

PART III.

LATINO/A LAY AND VOLUNTEER LEADERS

III.1 General Traits of Parish and Congregational Leaders

The NSLLPC used income questions and employment categories taken from the 2000 United States Census in order to better compare the income and employment patterns of church leaders with those of the general Latino population in the country.

- The median household income for all Latino Lay and volunteer leaders responding to the survey was \$30,000, which is slightly less than the median for all Latino households (\$33,447) as reported in the 2000 Census.

Economics - In comparing Latino lay and volunteer leaders with other groups, it should be remembered that as a group, Latinos/as are among the poorest of groups in the United States today.

Census and other current data suggest the following:

- *The median household income for all Hispanics was 72.9% of what households of non-Hispanic whites earned (\$45,904) in 2000.*
- *When the larger size of Hispanic households due to children is factored in, the per capita income for Hispanics drops even lower to only 49.9% -- half of the per capita income for the U.S. non-white Hispanic average.*
- *The per capita income of Hispanics was \$12,011 -- less than that of African Americans (\$14,881).*
- *Only 2% of Hispanics earn more than \$75,000 a year compared with 11% of non-Hispanic whites.*

The low levels of income -- particularly the per capita income of Latinos/as - is related to the low paying jobs that characterize Hispanic employment patterns.

- The majority of Latino/a church lay and volunteer leaders who responded were employed as blue collar workers or as homemakers (*amas de casas*).

The lay and volunteer leaders surveyed show general agreement with the reports of the U.S. Census and other agencies from the Departments of Labor and Commerce about the employment patterns for Hispanics.

- ❑ *Nearly 64% of Hispanics hold blue-collar jobs compared with 41.5% of the general population.*
- ❑ *Hispanics account for 61% of all workers in the agricultural sector in 2002.*
- ❑ *Only 37.5% of Hispanics hold white-collar jobs in the private sector compared with 58.5% of the U.S. average.*

In other words, the majority of workers in the United States hold white-collar jobs, but almost 2 out of 3 Latinos/as are in blue-collar jobs, and 3 out of every 5 of U.S. agricultural workers are Hispanic.

The Latinas/os with professional jobs are underrepresented in the work force.

- ❑ *Only 12.1% of workers born in Latin America hold managerial or professional jobs, while 38.7% of persons born in Asia are professionals.*
 - ❑ *Among all workers born in the United States, 3 out of 5 are professionals, managers or work in service industries nearly double the Latino average. Persons born in Asia have an even higher percentage of workers (65.2%) in these categories.*
- The survey found that 29% of Latino/a lay and volunteer leaders listed themselves as professionals. **This is twice as high as the rate of workers born in Latin America.**
 - The majority of those leaders presently reporting a profession came from families where their parents did not have professions.
 - Of Latino church leaders who are professionals today, 69% came from families where their parents were not professionals.

Thus, it might be said that about one fourth (24%) of lay and volunteer leaders in Latino parishes and congregations within this survey have experienced upward mobility in terms of education and profession.

Lay and Volunteer leaders in Latino faith communities have a lower income but higher educational achievements than the general Hispanic population.

Egalitarian Values Inherent in Latino Religious Commitment

Churches recruit lay and volunteer leaders for ministry on the basis of religious commitment rather on economic and educational attainment. This allows Latinos and Latinas in parishes and congregations to gain community respect without conforming to secular expectations for upward social mobility. Instead of waiting generations to acquire a middle-class status and representative political leaders, Hispanics in the church can immediately reach leadership status on behalf of the community. The respect afforded religious institutions within US society is transferred to Latinos/as without a need to accumulate independent credentials as resources before becoming leaders.

“Only religious institutions provide a counterbalance on this cumulative resource process. They play an unusual role in the American political system by providing opportunities for those who would be otherwise resource poor”. “Verba, et al., 1995:18. See Michael A. Jones-Correa and David L. Leal (December 2001) “Political Participation: Does Religion Matter?” in *Political Research Quarterly* 54:4:751-770.

The 2000 U. S. Census reports :

- ❑ *49% of Hispanic males and 46% of Hispanic females over the age of 25 have not graduated from High School (47.5% overall).*
- ❑ *3 of 10 of Hispanics have graduated from High School or gone to college but have not obtained a college degree.*
- ❑ *Only 14% of Hispanic males over 25 years of age and 15% of Hispanic females have a college degree (Associate or Bachelor of Arts or a graduate degree).*
- Roughly half of all Latino/a lay and volunteer leaders in the survey have a high school education, which is higher than the national pattern for Hispanics (37.7%) in the United States.

Slightly more than a quarter of these lay and volunteer leaders report having a college degree and somewhat less than a quarter lack a high school education. Comparison with the general Hispanic population, suggests that religious lay and volunteer leaders have high value for education.

- The survey reports that parish and congregational leaders in Latino faith communities are twice as likely to have a college education than the general Hispanic population (14.6%).
- One out of three Latino/a lay and volunteer leaders (29%) reported having a college degree.
- One out of five leaders had not graduated from High School, while in the general population, nearly half of all Hispanics are without a high school degree (47.6%).

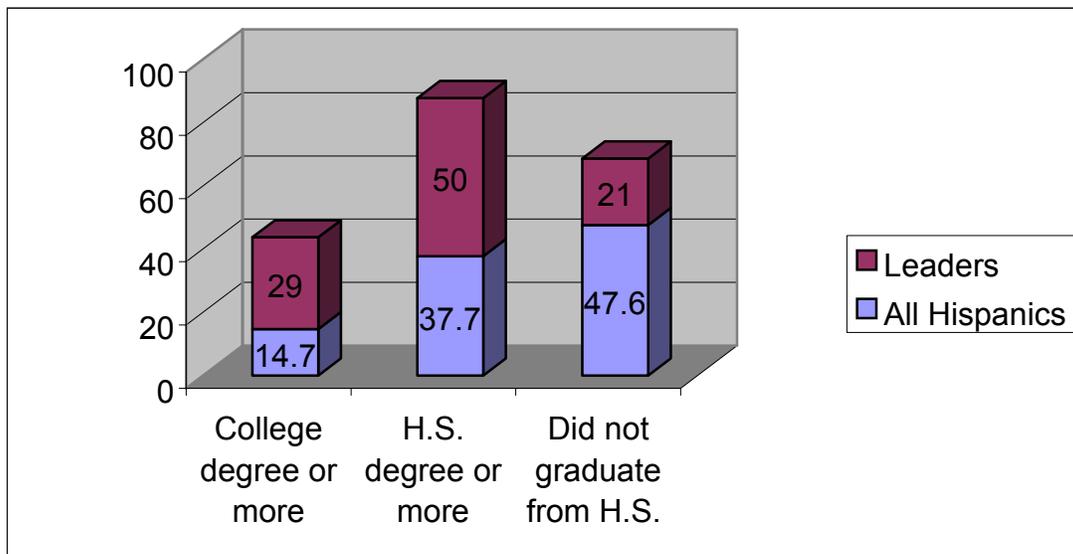
Hispanic Religious People Value Education

PARAL scholar, Professor Segundo Pantoja, has studied the linkages between religion and educational attainment among Latinos/as.* He has found patterns which suggest that religious persons encourage their children's education more successfully than among Hispanics in general.

*See also the President's Advisory Commission on the Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans' interim report in September 2002: *The Road to a College Diploma: The Complex Reality of Raising Educational Achievement for Hispanics in the United States*.

In general, all persons who practice a religion in the United States regardless of race or ethnic group, tend to show somewhat greater educational and economic achievements than the general population. Health risks from diseases caused by drinking, smoking or drug use are also lower among religious people, resulting in better longevity. While religion *alone* does not guarantee these positive attainments, the values of religion are clearly influential in these categories.

Graph III.1.1 Educational Attainment for Latino Church Leaders and Hispanics in the United States Compared



Sources: US 2000 Census for all Hispanics; NSLLPC for Latino/a Leaders

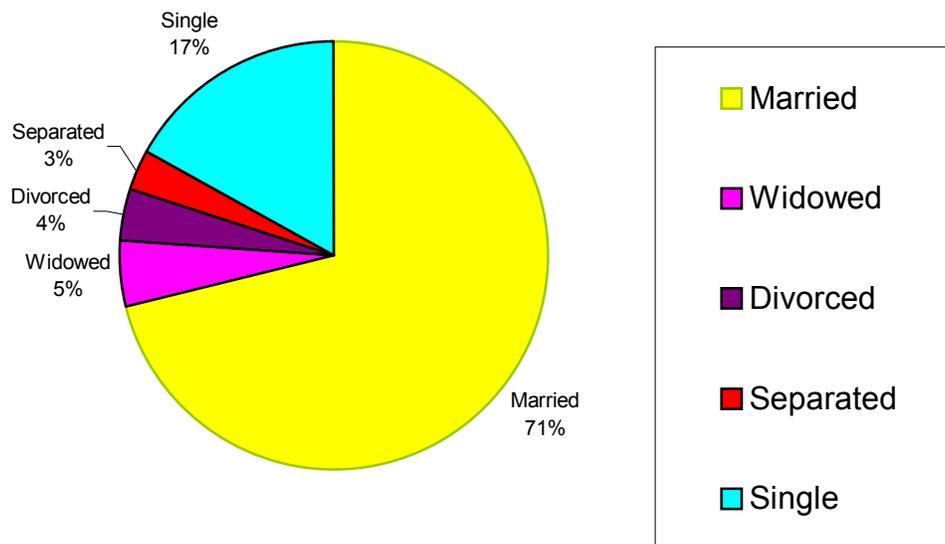
Marriage is a religious event that has important social and economic consequences, such as providing a better environment for children and increasing income when both spouses are employed. Leaders are often

required to have a marital status approved by their church, so that the marriages of religious persons can be expected to be more stable than those of the general population. In the Roman Catholic tradition, vows of celibacy insure that some leaders will not be married.

The PARAL Study adds the following information to our understanding of marital status for Hispanic lay and volunteer leaders.

- Five out of six Latino and Latina leaders are or have been married.
- Only 1% reported to be living in consensual union or common law marriage.
- The percentage of single lay and volunteer ministers (17%) is four times higher than those divorced (4%).
- Some of the Roman Catholic lay and volunteer leaders in Latino faith communities are consecrated religious women who take vows not to be married.

Graph III.1.2 Marital Status of Latino/a Lay & Volunteer Leaders

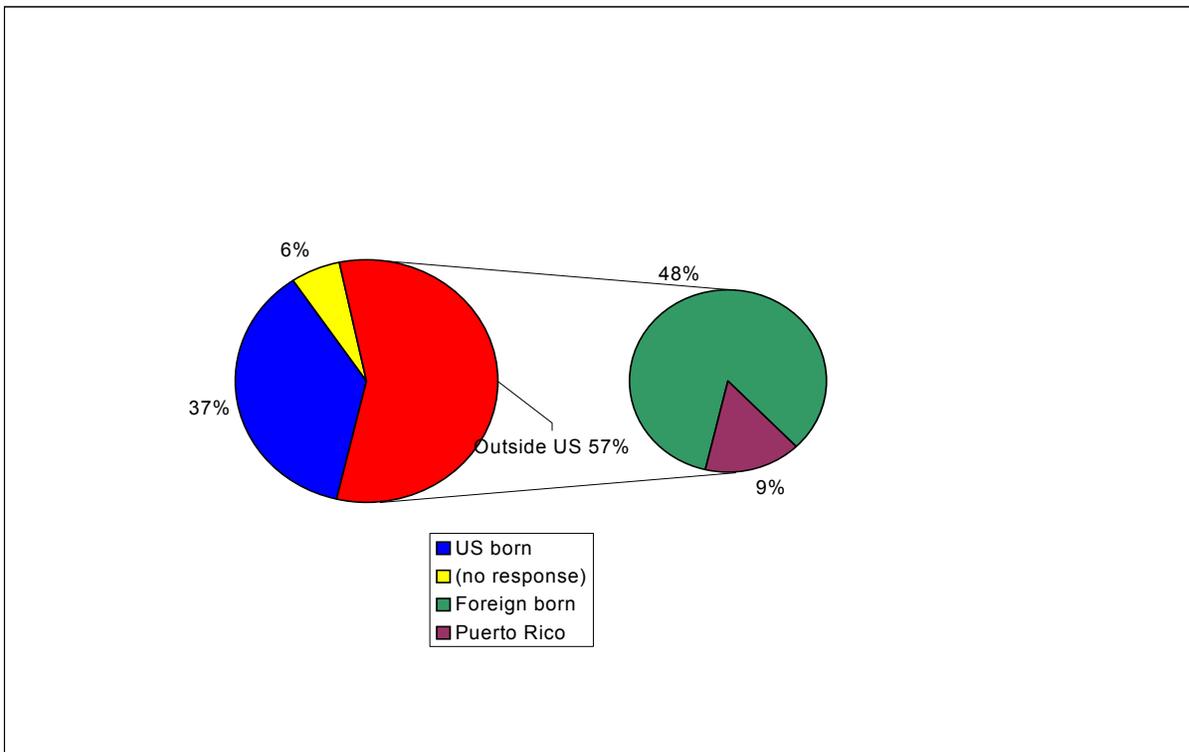


**percentages do not equal 100% because of rounding*

Place of birth, that is -- whether the Hispanic is foreign-born or born in the United States -- is a significant factor in many socio-economic categories, such as income, language preferences, citizenship status.

- 48% of the lay and volunteer leaders in Latino faith communities were born outside the United States in a foreign country.
- This percentage of foreign born lay and volunteer leaders is higher than the percentage of all foreign-born Hispanics in the United States (39%) as reported by the US Census for 2000 but about the same as all foreign-born Hispanic adults.
- Counting those born in Puerto Rico as “born outside the United States”, 57% of those responding among the lay and volunteer leaders are the first generation of im/migrants to the United States.

Graph III.1.3 Birthplace of Latino/a Lay and Volunteer Leaders



- The majority of all leaders (51%) spoke Spanish at least as well as English.
- *The findings suggest that ministry in the church tends to select Latinos and Latinas who are at least as conversant with English as with Spanish, even if they are often expected to use Spanish in ministry.*
- For those who were equally bilingual, Spanish was preferred for prayer by only 10%.

- *It seems those who classify themselves as “equally bilingual” are more likely to have been raised in the United States.*

How Puerto Rico is a Foreign Country

Puerto Rico is a colony of the United States and all persons born on the island have U.S. citizenship, although they may vote for president and congressional representation only when resident in one of the 50 states. Sociologically, however, in many language and cultural indicators, birth in Puerto Rico functions like birth in a Latin American country, despite being born citizens under the U.S. flag.

III.2 Conversion and Denominational Switching

There is a considerable interest in denominational membership among Latinos/as, particularly in light of the growth in the number of churches among Latino Protestants, Evangelicals and Pentecostals. This sample had nearly 85% of Roman Catholics, so that the switch to a Protestant denomination reported here cannot be verified statistically. It is likely, however, that the findings of the NSLLPC accurately reflect a pattern of loyalty among Roman Catholics who attain church leadership posts. These lay and volunteer leaders were asked about denominational membership during various life situations.

Conversion and Switching

"Conversion" has a theological meaning: one rejects a set of doctrines and practices because they are considered lacking in some essential way and another set of doctrines and practices are embraced.

“Switching” is a sociological category that measures only belonging to one or another denomination, regardless of considerations about the embrace or rejection of doctrines and practices.

- Six out of seven leaders (85%) who responded were born in their religion and had never converted or switched.
- For those who had switched, the average age for joining the present denomination was 17-24, the youngest adult category provided in the survey.
- Of the 8% who switched, a healthy majority (61%) switched more than once.

- The most frequent changes are among those of all other denominations AOD although the sample favors those who now identify with Roman Catholicism.

Joining a faith community is a spiritual experience. However, it may be accompanied by events that can be measured in sociology. The NSLLPC asked the respondents to indicate as many of the following that accompanied their switching.

- ❖ I came to the US from another country (*immigration*)
- ❖ I married someone in the denomination (out-group marriage)
- ❖ I moved into this neighborhood/city (migration and resettlement)
- ❖ I had been seriously ill (health crisis)
- ❖ I was going through a personal crisis (life issues)
- ❖ Nothing in particular

- The NSLLPC found that a switch in denomination was accompanied by **immigration** in three out of four cases.
- If “moving into a neighborhood/city” is included (**migration and resettlement**) the frequency rises to four out of five cases.

These findings suggest that conversion of faith or religious switching among Latinos/as is:

- more common among the young;
- before commitment to church service; and is
- occasioned by immigration and/or migration.

III.3 Ministry

As part of the NSLLPC, the heads of Latino faith communities were asked to list by name the persons occupying specific posts of ministry within the parish or congregation. Separate forms were used by Roman Catholics and all other denominations to respect the different titles and offices in these two sets of denominations.

There were more than 300 respondents who filled in this form that was separate from the formal questionnaire for the heads of the Latino faith communities that has been analyzed in Parts I and II of the PARAL Study.

The survey developed categories that could be applied to all denominations by focusing on the functions performed to benefit the faith community. The series of tables in this section record the number of persons listed by the heads of Latino faith community in the different ministries of eight classifications.

- 1) **Stewardship,**
- 2) **Religious Education,**
- 3) **Worship or Liturgy,**
- 4) **Youth Ministry,**
- 5) **Societies or Movements,**
- 6) **Charitable Works and/or Evangelization,**
- 7) **Counseling,**
- 8) **Outreach or Social Justice Ministries.**

Note that in many faith communities, multiple ministries were fulfilled by the same person. This data is not included below however, the gender* of the person serving the community does form a major part of the analysis, and was derived by identifying names as masculine or feminine.

The listings below utilize the name of the ministries in Spanish. It was found that in most categories even those who spoke English frequently referred to the ministries by their names in Spanish.

**Where two persons of different genders were listed, as for instance, in the ministry for Roman Catholics of the Marriage Encounter, the “partnered” ministry is listed as “P.”*

Stewardship

The denominations formed by the Protestant Reformation have maintained the biblical offices of deacons and presbyters within their tradition. Deacons serve certain needs of the faith community so as to keep the pastor or head free for more direct ministries.

The II Vatican Council a generation ago fostered within the Roman Catholic Church the ordination of deacons who might be married and who did not intend to seek the priesthood. Sometimes labeled “the permanent diaconate,” bearers of this office are ordained by the bishop and are permitted to preach, baptize and officiate at rituals such as funerals and weddings. Among Roman Catholic Latinos, the permanent deacons often are Latinos themselves, becoming a native clergy serving under the priest.

Deacons and Presbyters in the Bible

The Apostles call for *diakonia* to the Greek-speaking converts to Christianity

‘The Twelve called a full meeting of the disciples and addressed them, ‘It would not be right for us to neglect the word of God so as to give out food; you, brothers, must select from among yourselves seven men of good reputation, filled with the Spirit and with wisdom; we will hand over this duty to them and continue to devote ourselves to prayer and to the service of the word.’ ” (Acts 6:2-4)

Paul describes the qualities for a presbyter

“Since, as president, he [the presbyter] will be God’s representative, he must be irreproachable; never an arrogant or hot-tempered man, nor a heavy drinker or violent, nor out to make money; but a man who is hospitable and a friend of all that is good; sensible, moral, devout and self-controlled; and he must have a firm grasp of the unchanging message of the tradition, so that he can be counted on for both expounding the sound doctrine and refuting those who argue against it.” (Titus 1:7-9)

Among Roman Catholics in the United States, the conciliar reforms have also led to the establishment of parish councils to democratize the decision-making process within parishes. In virtually all parishes, these representatives are elected for specified terms of office and usually serve alongside persons of other ethnicities, since three out of four Roman Catholic Latino faith communities are found in parishes which also serve other language and ethnic groups (see Part I.1 and Part I.12).

In all other denominations, the church board or council of elders (presbyters) usually functions with the powers similar to those of the trustees or a board of directors in a secular corporation. In many instances, they control church expenses and decide on the contract for the pastor. The Roman Catholic parish councils do not hold such power, and are legally under the power of the bishop, both in civil and ecclesiastical law. It should be noted, however, that in some instances, a particular Roman Catholic clergyman might choose to follow the majority opinion of the parish council allowing it to function as a virtual decision-making body.

The percentages listed indicate the distribution by gender within the Roman Catholic and all other denominations (AOD) for each of these ministries. The total number of persons listed is noted in parentheses for each of the denominational categories.

Table III.3.1 Ministries of Stewardship by Gender and Denomination

Stewardship/Mayordomia	RC (328)			AOD (536)		
	F	M	P	F	M	P
Diáconos Hispanos/Latinos	2%	38%	-	13%	32%	1%
Consejo Parroquial *	23%	37%	-	-	-	-
Junta de la Iglesia *	-	-	-	17%	34%	-

*Categories not included in the denominational list are indicated by “-“. No response is marked “X”.

- A higher percentage of Roman Catholic women (23%) are on parish councils than women of all other denominations on church boards (17%).
- Men are a third or more of members of Catholic parish councils (37%) or church boards of all other denominations (34%).
- Men are also more likely to be deacons in all faith communities, whether Roman Catholic (38%) or of all other denominations (32%).
- Women reported as Roman Catholic deacons (2%) represents an anomaly.

Religious Education

Roman Catholics sometimes use the biblical word “catechesis” for the education of children. In all other denominations, “Sunday School” is a common term. The survey grouped together the teaching of the faith to children with study of the bible, usually to adults. Also included are day care and after-school programs that are increasingly common in churches and which often provide opportunities for instruction in the faith.

Worship or Liturgy

The official worship service (*culto*) often employs music played or sung by a choir. In the Roman Catholic tradition since the II Vatican Council, lay persons can read from the scriptures during the service.

Table III.3.2 Ministries of Religious Education and Worship/Liturgy by Gender and Denomination

Educación Religiosa	RC (426)			AOD (391)		
	F	M	P	F	M	P
Educación Religiosa	40%	10%	1%	-	-	-
Escuela dominical	-	-	-	29%	16%	X
Estudio Bíblico	15%	19%	0%	11%	26%	X
Cuidados diurnos/kindergarten	7%	X	X	10%	1%	X
Cuidados después de las clases	6%	X	X	5%	1%	X
Liturgia/Culto	RC (622)			AOD (258)		
	F	M	P	F	M	P
Director del Coro	15%	21%	1%	23%	35%	X
Música	10%	16%	X	20%	36%	X
Lectores	20%	16%	X	-	-	-

- Among Roman Catholics, religious education in most categories is fulfilled by a woman (68%).
- Among leaders of all other denominations, men (26%) are more likely than women (11%) to lead the bible study, but women are more likely to head up the Sunday School (29%) than men (16%).
- Women in both Roman Catholic and all other denominations are more likely to attend to children in day care or after-school programs.
- Men in both Roman Catholic and all other denominations are more likely to lead the choir or direct the music.
- Women in the Roman Catholic tradition are somewhat more likely than men to be lecturers during the liturgy.

Youth Ministries

Recreation, often with sports leagues, is an important part of church services offered to young people. It is connected to ministry because it keeps the youth identified with the church and coming to the buildings. Scouting serves a similar function. Retreats, revivals and other forms of intensive faith training are included here as “other”.

Charitable Works/Evangelization

Visits to the sick and those in prisons are works of mercy urged on Christians by the bible. As a part of increasing membership, faith communities also send representatives to visit homes, even just to knock on doors of unknown persons. The Reformation stressed the role of the laity in preaching and recently the association known as “**Promise Keepers**” rallied Christian men to fulfill their faith and provided support networks to maintain that commitment.

Table III.3.3 Youth Ministries and Charitable Works/Evangelization by Gender and Denomination

	RC (228)			AOD (130)		
	F	M	P	F	M	P
Ministerio de Jovenes						
Recreo y Deportes	20%	27%	2%	18%	51%	X
Scouting	6%	10%	X	X	X	X
Otro/Other	18%	10%	1%	14%	25%	X
Obras Caritativas/Evangelización	RC (271)			AOD (345)		
	F	M	P	F	M	P
Visitas a los enfermos	28%	20%	1%	16%	28%	X
Ministerio a los encarcelados	6%	18%	X	3%	13%	X
Visitas de casa en casa	17%	8%	1%	10%	15%	X
Prédicar/culto al aire libre	-	-	-	2%	13%	X
Promise Keepers	-	-	-	X	7%	X

- Men in all other denominations are half of those conducting recreational programs for youth.
- Scouting in both Roman Catholic parishes and congregations of all other denominations is not a common ministry among Latinos and Latinas.
- Youth retreats are more common as ministries for all other denominations (39%) than among Roman Catholics (29%).
- Roman Catholic women are more likely to lead the various programs of youth ministry (44%) than women of all other denominations (32%).
- Men in both Roman Catholic parishes and congregations of all other denominations are most likely to engage in the prison ministry.
- Roman Catholic women are more likely to visit house by house (17%) and visit the sick (28%) while among Latinos of all other denominations it is the men who outnumber women in house visitation (15%) and ministry to the sick (28%).
- Street preaching (*al aire libre*) is an important ministry for about one out of eight men of all other denominations, twice as common as Promise Keepers.

Movements and Societies

Most parishes and congregations have organizations which allow members to attend to specialized needs. These are often targeted upon segments of the population and often are gender specific. The **Cursillo**, **Charismatic Renewal**, **Marriage Encounter** and the **Legion of Mary** are organizations within Roman Catholicism that have independent status in the church as a whole, but which often seek to have branches or local chapters in each parish.

Table III.3.4 Ministries of Movements and Societies by Gender and Denomination

Movimientos y Cofradías/Sociedades	RC (359)			AOD (451)		
	F	M	P	F	M	P
Cursillos de Cristiandad	13%	18%	1%	-	-	-
Movimiento carismático	15%	18%	1%	-	-	-
Encuentro Matrimonial	6%	10%	6%	-	-	-
Legión de Maria	7%	2%	X	-	-	-
Otras organizaciones	2%	1%	X	-	-	-
Sociedad de Caballeros	-	-	-	3%	20%	X
Sociedad de Damas	-	-	-	12%	12%	X
Sociedad de Jovenes	-	-	-	17%	6%	X
Sociedad de Ninos	-	-	-	X	1%	X

- The membership of leaders of both genders in the societies for **Women** (*las damas*) and for **Men** (*los caballeros*) in congregations of all other denominations suggests that the strict gender division is less common today.
- Men are more likely to be leaders of most movements and societies except for the Roman Catholic organization of the **Legion of Mary**, where women are three times more likely to serve as leader.

Counseling and Orientation

Reception into the church is an adult commitment for some denominations that follow the traditions of the Reformation. Although Roman Catholics baptize infants, through a rigorously organized program for educating the parents and the godparents, there is also a program for adults seeking church membership through baptism (RICA = Rites of Initiation for Christian Adults). Members of the faith community often turn to the church for marriage counseling and help with grieving or mourning the loss of a loved one.

Table III.3.5 Ministries of Counseling and Mentoring by Gender and Denomination

	RC (599)			AOD (328)		
	F	M	P	F	M	P
Consejería y Asesoramiento (599)						
Preparación para el bautismo del niño	10%	14%	2%	5%	21%	X
Preparación para la confirmación	13%	8%	1%	5%	9%	X
Consejos para los matrimonios	5%	11%	3%	7%	27%	X
Condolencias	5%	5%	X	6%	20%	X
RICA/Rite of Initiation for Christian Adults	13%	9%	X	-	-	-

- Roman Catholic women are more likely to be leaders of ministries of counseling and mentoring in Latino faith communities than women of all other denominations, except in marriage counseling where the percentages of women are about the same.
- Roman Catholic women are about as likely as men to be leaders in these ministries, while in congregations of all other denominations, men (77%) are much more likely to head these ministries than women (23%).

Social Justice, Holistic and Outreach Ministries

Many Latino faith communities offer social services. As reported extensively in Part I and below, these ministries can be classified as “professional” and “non-professional” according to requirements for specialized training. Often these services are provided by the movements and societies listed above. **Habitat for Humanity** is an organization that recruits church members at a local level. Although it has its origins among all other denominations, it finds members among Roman Catholics. The Catholic Church as the Society of St. Vincent de Paul to collect and distribute clothing and food to the needy. The **Right to Life Movement** is coordinated nationally to promote legislation principally against abortion.

Table III.3.6 Social Justice, Holistic and Outreach Ministries by Gender and Denomination

Social Justice/Holistic & Outreach Ministries	RC (338)			AOD (213)		
	F	M	P	F	M	P
Preparación de comida/ <i>Food</i>	10%	5%	X	16%	5%	1%
Distribución de ropa/ <i>Clothing</i>	16%	9%	X	21%	7%	X
Programa para personas de tercera edad	7%	3%	X	7%	3%	X
Servicios a los inmigración/ <i>Immigration</i>	9%	4%	X	4%	11%	X
Servicios de vivienda/ <i>Housing</i>	4%	2%	X	X	4%	X
Servicios a los adictos/ <i>Addiction</i>	1%	4%	X	1%	5%	X
Habitat for Humanity	1%	1%	X	8%	6%	X
Right to Life	13%	7%	1%	-	-	-
Otro/Other	1%	7%	1%	X	X	X

**Program for Senior Citizens*

- Women in both Roman Catholic and all other denominations are more likely than men to be leaders in the preparation of food and distribution of clothing to the needy.
- Attention to addicts is more likely to have male leaders in both the Roman Catholic (4%) and the faith community of all other denominations (5%).

Charitable Works, Social Justice and Evangelization

Charitable Works are distinguishable from Social Justice Ministries among Roman Catholics for two reasons: 1) Ministries listed under Charitable Works do not generally require professional preparation, while Social Justice Ministries do; and 2) Charitable Works concern attention to spiritual, that is, psychological and emotional needs, while Social Justice Ministries are focused on material needs.

Leaders of all other denominations often perceive the need for spiritual attention as an invitation for evangelization, that is, conversion. We found in that pre-test that they responded better to that description for these activities rather than to “Charitable Works.”

Table III.3.7 lists the number of leaders in each category of ministry with the percentage distribution for all ministries.

Table III.3.7 Distribution of Leaders in All Ministries by Denomination

	RC		AOD		TOTAL	%of all ministries
	n	%	n	%		
Stewardship/Mayordomia	328	10%	536	20%	864	15%
Educacion Religiosa	426	13%	391	15%	817	14%
Liturgia y Culto	622	20%	258	10%	880	15%
Ministerio de Jovenes	228	7%	130	5%	358	6%
Movimientos y Cofradias/Sociedades	359	11%	451	17%	810	14%
Otras Caritativas/Evangelizacion	271	9%	345	13%	616	11%
Consejeria y Asesoramiento	599	19%	328	12%	927	16%
Social Justice/Outreach Ministries	338	11%	213	8%	551	9%
TOTALS	3171		2652		5823	

- The categories chosen represent a generally even distribution of church ministry, with five of the eight categories each falling within a range of 14%-16% of lay and volunteer leaders in Latino faith communities.
- For all those faith communities responding, the lowest distribution percentages in leadership are for **Youth Ministry** (6%) and **Social Justice/Holistic and Outreach Ministries** (9%). Each of these require some professional training.
- The most common ministries for Roman Catholics are **Counseling and Mentoring** for sacramental reception (19%) and **Liturgy** (20%). Two out of five leadership opportunities in Roman Catholic parishes fall into these two categories.
- The most common ministries for all other denominations are **Stewardship** (20%) and **Movements/Societies** (17%).
- Lay and volunteer leaders from all other denomination (AOD) are more likely to be engaged in **Evangelization** (13%) than Catholics in corresponding ministries of **Charitable Works** (9%).



Understanding Ministries Across Denominational Boundaries

The ministries studied in this survey often have different names and varied tasks due to the historical development of each denomination. For instance, “ordination” has different meaning for Roman Catholics than for Methodists. In the Catholic experience, ordination is restricted to males: the priesthood is for the celibate and the diaconate for specially trained men, who usually are married. Among Methodists, ordination is not required to assume the role as pastor, nor is celibacy required. Similarly, Roman Catholics and some Protestants use the term “lay” for non-clerical leaders, while in other denominations “volunteer” better captures the functions of members who attend to ministries under the guidance of the head of the faith community.

The survey focused upon function of ministry. Questions were posed without denominationally specific in order not to allow comparison among all leaders of the tasks they perform for their churches.

In addition to profiles on leaders from lists provided by Pastors, we added survey questions directly to lay and volunteer leaders about the extent of their ministerial involvement and remuneration.

- Three out of four leaders (74%) are volunteer and are not paid.
- 26% of volunteer workers are full-time and 48% are part-time volunteers.
- One out of four lay leaders for Hispanics works full-time without pay.
- Only 17% of lay leaders in Latino faith communities were paid, either full-time (10%) or part-time (7%).
- Most leaders responding to the survey are female (53%).
- There were more women lay and volunteer leaders among Roman Catholic Latino faith communities than among all other denominations.

III.4 Social Ministries

The survey asked the lay and volunteers which ministries to material needs were most important for their faith community and if the lay leaders themselves were personally involved by giving time and/or money.

The first set of categories are those ministries which do not generally require professional preparation

The first set of categories are those ministries which do not generally require professional preparation.

Table III.4.1 Non-Professional Services Rendered by Leaders

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Very Important	Not at all Important	No* Answer	Not Apl.		Give Time	Give Money	Give Neither
Distribution of food, clothing, money	48%	20%	2%	>1%	29%	2%		37%	27%	36%
Sport Groups	29%	31%	11%	3%	21%	5%		8%	2%	90%
Scouts & other groups	32%	32%	7%	2%	21%	6%		9%	3%	88%
Sponsor Excursions	21%	35%	14%	3%	24%	5%		7%	2%	91%
Help Disaster Victims	62%	16%	2%	>1%	16%	3%		9%	23%	68%
Join Civic Marches	18%	27%	17%	6%	25%	7%		9%	3%	88%
Support Candidates	19%	23%	14%	9%	25%	9%		8%	3%	89%

**combines those who left blank with those who did not know.*

- **Sports groups, Scouting and excursions** such as picnics and other organized outings do not receive much time or monetary support from Latino lay and volunteer leaders.
- Emergency **help for disaster victims** is considered more important than regular distribution of food, clothing and money.
- Most leaders do not place high importance on political involvement such as **civic marches** or **support for candidates** as part of a ministry.
- Lay leaders are not inclined to give money to political causes.
- Lay leaders are most likely to give time (37%) and money (27%) to the regular **distribution of food, clothing and money**.
- They are somewhat less likely to give money (23%) to emergency **help for disaster victims**.

Some ministries require professional training, such as a college degree or specialized training. The PARAL Study listed social services such job training, that might be funded by government. But all the professional services were not secular. Delivering youth conferences and preparing church leaders are pastoral efforts require training. Lay and volunteer leaders were asked the questions about the importance of these services to the faith community and whether they gave time and/or money for these efforts.

Table III.4.2 Professional Services Rendered by Leaders

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Very Important	Not at all Important	No* Answer	Not Apl.		Give Time	Give Money	Give Neither
Senior Citizens	50%	21%	3%	1%	20%	5%		20%	8%	72%
Shelter for the Homeless	42%	25%	4%	>1%	22%	8%		9%	10%	81%
Immigration Services	39%	26%	7%	2%	21%	5%		12%	3%	85%
Housing Services	31%	28%	7%	2%	24%	8%		7%	4%	89%
AIDS Programs	36%	24%	7%	2%	24%	7%		5%	5%	91%
Family Violence	57%	19%	3%	>1%	17%	4%		11%	4%	85%
Job Training	31%	27%	9%	2%	23%	10%		6%	2%	92%
Health Clinic	42%	23%	5%	2%	20%	7%		8%	4%	88%
Rehabilitation Programs	38%	25%	6%	2%	22%	9%		6%	4%	90%
Day-Care & Pre-school	41%	22%	6%	1%	22%	8%		6%	3%	91%
English Classes	47%	23%	5%	>1%	18%	6%		7%	2%	91%
Literacy Classes	40%	22%	6%	2%	24%	7%		5%	1%	94%
Leadership Training	55%	21%	4%	>1%	17%	4%		16%	2%	82%
Youth Conferences	67%	14%	2%	>1%	15%	2%		16%	3%	81%

**combines those who left blank with those who did not know.*

- Two-thirds of lay and volunteer leaders felt that **conferences and retreats for young people** were very important.
- One-sixth of lay leaders gave time to the **youth ministry** and an equal number were involved in **leadership training**.
- More than half of lay and volunteer leaders said that **youth conferences, leadership training, programs to deal with family violence** and help **senior citizens** were very important to the Latino faith community.
- About two out of five placed high importance on **immigration services** (39%), including **English** (47%) and **literacy classes** (40%).

- Two out of five held important Day-Care and Pre-school (41%), rehabilitation programs (38%), health clinics (42%) and shelter for the homeless (42%).
- Less than a third placed great importance on **housing services** (31%) and **job training** (31%) as ministries offered through the Latino faith community.

Most lay and volunteer leaders welcome the use of government funds to accomplish the work of the churches.

- 50% say it is “Very Important” to governmental funds to do ministries.
- 74% say it is “Very” or simply “Important” to use governmental funds to do ministries.

III.5 Ecumenism and Inter-Ethnic Cooperation

In Part I of the PARAL Study, interaction with other faith communities was described as: “**intercongregational**” when the communities are in the same denomination; “**ecumenical**” when the communities are of different denominations; “**interfaith**” when the communities are of different religions, e.g. Jewish

In I.7, pages 11-17 of Part I, a full description of these findings for the heads of the faith community can be found. The most relevant to the lay and volunteer leaders include:

- *The Latino faith communities of all other denominations (AOD) were considerably more likely than Roman Catholic ones to engage in **ecumenical activities**.*
- *Latino faith communities of AOD were five times more likely (35%) to cooperate with Roman Catholics as Roman Catholics with AOD (7%) in **ecumenical Joint Worship Services**.*
- *The Roman Catholic faith communities were ten times more likely to have **intercongregational activities** with other Roman Catholics than with AOD.*

The questions to the lay and volunteer leaders focused on ecumenical activities, that is, activities with faith communities of another denomination.

Ecumenism was a priority for the lay and volunteer leaders.

- 57% consider it “Very important” to cooperate with other faith communities and denominations.
- 88% consider it important in some measure to have ecumenical cooperation.

Part I.12 of the PARAL Study (pages 34-36) reported on the attitudes of the heads of the faith community concerning conflicts. Questions were asked about conflicts with two groups:

1. the non-Spanish speaking people who might share facilities with the Latino faith community;
2. different Latino nationality groups in the same faith community (Multi-Hispanic).

The survey asked the lay and volunteer leaders about all frictions or conflicts, **without distinguishing between non-Latinos and Latinos**.

The survey asked if there were more than one group in the faith community. Including both non-Latino and Latino, in addition to different Latin American nationalities, there was a high percentage of shared facilities.

- 86% of respondents said the faith community had more than one group.
- Only 13% were in homogenous faith communities.

The types of sharing were listed for the lay and volunteer leaders, asking them how frequently they engaged in each.

Table III.5.1 Shared Inter-Group Activities Among Lay & Volunteer Leaders

	<u>Always</u>	<u>Often</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Never</u>
Have services together	27%	13%	40%	5%
Work on project together	20%	19%	35%	6%
Share leadership positions	5%	17%	26%	12%
Attend social functions together	20%	5%	26%	6%

The least common group sharing was in leadership positions. Lay and volunteer leaders were twice as likely never to share this function with other groups as any of the other activities. This corresponds with the perception of the heads of the faith community (Table I.12.2; page 35), where the number was 14%.

- This suggests that most Latino faith communities that share facilities with other groups have parallel leadership positions.

Dual Leaders Within the Same Parish or Congregation

A recent article reported on a survey of racial and ethnic diversity in faith communities (See Kevin D. Dougherty in Sociology of Religion: Spring 2003 – 64:1; 65-85.) It is suggested that almost half (42.9%) of all faith communities in the United States have no ethnic or racial diversity, and among the remainder, only 10% have ethnic groups large enough to affect policy. Based on the concept of “niche” congregations developed by Nancy Ammerman (1997), the article concludes that diversity in membership is not always positive and may actually hinder group consciousness and community mobilization.

While the findings of the PARAL Study do not resolve this issue, it appears that many Latino faith communities surveyed have parallel leadership groups. In a Roman Catholic parish, for instance, this may mean a Director of Liturgy for the English-speaking and another Director for the Spanish-speaking. Other areas of parallel leadership may include religious education, movements such as the Charismatic Renewal, and volunteer organizations such as the Legion of Mary. While such multiplication of leaders might be explained in terms of linguistic capability, parallel leadership may have other important effects in motivation for the members, procurement of resources and training for leadership roles.

III.6 Attitudes Towards Culture in Worship and Sermon Preferences

The use of music and symbols expressing Latino identity within worship services was high for all groups, as was the concept of celebrating certain patron saint and other holidays.

Table III.6.1 Importance of Cultural Expression to Lay & Volunteer Leaders

	<u>Very Important</u>	<u>Somewhat Important</u>	<u>Not Very Important</u>	<u>Unimportant</u>
Musical Instruments	55%	27%	10%	5%
Symbols	32%	32%	23%	8%
Saints' Days /Holidays	52%	30%	11%	4%

Like the heads of the Latino faith communities, an overwhelming segment of the leaders (92%) thought that the Spanish language was the trait most shared by the various Hispanic groups.

- The favorite term among Lay and Volunteer Leaders for **personal use** was "Hispanic" (41%) rather than "Latino" (17%)

This preference among lay and volunteer leaders closely approximates what was reported for the heads of the Latino faith communities.

In that part of the PARAL Study, it was possible to distinguish between Roman Catholics (RC) and members of all other denominations (AOD).

In general, the heads of faith communities of AOD, were more inclined to use “Latino” than Roman Catholics.

Table III.6.2
Personal Preferences of Terms Among Heads of Latino Faith Communities

	<u>Latino</u>	<u>Hispanic</u>
RC	15%	55%
AOD	29%	43%

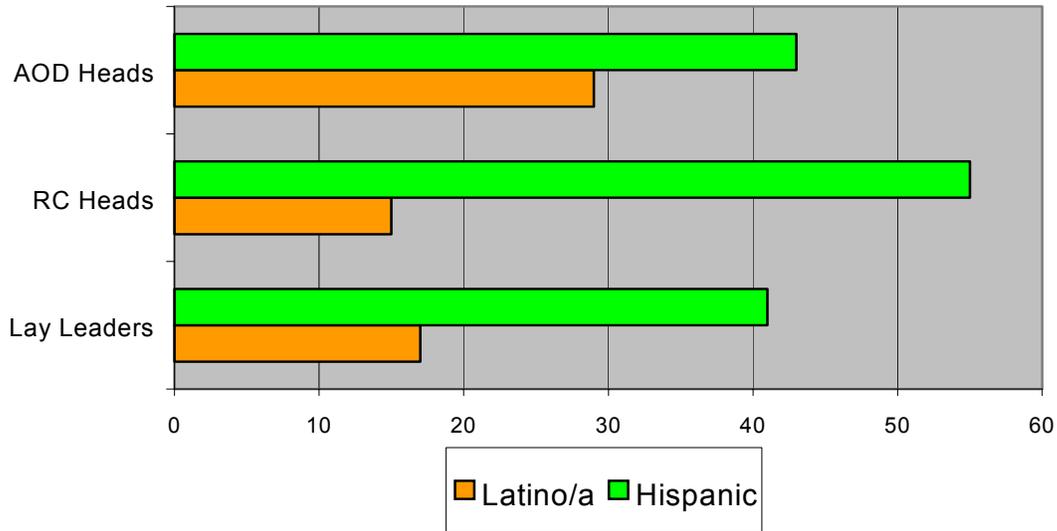
- When asked **what was used in the faith community**, "Hispanic" was only slightly more common (44%) than "Latino" (42%) in the opinion of the lay and volunteer leaders.

This approximates the same general usage among the heads of faith communities, including both Roman Catholics and those of all other denominations.

Table III.6.3
Congregational Preferences of Terms Among Heads of Latino Faith Communities

	<u>Latino</u>	<u>Hispanic</u>
RC	29%	52%
AOD	36%	47%

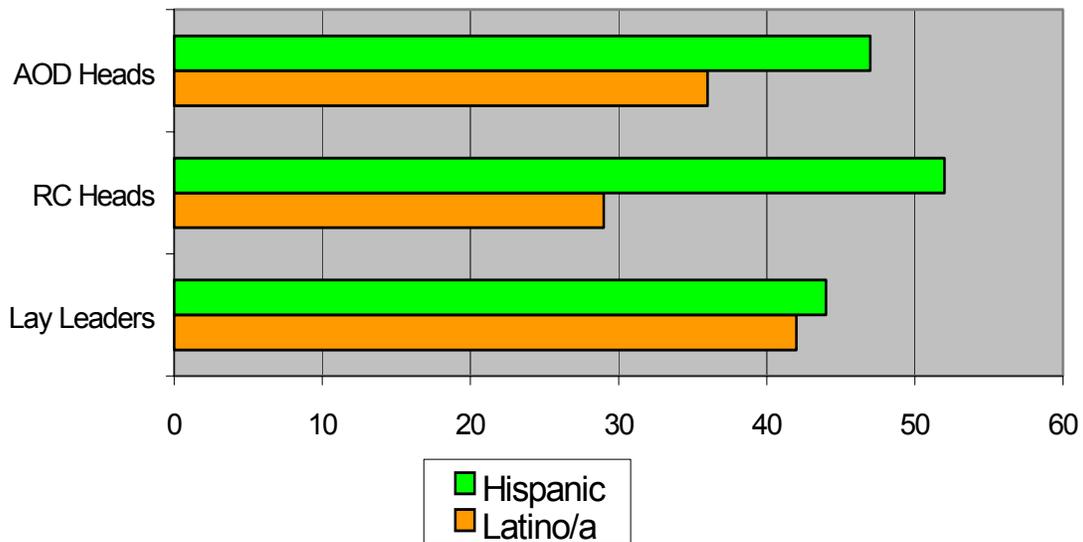
Graph III.6.4 Personal Preference for Latino/Hispanic – Lay & Volunteer Leaders compared with Heads by Denomination RC (Roman Catholic) and AOD (All Other Denominations)



Source: The National Survey of Leadership in Latino Parishes and Congregations

- The term “Hispanic” is preferred in personal usage by most church leaders and heads of faith communities serving Hispanics.
- The lay and volunteer leaders use “Hispanic” and “Latino/a” about equally to refer to the people in contrast with the heads who perceive “Hispanic” as more common.

Graph III.6.5 Church Usage of Latino/Hispanic – Lay & Volunteer Leaders compared with Heads by Denomination RC (Roman Catholic) and AOD (All Other Denominations)



Source: The National Survey of Leadership in Latino Parishes and Congregations

Sermons and Social Issues

Sermons are a very important part of church life. Although a pastor or a preacher may speak very often at meetings, in classrooms, in the rectory or parsonage when counseling, or in public at social events, the sermon delivered during worship is special. Many church-goers place limitations on the topics for sermons. Political issues or social themes, for instance, may be supported in church organizations, but considered inappropriate for the pulpit. Yet, the opposite is also true: when certain issues figure in sermons, they acquire greater importance because they have been linked to scripture, faith and worship.

In Table III.6.6 the sermon topic preferences of the lay and volunteer leaders surveyed are recorded by percentage.

Table III.6.6 Sermon Topic Preferences of Lay and Volunteer Leaders

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Never	No Answer
1. Social-Political Issues	7	20	57	12	6
2. Critique of US Policy	3	8	41	39	9
3. Abortion	20	31	36	6	6
4. Immigration	8	16	49	21	7
5. Bilingual Education	11	20	43	12	7
6. Affirmative Action	19	21	42	12	7
7. Support for Local Groups	18	29	41	7	5
8. Electoral Procedures	9	11	47	26	8
9. Homosexuality	6	12	51	24	8
10. Reforms Against Poverty	22	32	36	4	6
11. Domestic Violence	34	31	27	4	5
12. Gender Equality	32	27	31	5	5
13. Family Unity	67	20	8	2	3

Positive ratings are registered by combining “Always” with “Often”.

Negative ratings are measured by responses to “Never”.

The most popular sermon topics were:

- In favor of **family unity** (87%)
- Against **domestic violence** (64%)
- In support of **equality** between men and women (58%)
- In support of **reforms to end poverty** (54%)

The topics with the strongest opposition that they should never be sermons were:

- **Criticism of the United States policies in Latin America** (39%)
- Instruction about the **electoral process** (26%)
- **Homosexuality** (24%)

As noted in Part I.10 page 29, the NSLLPC only asked about the inclusion of topics in the sermon without requiring an indication of the content of the sermon topic might be. The opposition to hearing sermons treating homosexuality may come from both those who consider homosexuality so obviously wrong that it should not occupy the time in the pulpit and also from those who do not consider it sinful and therefore not a matter for preaching. Although not developed in this report, the substance of the opinions on homosexuality of the heads of the faith community and of the lay and volunteer leaders may be inferred by cross-reference to other political, social and theological indicators in the surveys.

III. 7 Cultural Transmission and the Role of Women

The survey asked leaders for their own ethnic background, that of their parents, both mother and father, and of their spouse, if applicable.

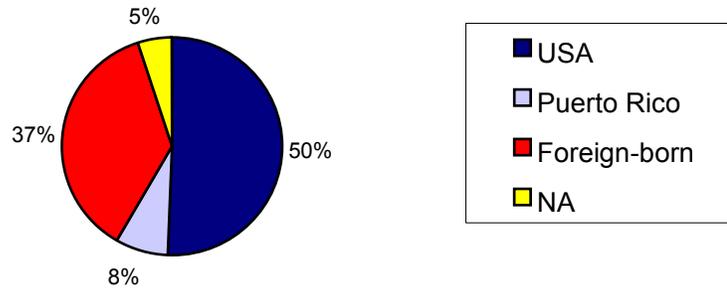
Although the country of origin is important for assessing cultural transmission, the small size of this sample did not permit exploration of this dimension with the data. We report here the tendencies for those born in the USA, in Puerto Rico and in Latin America (foreign born).

Since more than 90% of the respondents consider the Spanish language the most common trait of all Latinos (see III.6), we asked if “a person can be Latino without speaking Spanish?”

- The foreign born were less likely (37%) than those born in the United States (51%) to consider that one could be Latino without speaking Spanish.
- The US citizens born in Puerto Rico were twice as likely to consider speaking Spanish an indispensable characteristic of Latino identity than that one could be Latino without speaking Spanish.
- The foreign born were the majority of those who disagreed somewhat (63%) and disagreed strongly (58%) that one could be Latino without speaking Spanish.

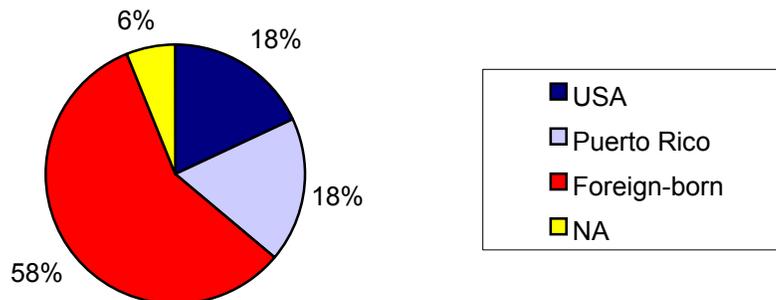
The different emphasis on the Spanish language can be seen by contrasting the percentages of US-born with foreign-born who strongly agreed or strongly disagreed with the notion that one could be Latino without speaking Spanish.

Graph III.7.1 Strong Agreement that Spanish is not Necessary to be Latino by Place of Birth



**NA – Did not respond*

Graph III.7.2 Strong Disagreement that Spanish is not Necessary to be Latino by Place of Birth



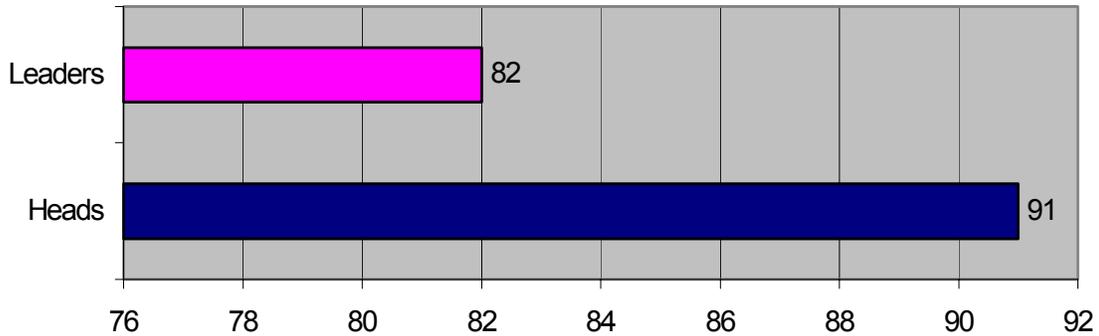
**NA – Did not respond*

The lay and volunteer leaders offered opinions about the roles for women in the faith community that followed a pattern similar to that of the heads of the faith communities (Part II:18-19)

- strongest in the matter of equal representation (82%)
- moderate for roles as pastors or heads of the faith community as a whole (53%)
- least for the use of the feminine in prayer and sermons when referring to God. (25%)

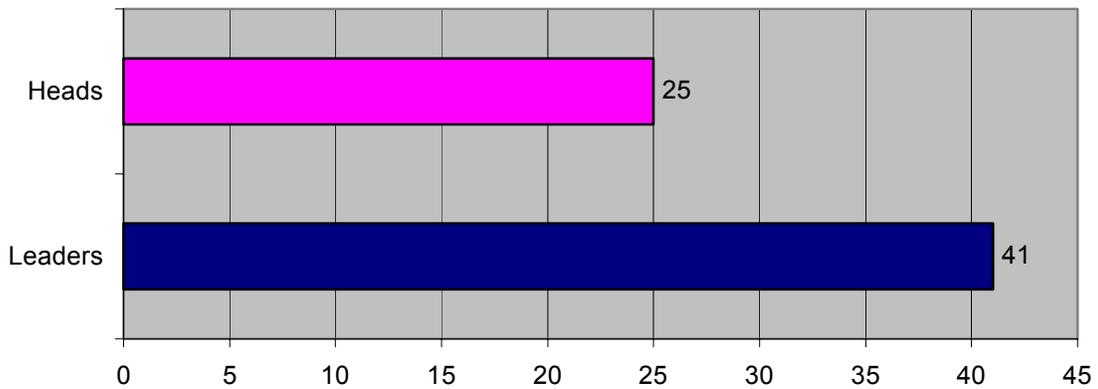
The lay and volunteer leaders were less likely than the heads of faith communities to agree that women should be in key positions or that it was acceptable to use the feminine gender when referring to God.

Graph III.7.3 Agreement (strongly and somewhat) that Women should be in Key Positions: Lay & Volunteer Leaders compared with Heads



The issue of women as in Part I, it was reported that among the heads of faith communities pastors were greatly affected by denomination, with Roman Catholics half as likely to accept women as pastors. *Among lay and volunteer leaders, the sample was not large enough to accurately measure if this trend was repeated among the Roman Catholic laity.*

Graph III.7.4 Agreement (strongly and somewhat) that the Feminine should be used in Referring to God: Lay & Volunteer Leaders compared with Heads



Actual roles of women in the leader's own faith community may be perceived differently by women than by men. The survey asked about four key areas. (See the responses of the heads, recorded both by denomination and by gender, Part II, 19-20/ Tables III.4.4-7).

Table III.7.5 Participation in Organizing Services/Mass

	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>
Mostly Men	8	14
Mostly Women	31	26
About the Same	48	50
Not Applicable	3	3
Don't Know	4	4
No Answer	6	4

- Men were more likely to see themselves as in charge of organizing service/mass (14%) than women (8%); women felt themselves mostly responsible (31%) more than men (25%).
- Although half of both men and women identified the roles about the same for both genders, a minority of both men and women agreed that women had a larger role in organizing service/mass.

Table III.7.6 Participation in Preaching* Sermons/Homilies

	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>
Mostly Men	46	54
Mostly Women	7	6
About the Same	17	15
Not Applicable	16	17
Don't Know	6	3
No Answer	9	6

**NB – In Roman Catholic faith communities, only men are ordained to preach*

Table III.7.7 Participation in Deciding How Church Income is Spent

	Female	Male
Mostly Men	18	18
Mostly Women	7	7
About the Same	40	45
Not Applicable	11	11
Don't Know	16	14
No Answer	8	6

- Most respondents agree about the gender roles that govern participation in how church income is spent.

- About one in five believe men make most decisions about money in faith communities, but twice as many of both men (45%) and women (40%) believe that the influence the same for both men and women.
- About one out of ten of respondents do not believe that this kind of participation in decision-making applies to lay and volunteer leaders.

Table III.7.8 Participation in Selecting Faith Community Leaders

	Female	Male
Mostly Men	9	16
Mostly Women	13	8
About the Same	58	55
Not Applicable	6	7
Don't Know	9	8
No Answer	6	5

- The perceptions of male and female lay and volunteer leaders differed only when asked about participation for services and in the selection of faith community leaders.
- In both areas, men and women each perceived themselves as having larger roles than their counterparts of the other gender.
- A majority of all respondents felt the selection of lay leaders was the same for both genders.
- Men (16%) were more inclined than women (9%) to see themselves as mostly in charge of the selection of leaders, while women (13%) were more inclined to see themselves as in charge than men (8%).

III.8 Religious Schools and Political Preferences

Latinos/as are generally underrepresented in religious schools, often for financial reasons. The NSLLPC confirmed this pattern, even for leaders close to the church.

Table III.8.1 Child's School Attendance

I have no children	22%
To public school	58%
To a non-religious private school	2%
To a Catholic or other religious school	17%
No Answer	2%

- Most of the lay and volunteer leaders do not send their children to public schools.
- Only about one in six send their children to Catholic or another religious school.

However: Most leaders agreed it was important that the government provide vouchers for religious elementary schools.

Table III.8.2 Importance of School Vouchers

Extremely Important	30%
Very Important	37%
Somewhat Important	20%
Not Important	12%
No Answer	1%

- Two out of three lay & volunteer leaders consider it extremely or very important to have government vouchers for religious schools.

The survey asked the respondents *“Which US political party offers the most help for faith communities to provide services for people’s material needs?”*

There were a variety of responses offered in addition to “Democratic” and “Republican”:

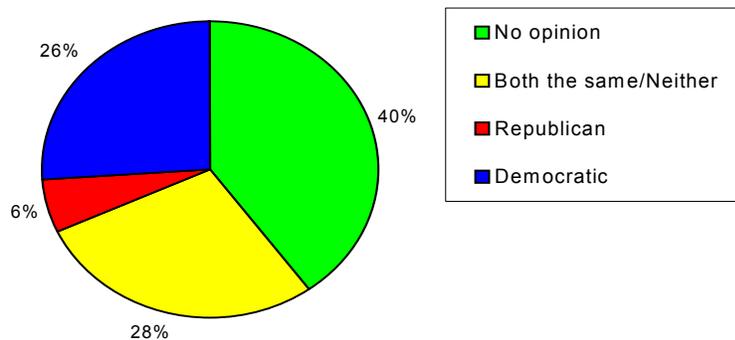
Respondents could answer: “I have no political opinion”

“Neither”

“Both the Same”

“Other” (and write in the name of an alternate party)

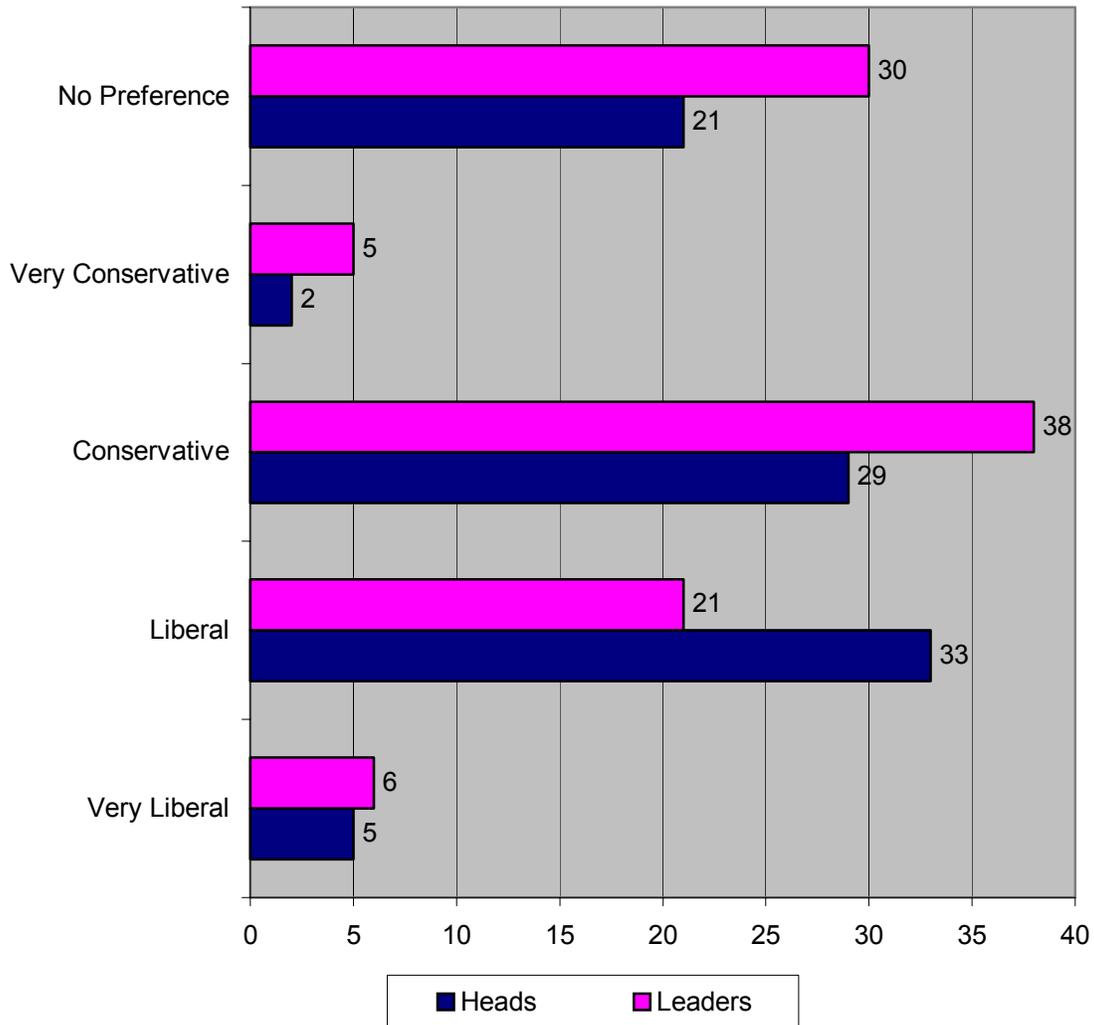
Graph III.8.3 Opinions about Political Parties that Help Latinos/as



- Like the heads of Latino faith communities (Part II.5), the lay and volunteer leaders saw by a wide margin the Democratic Party (26%) as helping Latinos/as more than the Republican Party (6%).
- Almost as many (28%) said political parties were the same or provided no help as those who gave both political parties credit for helping Latinos/as.
- The largest group of lay and volunteer leaders (40%), however, had no opinion about politics, just as reported for the heads of the faith communities.

The foreign-born were more likely than those born in the US to say they had no opinion about political parties. **This may be attributed to an immigrant status that does not permit voting for non-citizens.**

Graph III.8.4 Political preferences: Leaders compared to Heads of Latino Faith Communities



Some analysts of political trends presume that the term “**liberal**” is synonymous with a preference for the Democratic Party and “**conservative**” for the Republican Party. This survey separated the questions because the terms “liberal” and “conservative” can often be attributed to political parties in Latin America or Puerto Rico, allowing insight into political outlooks not limited to the narrow confines of US parties. Also, persons of faith sometimes classify their religious belief as liberal or conservative.

The significance of “liberal” and “conservative” in their varied contexts is explored for the heads of the Latino communities in Part II.5. Graph III.8.4 above compares the responses of the lay and volunteer leaders with the heads of their parishes and congregations.

- Lay and Volunteer leaders are generally more conservative and very conservative (43%) than the heads of the Latino faith communities (31%).
- Whereas one out of three heads were liberal, only one out of four lay and volunteer leaders classified themselves in this way.
- Lay and volunteer leaders were more likely to have no political preference (30%) than the heads of Latino faith communities (21%).
- Fewer leaders excluded themselves from political preferences when asked if they were liberal or conservative (30%) than when asked opinions about the Democratic and Republican Parties (40%).

Skepticism about the Two-Party System

Many studies based on interpretations of political participation in the United States presume that voting for candidates of the Democratic or Republican Parties indicates political maturity and non-participation in elections is a characteristic of a public uneducated in politics. The PARAL Study challenged this premise by allowing responses of “helps the same” and “neither helps” to distinguish between people who had formed judgements about the relevance of the US political system from those who have “no political preference.” Skepticism about the two party system may be considered in our survey as a more sophisticated political attitude than voting for either of the two major parties. See Deck, 1995.

Latino lay and volunteer leaders are more inclined to have political preferences when not required to define those preferences by the US system of Democratic and Republican Parties.

III.9 Preparation for Ministry

The survey distinguishes between secular education (III.2) and ministerial or pastoral training to serve the church. As suggested above (III.1, Page 3) the equality often found in the churches allows persons of different social and economic classes to work side by side.

Table III.9.1 Ministerial Education of Lay and Volunteer Leaders

None	51%
Certificate or correspondence program	18%
Bible college or pastoral center	18%
Seminary/deaconate degree	6%
Postgraduate degree (e.g. Masters of Divinity)	6%

Does leadership in the church prepare someone for civic leadership in the community?

We asked if these leaders had participated in meetings where decisions were made by a majority vote. This is the basis of democracy, and we wanted to see if the faith community provided at least one forum for this process. These questions were identical to the items which had been used by *Voice and Equality*, a survey report by Sidney Verba and his associates (1995).

Table III.9.2 Participation in a Democratic Process Within the Church

Yes	83%
No	16%

Similarly, we asked if the leadership role in this faith community helped the person develop skills for tasks such as speaking in public, conducting meetings of planning activities.

Table III.9.3 Use of Leadership Skills Within the Church

Yes	91%
No	8%

- Nine out of ten respondents developed leadership skills while working within the church.
- Four out of five participated in meetings where decisions were taken by majority vote.

- There was no difference between Roman Catholics and Protestants in these results.

Ministry and Leadership Development

Following *Voice and Equality*, the 1995 study of community leadership by Verba and his colleagues, various studies of Latinos/as have tested his finding that Roman Catholicism impeded preparation for civic leadership and professing Catholicism lessened the likelihood of political participation for Latinos/as. Both Jones and Leal (2001) and Vargas-Ramos (2003) found Catholicism was not the negative force towards civic participation reported by Verba, and in fact often served as a positive factor. The NSLLPC makes a contribution to this literature because the survey of leaders active in the churches used the same categories suggested by Verba. The findings of the PARAL Study both corroborate the conclusions of the more recent studies and also contribution data on persons closely affiliated with church leadership. The levels of civic preparation for a largely Roman Catholic sample are so high as to suggest that Verba and his colleagues did not consider the differences in size of Catholic parishes and Protestant congregations in developing their instrument.

The PARAL Study has shown that nearly 40% of Roman Catholic parishes have a 1,000 or more members, while nearly half of congregation of all other denominations have 100 or less members. Despite the difference in size, there is no significant difference in the number of types of ministry in Latino faith communities. (See Part I, Sections 1 and 8; also; Finke, 1994). Hence, the leadership opportunities for the members of a congregation with only 100 members are ten times larger than in a parish with 1,000 members. When comparing Latino Roman Catholics with Latinos and Latinas in all other denominations, the opportunities for leadership must also consider the size of membership and recognize that persons already leaders in Roman Catholic parishes show no differences with leaders in all other denominations in terms of civic skills preparation.

We asked what the leaders would study if they had the opportunity for schooling in order to be a trainer or teacher in the faith community:

- The most popular fields of study were **Theology** (15%), **Scripture or Bible Study** (15%) and **Religious Education** (15%).
- The least popular category listed was study of **Latino Culture And History** (6%).
- The fields of **Counseling** and **Community Work** were both preferred by one out of eight leaders (12% each) and these include skills transferable to the civic sphere.

When examined by gender, the preferences varied only for **Theology**, which was favored by twice as many males and females and **Religious Education** with was favored by females at double the rate as among males.

Table III.9.4 What Leaders Would Study To Become Teachers: by Gender

	Female	Male
Counseling for Ministry	12%	12%
Scripture/Bible Study	16%	14%
Church Music & Worship	9%	12%
Theology	11%	22%
Latino Culture & History	5%	7%
Religious Education	20%	8%
Community Work	12%	12%
Other	3%	3%
No Answer	12%	11%

III.10 Religious and Cultural Transmission

A key issue for all ethnic groups within the United States is assimilation. The survey explored assimilation in its various forms in terms of religious practice. While many expressions of belief and traditions employed in commemorations such as Christmas and Good Friday are common in many Christian denominations, the religious traditions of Latin America provide some traits that distinguish Latinos/as from other believers in the United States. The NSLLPC explored various types of religious expression, seeking to measure if or how culture influenced custom. The transmission of these traditions through family observances was also included.

The survey asked the lay and volunteer leaders questions about customs that might indicate specificity in several key areas:

- ***Denominational differences*** (e.g. Roman Catholics compared to Methodists)
- ***Ethnic differences*** (e.g. Mexican heritage people compared to Puerto Ricans)
- ***Generational differences*** (e.g. Hispanics born in the US and those born in Latin America)

While all religion is related to official worship and doctrinal orthodoxy, there are some traditions related to practices at home or on special occasions such as funerals and weddings that allow for the inclusion of cultural idiosyncrasies that might be described as “the Latino difference.”

The Latino Difference

There are several quality studies of attitudes and opinions of members in the Christian Churches of the United States that include samples of Latinos and Latinas. One of the most recent focused on Catholics (American Catholics: Gender, Generation, and Commitment, William V. D’Antonio, James D. Davidson, Dean R. Hoge and Katherine Meyer. Altamira Press: 2001), and included a chapter devoted to discovering differences between the general population and ethnic groups, especially Hispanics.

The American Catholics’ study verified what had been suggested earlier by Díaz-Stevens and Stevens-Arroyo in Recognizing the Latino Resurgence in US Religion (Westview:1998). When asked questions about general issues such as church governance, political matters or doctrine, Latinos tend to answer the same as other groups probably because the sources of opinion formation on such general issues are the same for Hispanics as for all others. American Catholics reported that when asked about practices more closely linked to home and tradition, ethnic differences are more likely to appear. Devotion to Mary and the saints was considerably higher for Latinos (41%) than for Euro-Americans (27%). Latinos were also more likely to keep altars at home, to be constant in prayer and more often were found “wearing medals and scapulars, keeping images of saints in the home,...and carrying out *promesas* in return for divine favors” (American Catholics, page 154).

Among the practices that could be employed in the home and outside the church buildings are some which are common among all Christians, Latinos/as as well as non-Latinos/as. As might be expected, these practices were the most frequently followed by the Latino lay and volunteer leaders.

- ❖ Place a cross on the wall.
- ❖ Keep a bible in the home.
- ❖ Carry or wear religious objects
- ❖ Have representations of Jesus, Mary or saints in the home.

Catholic vs. Protestant Traditions?

→**The survey asked about a cross and not a crucifix.** The first is the general name for any representation of the instrument of Christ's redeeming death: the second includes a figure of Christ's body and was shunned by many leaders of the Reformation on the premise that the dead figure of Christ did not sufficiently emphasize his resurrection.

→**The bible is the Word of God.** The Protestant tradition emphasizes the individual's need for the bible and its verses as guides for behavior. In moments of crisis, Protestants may prayerfully consult the bible by allowing their finger to randomly select a page and a verse that is then read as God's special message of inspiration. In the reforms of the II Vatican Council, Roman Catholics have been encouraged to make greater use of scripture in their devotional life and to engage in bible study.

→**Wearing a cross or medal** is common to many Christians, although Roman Catholics may include images of the Blessed Mother and the saints, whereas Protestants would not.

→Likewise, **pictures of Christ** hung on house walls are common to both groups, but Protestants generally have a set of pictures common to their traditions that do not generally include Roman Catholic representations of Christ's Sacred Heart. Pictures of Our Lady of Guadalupe or of Mary's Immaculate Conception are more likely found among Roman Catholics.

The survey contented itself only asking if these were practiced and avoided adding the content or subject matter of the representations.

The survey inquired if the respondent followed this practice and if his or her parents did.

- **Placing a cross on the wall** was virtually the same for the lay leaders and their parents.
- Leaders were slightly less likely to have a **representation of Jesus, Mary or the saints** or to **carry/wear a religious object** than their parents.
- **Having a bible in the home** showed a significant increase for the lay and volunteer leaders (98%) over the practices of their parents (84%).

Respondents could choose among "Yes", "No", and "I do not know". This latter category allows us to measure those customs not recognized or understood as religious practices. Those surveyed could also register if their parents did not recognize a custom.

Table III.10.1 Common Christian Practices Among Latino/a Leaders Compared to their Parents

Practice	Leaders*			Parents*		
	Yes	No	Not Recognized	Yes	No	Not Recognized
Place Cross on the wall	69	27	2	72	22	2
Keep a Bible in the house	98	2	0.6	84	14	2
Carry or wear religious objects	58	37	3	63	37	3
Have representations of Jesus, Mary or saints	79	20	0.4	82	16	0.8

**Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding and omission of those who did not answer*

In addition to practices named above that are found among many Christians, the survey also explored some traditions that are more common among persons of Latin American heritage than the general population in the United States. **Culturally specific faith expressions develop when social and historical factors shape the Christian life for an ethnic or nationality group.** The five customs included in the survey are listed below with a brief explanation describing their linkages to Hispanic culture and religion.

❑ **Keep a home altar**

Religious articles such as candles, rosaries, statues and pictures of Jesus, Mary and the saints are placed on a table, ledge or mantelpiece. While not strictly speaking an “altar” where ritual sacrifice is performed, these become holy spaces within the household and are often chosen as a place to pray. Flowers and other adornments may be placed there and incense may be burned. Related to the medieval hermitage that provided a place for public prayer in regions far from churches, the “home altar” is a place for “sacramentals” such as holy water and blessed medals, candles and holy cards.

❑ **Make promises or *mandas***

*Related to the medieval custom of pilgrimages, this practice places spiritual value on a special action such as attending church services, pledging good works for the needy, fasting from food or deferring enjoyable activities. Often the practice is linked to a petition for a heavenly favor such as the safe return of a child from military duty. It may also be in thanksgiving for a favor received, such as a safe pregnancy and delivery. Although the promises (*promesas*) and *mandas* are completely orthodox within Roman Catholicism, the clergy tend to discourage these practices when they are not tightly supervised. Protestants also undertake similar pious obligations but would link their commitments only to Christ and not to Mary or the saints.*

❑ **Place an *azabache* or black hand on a child**

The use of black silex as a talisman can be found in the descriptions of Pliny, an ancient Roman writer, and similar amulets are common in much of Mediterranean Christianity. The name “azabache” is derived from Arabic and was brought by Spanish Catholic settlers to the Americas. Especially in the Caribbean today, the silex is generally fashioned in the form of a fist and forearm. A red dot or tiny red ribbon are affixed for spiritual protection against spells such as the evil eye. Use of the azabache or black hand is discouraged by official Catholic doctrine and strenuously avoided by most Protestants because it is viewed as connected to Satan-worship. Nonetheless, Christian theology teaches that during the period between birth and baptism a child is not yet infused with the power of the Holy Spirit. Hence, placing an azabache on an unbaptized child might be reconciled with orthodox beliefs about the effects of Original Sin. The practice appears more common among peoples of the Caribbean: Puerto Ricans, Cubans and Dominicans, than in Mexico, Central and South America.

□ **Place water next to the door or other places in the home**

Lustrations with water are common in many religions. As a Jew, Jesus Christ was expected to wash feet upon entering a home (Lk. 7:44) and hands before eating (Mt. 15:1-2; 19-20). Roman Catholicism places holy water at the entrance of the church in a practice that evokes the Jewish lustrations. A believer entering the church is supposed to recall baptism by dipping one’s fingers in the holy water and making the sign of the cross. Syncretism with African and indigenous religions has produced customs among Latinos/as such as that which takes holy water from a church, places it in a coconut shell, mixes it with herbs and other substances and expects that the preparation will protect the inhabitants of the house from evil spirits.

□ **Take a pregnant woman for consultation with a curandero/a**

In certain rural settings before the advent of easy transportation to hospitals, pregnancy was a life-threatening event. Practitioners of holistic medicine or curanderos (or curanderas, as often these were women) were visited during the pregnancy and asked to employ certain preventative measures to protect the health of the mother-to-be and the child. The curanderos/as frequently pray completely within Christian orthodoxy, but the art employed in administering the herbs often antedates the entry of Christianity into the Americas. Thus, the role of curandero/a generally preserves vestiges of the shaman in indigenous or African religions.

The graph below (III.10.2) reproduces the responses of the lay and volunteer leaders to questions about these culturally specific practices and provides comparison with the experiences of the parents, as reported by the leaders.

Table III.10.2 Culturally Specific Religious Practices Among Latino/a Leaders Compared to their Parents

Practice	Leaders*			Parents*		
	Yes	No	Not Recognized	Yes	No	Not Recognized
Keep a home altar	32	65	0.8	41	56	2
Make promises or <i>mandas</i>	32	59	6	52	39	8
Place an <i>azabache</i> or black hand on a child	2	60	35	7	61	30
Place water next to door or other places in the home	16	80	3	20	74	3
Take a pregnant woman for a <i>curandero/a</i> consultation	0.8	92	6	6	85	6

*Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding and omission of those who did not answer

- There has been a reduction in the number of present-day leaders who **keep home altars** (32%) when contrasted with their parents (41%).
- One in three of present-day leaders (32%) **make *promesas* or *mandas*** while half of their parents (52%) did so.
- Nearly one in three of respondents did not recognize the ***azabache* or *manita negra***, verifying that it is not as common among Mexican origin peoples as among persons with a Caribbean heritage.
- **Placing water near the door** had the most significant current practice among leaders (16%) and was virtually the same as for parents (20%). This is related to the Roman Catholic custom of having holy water in the house.
- More than nine out of ten respondents recognized the custom of **taking an expectant mother to a *curandero/a***.
- Parents (6%) had practiced the ***azabache*** custom considerably more than contemporary leaders (less than 1%).

The findings of the survey reflect the attitudes and practices of church leaders. The general population may follow some practices with greater frequency than reported here for the leaders alone.

In addition to culturally specific expressions of faith that are focused in the home or are practiced outside of the church, there are also customs that require linkage to the clergy and which take place inside the church building.

The survey selected two such church-related faith expressions, both related to key social events in one’s lifetime, called “rites of passage.”

→**mourning and funerals**

→**the *quinceañera***, a celebration when a young woman is 15 years old.

The survey chose four customs associated with Christian traditions of mourning and funerals.

□ **Wearing dark colors**

In Western Christianity, black is a color considered appropriate to those mourning the dead. In some societies, a widow wears black for the rest of her life. The survey asked if respondents considered it appropriate for a mourner to wear black for (at least) nine days after the death of a loved one. This clothing is referred to in Spanish as “luto”.

□ **Prayer with the grieving family for nine days**

Before the advent of modern embalming and the automobile, many family members and friends might not have been able to attend the wake of the deceased before the burial. Families often grieved for eight days after the funeral to enable others to join them in prayer and mourning. The eight day period is part of Christian history as the octave of commemoration.

□ **Pray every year for the deceased on the anniversary of death**

For Roman Catholics, prayer on the anniversary of death often included mass. Traditionally, prayer was linked to Catholic belief in Purgatory, a place where the dead must be purified from the effects of sin before entering haven. In the Protestant traditions, the anniversary does not occasion prayers for the dead person, who has already passed Divine Judgment, but unities loved ones in a common expression of faith.

□ **Keep a picture of the deceased near holy object in the house**

This custom is linked to the home altar described above.

Table III.10.3 Traditions of Mourning the Dead

	Yes	No	Do not recognize
Wear dark colors for nine days	27	62	6
Prayer with the family for nine days	61	30	6
Pray every year on the anniversary	74	19	4
Pictures of the deceased placed at home near holy objects	27	55	12

- Only one in four of the leaders believe it appropriate to wear dark clothing for an extended period of mourning or to place pictures of the deceased on a home altar.
- Three out of four say one should observe the anniversary of death with prayers.
- The octave of prayer for those mourning is supported by three out of five respondents.

The *Quinceañera*

In the *quinceañera*, a young woman at the age of 15 (in Spanish, *quince*, hence the name), promises before the faith community to remain chaste until her marriage. The ceremony usually takes on the trappings of a wedding ceremony with a formal white dress, and an accompanying “court” of young men and women who assume roles very much like those of ushers and bridesmaids. The formal service in the church for the *quinceañera* is followed by a reception that has much in common with the “Sweet Sixteen” of general US culture or with upper-class custom of the debutante ball. Although, the US Catholic Church has approved an official ritual in Spanish for the *quinceañera* that was designed by a Hispanic liturgical committee, some clergy have expressed concern that a costly extravagance in the festive celebration might eclipse the religious commitment to pre-nuptial chastity. At present, the *quinceañera* is celebrated principally by Roman Catholics Hispanics, but it has gained popularity among Latino members of other denominations.

Table III.10.4 Practice of the Quinceañera

Celebrated by me	34%
By parents	10%
Would/did teach children	11%
Not important in my family	42%
No Answer	4%

- The *quinceañera* tradition is three times as likely to be observed by leaders today (34%) as by their parents (10%).
- A majority of the respondents who personally celebrated the *quinceañera* would not or did not teach it to their children
- Two out of five respondents indicated that the *quinceañera* was not observed in their families, affirming that the custom is more popular among Mexican heritage peoples than all others.

The survey chose two Christian holy days for analysis:

→**Christmas**, a joyous feast commemorating the birth of Jesus Christ

→**Good Friday**, a solemn observance of the anniversary of Christ's death

Although these days are common to all Christians, both of these observances have acquired unique features appropriate to Hispanic traditions.

Christmas Without Snow

History and geography often create special practices within faith expressions that become part of culture. For instance, all Christians observe Christmas, but in northern climates winter cold and snow have shaped certain customs that celebrate the birth of the Christ child. The evergreen or Christmas tree is an established custom in many cultures from Northern Europe. In tropical regions, however, Christmas Eve invites different celebrations without fear of snow or cold. Similarly, the traditional foods of Christmas reflect preferences within a regional cuisine. While neither the Christmas tree or a traditional meal do not constitute faith, they frequently become cultural expressions associated with belief in the joyous event of the birth of the Savior.

Christmastime celebrations in Latin America are often shaped by the agricultural cycle that allows for the observance to extend for twelve nights, from December 25th to January 6th when tradition commemorates the visit to the new-born Child Jesus of the wise men or kings, bearing three gifts for the child.

Latinos/as in the United States are often confronted with two attractive ways of celebrating Christmastime: the Latin American way and the customs of the United States which mostly derive from faith expressions of Northern Europe.

The questionnaire asked about five observances linked to Christmas. In each, the leaders were asked how they celebrated such observances, if their parents did and either if they had or would teach such observances to their children.

Although the data include denominational affiliation, the sample was too small to permit here an estimate of denominational differences between Roman Catholics and members of all other denominations.

- The leaders are more likely than their parents to place a **Nativity scene, go to mass/ service** and put up a **Christmas Tree** and have or will teach their children at virtually the same rate.
- Nearly half the leaders (45%) want their children to **receive gifts on Three Kings' Day**, restoring the practice of the grandparents and at a slightly higher rate than with the leaders' themselves (40%).

- The highest rated Christmastime activities are **attending mass/service** and **eating traditional foods**.
- More than 4 out of 5 leaders have or will teach their children to eat **traditional foods** at Christmastime.

Table III.10.5 Traditions of Celebrating Christmastime: Transmission from Parents and to Children compared to Leaders' Practice

Have or place a Nativity Scene (A)– Statues representing the Child, his parents, shepherds, etc. are placed in a scene that recreates the stable in Bethlehem according to the details provided in the bible. The practice dates from medieval Christianity.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Leaders	86	14
Parents	77	21
Teach Children	87	9

Eat traditional foods (B) – The Christmastime foods of Latinos/as vary from *tamales* among Mexicans and Central Americans to *pasteles* in the Hispanic Caribbean.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Leaders	91	9
Parents	91	7
Teach Children	85	11

Go to service/mass (C) – The first service commemorating Christmas for Catholics is at midnight or at the hour of dawn (*misa de gallo*). The church service for all denominations provides the first official religious celebration of the joy of Christmas.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Leaders	98	2
Parents	87	12
Teach Children	94	2

Give gifts on Three Kings' Day (D) – In many countries, gift-giving is observed on January 6th in imitation of the biblical account of the visit of the Wise Men who brought gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. In Spanish, the wise men are often called “*Los Tres Reyes Magos*.” Unlike some saints’ days and observances of feast days of the

Blessed Virgin Mary, this event is described directly in the bible and is generally accepted by Protestants.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Leaders	40	60
Parents	45	53
Teach Children	45	51

Have a Christmas Tree (E) – The adornment of an evergreen with lights is a custom that derives from Germanic Christianity.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Leaders	90	9
Parents	78	21
Teach Children	89	8

The survey identified a series of five observances for Good Friday. As in the cases above, these observances are general throughout most of Christianity and can be found among other ethnic and racial groups.

Table III.10.6 Traditions of Celebrating Good Friday: Transmission from Parents and to Children compared to Leaders’ Practice

Remember Jesus’ death (A) – This is the basic observance for those who use a liturgical calendar. In some denominations, such as the Pentecostals, Good Friday is not observed.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Do Not Know</u>
Leaders	98	2	X
Parents	89	4	6
Teach Children	94	2	X

Eat meat (B) – Although the obligation to abstain from meat on most Fridays of the year no longer binds Roman Catholics as before the II Vatican Council, it is a tradition not to eat meat on Good Friday. (*Formulations of this questions such as “abstain from meat” proved confusing because of a double negative implied in the answer.*)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Do Not Know</u>
Leaders	11	88	X
Parents	7	87	5
Teach Children	12	81	3

Work less time (C) – In many workplaces, Good Friday is not an official vacation. However, some persons sacrifice a sick day or even a day’s pay for religious reasons.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Do Not Know</u>
Leaders	60	37	X
Parents	57	28	12
Teach Children	14	26	4

Go to service/mass (D) - This is the formal observance of the Good Friday’s religious meaning. (Technically, it should be noted that there is no “mass” on that day in the Roman Catholic church, since the hosts consecrated the previous day are used for communion.)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Do Not Know</u>
Leaders	95	4	X
Parents	82	12	6
Teach Children	93	3	0.4

Do nothing in particular (E) – This option was included for denominations that do not have a liturgical calendar.

<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Do Not Know</u>
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Leaders	2	97	X
Parents	3	93	3
Teach Children	2	91	1

- Good Friday is observed by virtually all respondents, who were mostly Roman Catholic and Protestants from the historically mainline denominations.
- The practice of avoiding meat on Good Friday shows a high amount of respect.
- A majority of respondents take time off on Good Friday for religious observances.

III.11 Language Preferences

The survey inquired about the language preferences and the daily frequency with which the lay and volunteer leaders of Latino faith communities utilized Spanish language media, such as the radio, television, and recordings.

- Half of the respondents felt themselves equally at home with both Spanish and English.
- About one in four (27%) said that they spoke “mostly Spanish”.
- Only 12% said they spoke “mostly English.”
- About the same percentage of leaders spoke only English (5%) as spoke only Spanish (4.4%).

The place of birth is a very important factor in determining language preferences. In the survey, those responding from the lay and volunteer leaders reported the following:

- A near majority were born outside the United States (48%).
- More than a third of lay and volunteer leaders (37%) were born in the United States.
- Of our respondents, 9% were born in Puerto Rico, where Spanish is the predominant language.

Table III.11.1 Language Preferences by Place of Birth

	USA	Puerto Rico	Other
Only English	13	0	4
Mostly English	26	4	1
English/Spanish Equally	56	64	47
Mostly Spanish	4	22	43
Only Spanish	0	10	6
Total In Sample	37%	9%	48%

- Persons born in Puerto Rico were more likely to be equally comfortable with English and Spanish than those born in the USA or in other countries
- Nine out of ten of those born outside the USA did not prefer the English language.
- Two out of five lay and volunteer leaders born in the USA preferred English or spoke only English.

A majority of lay and volunteer leaders in Latino faith communities have contact with the Spanish-language media on a daily basis.

- The daily contact with secular Spanish-language media was higher for radio (48%) than for television (13%) among the lay and volunteer leaders.
- Those born in the United States listened to Spanish language radio daily at a higher rate (54%) than the foreign-born (46%). *The foreign-born included those born in Europe, Africa and Asia.*
- More of those born in Puerto Rico listened to Spanish-language radio daily (61%) than the other groups.