

An Essay

DENSITY, DIASPORA and DIVERSITY:
Interpreting the 2000 US Census for Its Pastoral Implications

Although it is placed under constant scrutiny for its accuracy, especially regarding Hispanics, the US diennial census is an indispensable source for demographic and other important data on the national population. Unfortunately, the US Census does not include questions about religious affiliation or religious practice. Information on the role of religion in the United States, therefore, does not come from census data. However, there is much to be learned by examining various official government reports on the census results, especially those that are focused on Latinos/Hispanics, and comparing that information with the findings of research that analyzes religious people and their institutions.

Like others of its type, the PARAL Study was timed to gather data on leadership in Latino parishes and congregations so that findings about religion among Latinos and Latinas could be placed in the context of available data from the US 2000 Census about the entire Hispanic population in the United States. This essay explores census data and explains some of the pastoral questions that are posed by examining this information in light of the findings of the PARAL Study reported in the first two parts of this summary report.

What does the 2000 Census* say about the increase in the numbers of Latinos and Latinas nationwide?

**The data cited here comes from "The Hispanic Population: Census 2000 Brief" issues in May 2001 by the Bureau of the Census and available on-line.*

- ❑ There were 35.3 million Hispanics counted in the 2000 Census, constituting 12.5% of the total population of the United States.
- ❑ There were an additional 3.8 million Latinos in Puerto Rico, for a total of 39.1 million Hispanics living under the US flag.
- ❑ The Hispanic population – not counting Puerto Rico -- grew by 57.9% since 1990, and more than doubled since 1980 when there were 14.6 million Latinos.
- ❑ Latinos are 12.5% of the US population, now more numerous than African Americans (12.3%).
- ❑ The population of Latino children under the age of 14 **grew** 62%, while the Euro-American child population **decreased** by 9.5%.

Based on extrapolations of these and other demographic patterns reported in 1996 by the Bureau of the Census (Baugher and Lamison-White) it can be said:

- ❑ By 2020, there are expected to be 47 million Latinos, or nearly 15% of the total US population.
- ❑ By 2020, more Latinos will be added to the US population by immigration and birth than African Americans, Asian Americans, or Native Americans -- or all of them combined.
- ❑ By 2050, 95 million Latinos will constitute 25% or one out of every four persons in the country.
- ❑ The most rapidly growing segment of the Euro-American population is of persons *over the age of 85*.
- ❑ By the year 2034, it is estimated that more Euro-Americans will die each year than will be born in or enter the United States as immigrants.
- ❑ By 2050 in the US, there will be virtually as many “people of color” (Latinos, African Americans, Native Americans and Asian Americans) as non-Hispanic white Euro-Americans.

The rapid growth in the number and the percentages of Hispanics in the US is simultaneous with the reduction of a Euro-American population no longer reproducing itself. The conjunction of these trends represents a historical demographic shift for the country. No one can be sure what it will mean in economic, cultural or political terms when the United States becomes a country whose majority population is not white or European in ethnic heritage.

In pastoral terms:

Churches that increase their Latino membership are more likely to grow in size than those which do not have Latinos in the pews.

Latinos are likely to represent larger percentages of church members within active, growing denominations.

There will be an increasing need for the development of native Latino leaders through ministry, pastoral training and theological education.

What parts of the United States have experienced the most significant increases of Latinos and Latinas?

Although the growth of the Latino population has increased by 57% **nationally**, the increase is not that high in all areas. Social and demographic variations among Hispanics require adaptations in the ministry to aptly fit circumstances of each particular

community of Latino faithful. The census supplies additional information on these variations.

- ❑ Hispanics were the majority of the population in 50 counties of the United States, and these Latinos were 13.5% of the total number of Latinos/as in the country. That means that about one-seventh of all Hispanics nationwide are concentrated in only 50 counties of the United States.
- ❑ However, there were 2,447 counties of the 4,050 in the United States where in 2000 Hispanics were less than 6% of the total population and another 899 counties where Latinos were less than 1%.

Because the growth in the number of Latinos/as is not found in most counties of the US, it is important to determine the areas of the country where the Hispanic population has grown significantly.

Page 4 reproduces a map of the United States from the U.S. Census Bureau that shows by county, the Hispanic population as a percent of total population.

- ❑ The darkest blue shows 50% or more of the county population is Hispanic: these areas are limited to the states of California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Colorado, Florida and New York.
- ❑ The small inserted map on the same page offers the same information by state: there are four states where the Hispanic population is 25% of the total number of residents: California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas. **Each of these states were parts of Mexico that were annexed by the United States in the 19th Century.**
- ❑ The island of Puerto Rico has a population of 3.8 million persons, of which 98.8% were Latino, the most dominantly Latino area under the United States' flag. **Puerto Rico was annexed in 1898.** Dominicans accounted for 1.5% of Latinos in Puerto Rico.

How do we interpret such information to best shape ministry?

While the census data give us statistics, other questions need to be posed about that information before it can become a guide to ministry.

For example:

The Census reports that in 2000 African Americans had a median household income of \$30,439 while Hispanics had a median income of \$33,447. On this report, we might conclude that poverty is not as great a problem for Hispanics as for African Americans.

- ❑ But the single most salient reason for low income is a single-parent family.
- ❑ More than 60% of Hispanic households have two parents, while for African American households, there are about only half that percentage (32%) of two-parent families.

- ❑ When we compare the 1995 data for two-parent African American families with two-parent Hispanic families, the poverty rate for Latinos between 1974 and 1995 **rose** by 189%, while for two-parent African American households the poverty rate **decreased** (–28%).
- ❑ Moreover, Hispanic households generally have more children than either Euro or African Americans, meaning that Latino household income must feed, clothe and house more persons.
- ❑ The per capita income for Hispanics in 2000 was \$12,011; less than that of Blacks-African Americans (\$14,881), Asian Americans-Pacific Islanders (\$21,844) and non-Hispanic whites (\$24,919).
- ❑ Hispanic **household income** is 72.9% of the median income for Euro-American households, but when we divide that income by the number of people in the family to derive the **per capita income** for Hispanics, we find that they slip to less than half (49.9%) of what each Euro-American has for income.
- ❑ Latino children (31.6%) are nearly twice as likely as African American children (17.3%) and three times more likely than Euro-American children (10.3%) to have no health insurance. (*National Health Interview Survey by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, July 2002*).

Hence, the amount of household income alone does not describe life in poverty.

Pastoral common-sense derived from experience in the ministry is very useful for interpreting census data.

For example:

The census data shows that Latinos, especially Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans, often share neighborhoods, public housing and schools with African Americans. Yet the same is not true of the churches.

- Surveys (e.g. ARIS, González and Lavelle) consistently show that most Latinos and Latinas consider themselves Roman Catholic.
- Most African Americans are Protestant: many belong to churches that traditionally serve **only** African Americans.
- As shown in the PARAL Study, most Latino and Latina congregations and parishes offer services in the Spanish language and in English from time to time.
- Most Latino and Latina congregations and parishes share space with other language groups of the faith community, usually English-speaking Euro-Americans.

Pastoral common sense understands that segregation in worship communities of Latinos and Latinas from African Americans is the result of patterns of denominational organization and not the result of the exclusion of African Americans from Latino faith communities.

- Interethnic relations between Latinos and African Americans are addressed by the PARAL Study in the community study of the Roxbury-Jamaica Plain neighborhoods of Boston, Massachusetts.

The census can report mistaken statistics.

For example:

- ❑ In the 2000 Census, 15.1% of Latino respondents did not indicate a specific national origin, but just listed themselves as either “Hispanic” or “Latino”.
- ❑ The census allocated these respondents to specific national groups, based on formulae derived from national trends.
- ❑ Since most Latinos are of Mexican heritage, this process called “imputation” increased the number of Mexican heritage people counted in the census.
- ❑ But the choices presented in the identity question on the census do not list all national groups: for instance, Dominicans and Salvadorans are omitted.
- ❑ The Bureau of the Census now admits it made a mistake in listing many Dominicans in New York and Salvadorans in California as “Mexican”.
- ❑ The first release of the census which showed a decrease in Salvadorans and a stagnation in the number of Dominicans is wrong, as is the report of a huge increase of Mexicans in New York City.
- ❑ Using adjusted numbers (Logan et al.), there are nearly as many Dominicans (1.1 million) and Salvadorans (1.1 million) in the United States as Cubans (1.3 million).

The census needs to be scrutinized so that its errors can be corrected by careful analysis.

History can also explain census data.

For example:

The concentration of Latinos in Texas, California and Puerto Rico is not a recent phenomenon.

- ❑ With the exception of the counties in New York City, the high concentrations of Latinos reported by the census occur in regions colonized by Spain that were annexed to the United States after 19th century wars.
- ❑ The PARAL Study used the concept of “**colonial settlement**”, meaning that the cultural identity of Latinos living in those places was shaped by the historical reality that Christianity was established in each area before annexation by the United States.
- ❑ Stated in another way, in colonial sites Latinos were the first Christians and were the founders of many churches serving them.
- ❑ A Mexican American in San Antonio is more like an Irish Catholic in Belfast than like an Irish American Catholic in Boston.

The distinction between “colonial” and “non-colonial” reflects the relevance of history to the formation of a cultural and religious identity.

As a multi-disciplinary effort, the PARAL Study utilizes these definitions that come from history along with data from the census.

- The colonial sites included in the community study phase of the PARAL Study were: San Antonio, Texas and Santa Fe, New Mexico.
- Fresno, California is similar to a colonial site since Mexican heritage people had first farmed the San Joaquín Valley in Spanish times, but the city itself was founded with the arrival of the US and the railroad, so that it has some aspects of a non-colonial site.
- In **non-colonial** places, Latinos have entered the region and joined the churches first established for others.

Density, Diaspora and Diversity

The census provides current demographic data to make other distinctions. The pattern of Latino growth was not the same throughout the US. The two types of communities experiencing the most dramatic growth of the Latino population were:

- 1) **areas where Latinos had long lived and were already present in significant numbers; and**
- 2) **places where Latinos had been less than 10% of the total state population in 1990.**
Additionally, the census reported:
- 3) **greater diversity in the countries of origin for foreign-born Latinos and a growth in the number of Latinos born in the United States.**

To understand better the pastoral implications of these three trends reported by the 2000 Census, this essay will analyze each of these ideas separately.

In the first case -- where Latino areas became more “Latino” since 1990 -- we examine the census data with the concept, “**Density**.”

In the second, where Latinos enter new areas in significant numbers in a short time, we use the notion of “**Diaspora**” for the explanation.

In the third, the ethnic and generational differences among Latinos will be described under the heading of “**Diversity**.”

- The sites of Latino density studied in the community studies of the PARAL Study were: Sunset Park, Brooklyn in New York City; Roxbury-Jamaica Plain in Boston; Fresno, California; Union City, New Jersey and Orlando, Florida.
- The site of Latino Diaspora studied was in Southeastern Indiana.
- All the sites studied the effect of diversity in Latino ethnicity and generational differences.

Density

The following information taken from the census helps explain the concept of density.

- ❑ 50% of all Latinos nationwide live in two states – California and Texas.
- ❑ 77% of all Latinos nationwide live in seven states – California, Texas, New York, Florida, Illinois, Arizona and New Jersey.
- ❑ Latinos are 42% of the population of New Mexico, the highest ratio for any state.
- ❑ Latinos are 31% of the population of California, the most populous state in the union.
- ❑ Latinos are 98.8% of the population of Puerto Rico, the US colony.
- ❑ There were 120,000 Hispanics in East Los Angeles (incorporated into the city of Los Angeles), constituting 96.8% of the total population.
- ❑ El Paso, TX (76.6%) and San Antonio, TX (58.7%) were among the ten numerically largest populations of Hispanics where Latinos were also the majority of the total population.
- ❑ Hialeah, FL (91.3%) and Miami, FL (65.8%) were among the cities of a quarter million or more residents where more than half of the total population was Latino. *(See Table below for other areas with large percentages of Hispanics in the total population).*

Census Table 4

Place and State	Total Population	Hispanic Population	Percent Hispanic of total Population
East Los Angeles, CA*.	124,283	120,307	96.8
Laredo, TX.....	176,576	166,216	94.1
Brownsville, TX.....	139,722	127,535	91.3
Hialeah, FL.....	226,419	204,543	90.3
McAllen, TX.....	106,414	85,427	80.3
El Paso, TX.....	563,662	431,875	76.6
Santa Ana, CA.....	337,977	257,097	76.1
El Monte, CA.....	115,965	83,945	72.4
Oxnard, CA.....	170,358	112,807	66.2
Miami, FL.....	362,470	238,351	65.8

*East Los Angeles, California is a census designated place is not legally incorporated.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1.

Density in the Latino population relates to ministry in the following ways:

In pastoral terms:

Faith communities located in places where there is a density of Latinos in the population have growing numbers of Latinos to serve.

Denominations that are highly urbanized have a higher potential for Latino membership growth than those which have many faith communities located in new suburbs and rural areas.

Pastors and leaders in the areas of Latino density are likely to have already conceived of their ministry in terms of Latino needs and to have developed the linguistic skills and outreach strategies for serving Latinos.

Faith communities in places where the Latino presence has been established compete for civic space with governmental, educational, political and cultural agencies established to serve Hispanics.

Density and Urban Ministry

There is a decidedly urban character to the Latino population in the United States, particularly for the areas of density in Latino presence.

- ❑ Half of all Latinos in the US live in 5 large metropolitan areas.
- ❑ Most of the nation's largest cities have significant Latino populations.
- ❑ Of the nation's ten largest cities, only Philadelphia (5th) and Detroit (10th) have less than 25% Hispanic population.
- ❑ Los Angeles, CA (46.5%), Houston, TX (37.4%), Dallas, TX (35.6%) and Phoenix, AZ (34.1%) were cities where more than a third, but less than a half of the total population was Latino.
- ❑ San José, CA (30.2%), New York, NY (27%) and Chicago, IL (26%) were cities where Hispanics comprised more than a quarter but less than a third of the total population.
- ❑ The population of one-fifth of US cities would have declined **except for Latino population increase**. (Pew Hispanic Center/PHC-Brookings Report).

Census Table 3

Place and State	Total Population		Hispanic Population		Percent Hispanic
	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	of total Population
New York, NY.....	8,008,278	1	2,160,554	1	27.0
Los Angeles, CA...	3,694,820	2	1,719,073	2	46.5
Chicago, IL.....	2,896,016	3	753,644	3	26.0
Houston, TX.....	1,953,631	4	730,865	4	37.4
Philadelphia, PA...	1,517,550	5	128,928	24	8.5
Phoenix, AZ.....	1,321,045	6	449,972	6	34.1
San Diego, CA.....	1,223,400	7	310,752	9	25.4
Dallas, TX.....	1,188,580	8	422,587	8	35.6
San Antonio, TX....	1,144,646	9	671,394	5	58.7
Detroit, MI.....	951,270	10	47,167	72	5.0
El Paso, TX.....	563,662	23	431,875	7	76.6
San Jose, CA.....	894,943	11	269,989	10	30.2

Source U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1.

It is important to note that a concentration of Latinos does not always translate into the dominance of Latinos in the total population. The urban character of the Latino presence means that they live in cities where there are often several significant racial and ethnic groups in addition to the Euro-American population.

The report described above from the Lewis Mumford Center at the University of Albany-SUNY devised a measure to analyze the ratio of Latinos to the other groups residing with them in census tracts. Cf. <http://mumford1.dyndns.org/cen2000/report.html>

The typical Euro-American resides in a census tract area that is:

80.2% White
7.9% Hispanic
6.7% Black
3.9% Asian

For the typical Latino/a, the percentages are different:

45.5% Hispanic
36.5% White
10.8% Black
5.9% Asian

Although there are variations from this average for each of the Hispanic groups and for the different regions of the United States, the pattern of Hispanics living with each other, relatively segregated from white Euro-Americans, is consistent throughout the country. The Mumford Center report states:

“Mexicans, who are less than 10% of the nation’s population, live on average in neighborhoods that are almost 40% Mexican, and nearly 50% Hispanic. Cubans, not even 1% of the nation’s population, live in neighborhoods where more than a quarter of residents are Cuban and more than half are Hispanic. Every group has a similar experience. Of course, the smaller the group, the lower is its isolation. But even the smaller groups, like Central and South Americans, whose neighborhoods are only 7-8% Central or South American, live in neighborhoods that are half, or nearly half, Hispanic. There is a high residential degree of mixing among these [Latino] groups: each tends to concentrate in its own specific neighborhoods, but the presence of people from other Hispanic national origins reinforces the Hispanic character of those neighborhoods.”

*These issues are discussed again in this essay as examples of **Diversity**.*

Among the Hispanic groups, the segregation patterns reported by the Mumford Center should be interpreted along with economic and social circumstances.

- Of Latino groups, Dominicans (80.8%) and Central Americans (64.1%) are the most segregated from Euro-Americans.

Dominicans and Central Americans are also the two poorest of Hispanic groups according to the 2000 Census.

In pastoral terms :

Poverty hinders integration in secular terms, but does this carry over into faith communities?

- Cubans (49.5%) and South Americans (47.8%) are the least segregated from Euro-Americans

Cubans and South Americans have the highest income among Hispanic groups and are the best educated according to the 2000 Census.

In pastoral terms:

Do churches with mostly Euro-American membership extend a welcome to Latinos who are economically well-off more easily than to those who are poorer and less educated?

Density explains how Latinos who are 12.5% of the total US population nationwide can be the majority group in some areas.

- ❑ Density for Latinos is best understood in terms of smaller units such as neighborhoods in large cities.
- ❑ Density does not guarantee Latino numerical dominance over the entire city population because the Hispanic population is concentrated in sectors of the city or country.
- ❑ Density for Latinos living with other people of color in certain neighborhoods acquires a class and economic character.
- ❑ In 1990, 46% of all Latinos below the poverty line lived in a census tract with 50% or more Hispanic residents.
- ❑ Commercial and public use of the Spanish language, Latino cultural symbols and civic expressions are more likely to reinforce Latino identity in areas with a dense Latino population than in other areas.

Percentages (not numbers alone!) Give Clout

Migration and immigration have not only increased the number of Hispanics in locations with an already high proportion of Latinos, but have also created new communities in areas of the Southeast and Midwest where previously there was very little Latino presence. Although the **number** of Hispanics in some of these small towns is minuscule in comparison with far larger numbers in metropolitan centers like New York, Los Angeles, Miami or Chicago, the **percentages** are very high.

Thus, in an Indiana town with about 4,000 total population, the presence of 2,000 Mexican and Mexican Americans represents 50% of the town -- affording Latinos a larger share of the population than they enjoy in Chicago where the number of Latinos is closer to a half-million.

Gentrification and Suburbanization

There is now a trend for affluent Euro-Americans to move into formerly poor city neighborhoods. Proximity to business and office districts attract this class of resident, who buy housing from Latinos/as and other groups at a low price and then repair and remodel the dwellings. The process is called "gentrification."

The impact of gentrification is felt on faith communities, which most often experience

- ❑ a decrease in Latino congregational members,
- ❑ a reduction in the number of children baptized or brought into the church
- ❑ a shift of political and governmental attentions to a wealthier constituency.

The results often lead to a "better neighborhood" but one with:

- ❑ higher tax assessments and property taxes

- ❑ an acceleration of the pace of Latinos selling and moving away from the neighborhood.

In pastoral terms:

Gentrification can shrink the size of the Latino faith community in a Roman Catholic territorial parish.

Gentrification can incline a Latino Protestant congregation to move to a new location.

Gentrification can mobilize a faith community into political and civic action to preserve the Latino identity of the neighborhood.

- The PARAL Study addresses the gentrification of Latino neighborhoods in the community study of Santa Fe, New Mexico.

The suburbs of the United States have increasingly become the major resident area for the Euro-American population.

- ❑ Minority (Latino, African, Native and Asian American) population in the suburbs grew from 18% in 1990 to 25% in 2000.
- ❑ Over the past ten years, Hispanics (72%) and Asians (84%) had higher percentages of increase of those residing in suburbs than African Americans (38%).
- ❑ The majority of Latinos/as (54%) now live in suburbs.
- ❑ Latinos/as are more than 25% of the suburban population of Miami, Florida; Los Angeles, Riverside and San Diego, California.

However, it appears that the level of segregation from the Euro-American white population is relatively high in Latino suburbs.

- ❑ The Lewis Mumford Center found that Latinos in Los Angeles suburbs had a high segregation ratio from whites (62%), which was more than in 1990 (59.7%).
- ❑ In the San Diego suburbs the segregation index **increased** from 38.6% in 1990, to 44.7% in 2000.
- ❑ Latinos and other minorities appear to be concentrated in what can be called “older” suburbs, which receive people of color as the Euro-American community moves to “newer” suburbs that preserve higher concentrations of whites.

In pastoral terms:

The difference in Roman Catholic ministry between the typical faith community where *Euro-Americans* are the majority and one where *Latinos* predominate is often the difference between *suburban parish* and *city parish*.

Suburban Latino congregations are likely to increase for Protestant and Evangelical Latinos, but they may be segregated from the Euro-American Protestants and Evangelicals.

- The PARAL Study addressed the suburbanization of Latinos in the community study of Orlando, Florida.

Diaspora

“Diaspora” is a Greek word found in the scriptures that is used to explain the “scattering” of early Christian communities throughout the Roman Empire. It is used in the PARAL Study to describe the increased range of Latino communities throughout the United States. The following table offers the census data that explain the Latino Diaspora.

Table 1 Latino Diaspora States, 1990-2000

New State	% of State Population 1990	#	% of State Population 2000	#
Alabama	0.6	24,629	1.7	75,830
Arkansas	0.8	19,876	3.2	86,866
Delaware	2.4	15,828	4.8	37,277
Georgia	1.7	108,922	5.3	435,227
Indiana	1.8	98,788	3.5	214,536
Iowa	1.2	32,647	2.8	82,473
Kentucky	0.6	21,984	1.5	59,939
Minnesota	1.2	53,884	2.9	143,382
Mississippi	0.6	15,931	1.4	39,569
Nebraska	2.3	36,969	5.5	94,425
North Carolina	1.2	76,726	4.7	378,963
Oregon	4	112,707	8	275,314
South Carolina	0.9	30,551	2.4	95,076
Tennessee	0.7	32,741	2.2	123,838

- ❑ In 1990, only one of these states (Oregon = 4%) had a Latino population as high as 2.4%.

- ❑ Each of these 14 states have seen their Hispanic population double, that is, rise by 100% or more since 1990.
- ❑ Of the states where Latino population is now 4% or more, Georgia, Nebraska, North Carolina and Oregon have Mexican heritage people as the majority group: Delaware has a majority of Puerto Ricans among the Latinos in that state.

These fourteen states can be considered “Diaspora” states because the Latino population is outside the colonial regions or large cities that had significant Latino populations in 1990.

The PARAL Study considers any growth rate in excess of the national average of 58% since 1990 to constitute **rapid growth**.

- The Indiana site of the PARAL community studies constituted rapid growth. It is also a Diaspora site.
- The Latino population of Orlando, Florida doubled from 8% in 1990 to 17% in 2000, at the same times that Orlando as a city also grew in total population.
- The Latino population in Orlando grew 1980-2000 at a rate of 859%; it is a site in the PARAL community studies of rapid growth.

Places where the pattern of growth was equal or less than the national average for 1990-2000 are considered **incremental growth**.

- The Latino population of the Fresno, California community site grew at 55%, 1990-2000, roughly equal to the national average of Latino growth.
- The remaining five community studies were in sites with incremental growth in the Latino population.

Diaspora sites generally repeat the density and segregational patterns found in other sites because although there is a low percentage of Latinos in the state, they tend to be concentrated in a few areas.

- ❑ There are counties in states such as Washington and Oregon where more than 50% of the total population is Hispanic, even though Latinos are less than 10% of the overall state population.
- ❑ Similar patterns of a large concentration of Latinos in certain counties of states with less than 10% of Hispanic population are: Nebraska, North Carolina, Georgia, Iowa, Arkansas and Minnesota.

Often the Latino population has come to the new region as workers in key industries such as food processing or meat packing. Without the Latino influx, some of these towns might not be able to survive economically. In the style of other migrations, there is a higher proportion of young males in the incoming population.

- ❑ The Pew Hispanic Center-Brookings Report recorded that Hispanic men outnumber Hispanic women by 17% or more in new Latino destinations where the population grew faster than the national average.

A key characteristic of a Diaspora site is the lack of experience in state, society and church in accommodating a significant influx of Latinos.

For example:

- ❑ Due to the larger number of children in Latino households, one in six school children in the US today is a Latino.
- ❑ A US Senate Committee reports that in the public schools have seen a 250% increase in the enrollment of Latino children in Arkansas, Georgia, North Carolina and Tennessee.
- ❑ Despite this need in areas of the country with little experience in the education of Latino children, federal funds for bilingual education were frozen by the White House in 2002 as well as the shrinkage of several programs designed to serve Latino needs in social services.
- ❑ Without outside funds, local communities with a rapid influx of Latinos are still obliged to offer basic services to the new residents.
- ❑ The rapid influx of Latinos presents new challenges for the social inclusion of a significant cultural and linguistic group.

Faith communities of Diaspora population are less likely than those in densely populated Latino sites to compete with governmental, educational, political and cultural agencies in serving Latinos and Latinas.

In pastoral terms:

Faith communities have an enlarged role in such locales where the growth of the Latino population is both rapid and significant, because the secular and public agencies generally have few programs in place to accommodate Latinos needs.

Governmental officials may be more inclined to work through the faith communities in taking the initial steps for organizing services or in recruiting community leaders for a rapidly growing Latino community in a state or jurisdiction where overall there less than 10% Latino population.

Denominations should examine general programs of Latino ministry for their effectiveness to communities in the Latino Diaspora.

Virtually every locality must now devise policies about language use, bilingual education, and the other matters that directly affect Latinos.

Diversity

The census showed that along with the increase in the number of Latinos since 1990, there is a greater variety of the ethnic groups from Latin America.

- ❑ Mexican heritage persons are the majority of all Hispanics in the US.
- ❑ Puerto Ricans are the second largest Latino group and Cubans the third largest.
- ❑ The absolute numbers of each of these groups increased, but the numbers of other groups increased more, thus reducing the dominance of these three groups among all Latinos.
- ❑ The percentage of each of these groups among all Latinos dropped from 1990:
 - Mexicans from 64% to 58.5%
 - Puerto Ricans from 11% to 9.6%
 - Cubans from 5% to 3.5%
- ❑ According to adjusted numbers, Dominicans (1.1 million) and Salvadoreans (1.1 million) have nearly overtaken Cubans (1.3 million) in size.
- ❑ Central Americans are an increasing presence in regions of the United States where either Mexican or Caribbean peoples have resided.
- ❑ The category of “Other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino” in the US Census combines Central Americans, Dominicans, Spaniards and South Americans. It is larger (28.4%) than the Puerto Rican (9.6%) or Cuban (3.5%) or both Puerto Rican and Cuban combined.

Why is diversity important?

Group behavior inclines people to react differently. Diversity among Latinos/as means that the same policy may have different effects.

Diversity is explained by different sociological terms:

Segmentation, when groups within the larger society are distinguishable by different modes of behavior.

Stratification, when the social positioning of the groups in the society affords some greater power (political, economic, etc.) than the others.

This report has already reported on the differences of Mono-Multi Hispanic parishes and congregations. But another expression of diversity derives from the generational differences between foreign born Latin Americans and their Latino children born in the United States.

It has always been recognized that Latinos born in the United States have cultural and social characteristics that differentiate them from Latin Americans who migrate to this country.

- Faith communities serve both populations, often simultaneously and within the same structures.

Children born to Latin American immigrants share traits with Latinos born in the US in terms of:

- language use
- education
- cultural expression, and
- social behavior.

Diversity and Language

Language is very important to Latinos/as everywhere. According to the Market Segment Group (2002):

- ❑ 28% of Latinos speak Spanish exclusively at Home
- ❑ 26% speak primarily Spanish with some English
- ❑ 22% speak both Spanish and English equally
- ❑ 14% speak primarily English with some Spanish
- ❑ 8% speak English exclusively.

Spanish predominates (54%) as the language of choice of the majority of Latinos. This is a larger percentage than those who are foreign born (39%).

The preference for English is higher with US-born Latinos although:

- ❑ 33% of third generation Hispanics speak Spanish at home.
- ❑ 75% of the third generation continue to utilize Spanish at some level.

Diversity and Citizenship

- ❑ There is an increasing number of Latin Americans who have become U.S. citizens, but retain a dual citizenship with the country of their birth.
- ❑ In 2002, the US Census estimated 5.65 million Latin Americans were undocumented persons living in the United States.
- ❑ Latinos/as constitute 64.9% of the total of such illegal residents.
- ❑ Mexicans are 44.5% of those without legal documentation.
- ❑ Of 2.1 million Mexicans who have resided in the US for 20 years or more, less than half (47%) have become naturalized citizens. The percentage for persons from other countries that have become citizens after 20 years residence is 78%.
- ❑ Of all foreign born residents, 50% of persons from Europe or Asia have become citizens: only 28% of Latin Americans have become citizens.

Legal and Illegal Immigration

Most Latin American immigrants have entered the United States legally, although it is possible for a person to become an illegal immigrant because of changing circumstances: for instance, one might overstay the original authorization for residence or enter on a student visa and begin to work for salary. Many cases of illegal residence are linked to the desire of people to keep their families together in one place. At present, U.S. immigration law allows the government to deport parents, separating them from infant children born in this country as U.S. citizens.

Legal appeal is permitted, although the disposition of the cases and the ability of the plaintiff to remain in the United States during the appeal process are subject to various statutes. The competence of the immigration lawyer may affect the case, and there are instances when lawyers prey upon a Latino immigrant's unfamiliarity with the U.S. legal system.

Given the complicated system, Latino immigrants, both legal and illegal, are often wary of governmental agencies and prefer to trust agencies related to the churches.

The persistence of the Spanish language and the relatively low numbers of Latinos/as seeking US citizenship may be considered as evidence of an attachment to Latin American homelands.

The increasing use of the Spanish language in public and commercial context, in education and social service delivery, the ease of travel and communication between the United States and Latin America and the role of remittances of money sent "back home" constitute historically new levels of immigrant attachment to the homeland.

This trend has been named "transnationalism."

Transnationalism

Transnationalism" in some form has been present for virtually all immigrant groups throughout history. However, modern communications and an increasing number of countries that grant dual citizenship have given a newly sharpened edge to this phenomenon today. Moreover, a good number of Latin American immigrants pursue a career that allows them to accumulate a retirement fund that allows them to live comfortably in the country of origin. The desire to eventually return home after working in the US makes involvement in US politics and society less likely for most such persons.

Transnationalism does not just affect individuals.

- ❑ A town or city neighborhood in the Latin American homeland might send a considerable percentage of its population to a single US destination.
- ❑ Indigenous groups, which are identified as “Indians” in their Latin American country, may form a part of the Latino faith community: however, their culture is different from the that of the majority: they may not speak Spanish as their primary tongue.
- ❑ Many Latin Americans maintain status in ministry and enjoy a high level of pastoral education in im/migration. It cannot be presumed that Latin Americans are less prepared for ministry than resident US Latinos: in fact, the opposite may be true.

In pastoral terms:

The segmentation of nationality and generational groups is probably inevitable within a faith community: stratification, that is, when one group has more power and influence and others, can be avoided.

Use of the Spanish language is a characteristic of Latino/a identity. The preference for English is often an expression of bilingualism rather than of assimilation. Faith communities need to utilize the Spanish language in various ways in order to sustain ministry among all segments of the Hispanic membership.

Generational differences among Latino groups are often ethnic ones as well. Ministry to Latinos/as must take into account the different social and cultural patterns that affect the youth, adults and senior citizens among the Hispanic membership.

Citizenship and immigration rights are legal issues that affect virtually all Latino faith communities. Church leadership needs to assess its role in the implementation of immigration laws in light of Gospel values.

Transnationalism provides an opportunity for ministry to reach not only individuals as they come to reside in one or another jurisdiction, but also to shape the complex process of im/migration, legal status, family relocation, cultural and linguistic accommodation. Faith communities should explore pastoral partnerships with sister churches in other countries.

Conclusion

This essay has added information from the 2000 US Census and commentaries from related studies in order to supplement the information obtained by the PARAL Study. The demographic growth of Latinos/as in the United States is a fact of

extraordinary importance and the essay has cited statistics to chart that growth and interpreted the patterns by three defining characteristics: density, diaspora and diversity.

In this essay, a user-friendly format has been used to highlight where the demographic facts affect pastoral care. It is to be hoped that this essay will encourage leaders in the Latino communities and in the various churches to include reliable social science data in devising future policies that affect the cultural expression and social service delivery through faith and faith-based institutions.

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