

The “*Latino Gospel*” in THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

A special presentation for the members of
C.E.L.
COALICION DE EPISCOPALES LATINOS

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WHAT IS THE “LATINO GOSPEL”?

Don't let the term distract you. In this presentation “Latino Gospel” refers to what is culturally very important or most essential to Latinos.

We are accustomed to use the word “Gospel” when we refer to the Good News of Jesus Christ. We acknowledge that it is in fact the transforming message of the Lord found in the New Testament, but we also know the term “Gospel” to mean a transformational way of understanding our lives as individuals and in the community of faith.

To truly understand our Latino population in the United States (and beyond), I believe we have to know what the “Latino Gospel” is: What do Latinos value most? What rules and social norms do they live by? What are needs and deepest desires of Latinos - as a group? What are the things that may attract them to a church or deter them from even coming in the door? Ultimately, what can The Episcopal Church offer Latinos?

VERY TELLING SURVEY

NCLR Poll: Immigration Tops Jobs & Economy as Most Important Issue for Latinos Published Thursday, July 28, 2011

A poll conducted at the National Council of La Raza's (NCLR) Annual Conference held in Washington, D.C. showed that immigration overwhelmingly trumps both the economy and education as the most important issue for Latinos.

This is according to the recent poll of 547 supporters and attendees at the 2011 NCLR Annual Conference. Almost half (45 percent) of all respondents chose immigration as the top issue, as opposed to jobs and the economy (25 percent), education (21 percent), and health care (6 percent).

*National Council La Raza, 2011

While people in the MAINSTREAM are mostly concerned about the economy, LATINOS see immigration, deportation and family separation as their top issue.

HOW DO WE PREACH AND TEACH THE LATINO GOSPEL?

In order for The Episcopal Church to effectively continue to reach out to the more than 50 million Latinos in the United States alone, we must embrace the “LATINO GOSPEL”; bringing the Good News of Jesus to this growing demographic in a language, style and with practices that are recognizable, and overall, familiar.

Most studies demonstrate that RELIGION is very important to most Latinos.

**%of Latinos who say religion is “very important”
(according to a study by The Pew Hispanic Center - 2006):**

All Hispanics 68%

Mexican 68%

Puerto Rican 65%

Cuban 58%

Dominican 65%

Central American 76%

South American 64%

WHY SHOULD THE “LATINO GOSPEL” BE IMPORTANT TO ME?

While we know that religion is very important to most Latinos, it is equally important to remember that these “LATINO GOSPEL” CORE-VALUES we will discuss may or may not have much to do with religion at all.

These values are mostly influenced by specific backgrounds by region, socioeconomic status and cultural customs.

There is no doubt that keeping these core-values in mind and at work in our ministry will make us much more effective pastoral ministers and evangelists to the Latino community. The Episcopal Church has invested in and created resources to help you in this important ministry.

**We must ALL become familiar with:
*THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH’S STRATEGIC VISION FOR
REACHING LATINOS/HISPANICS*
Visit: episcopalchurch.org/latino**

THE FOUR BASIC CORE-VALUES LATINOS SEEK IN THE CHURCH OF THEIR CHOICE:

1. “LA FAMILIA” (All things FAMILY)

**Key question for Latinos:
What can The Episcopal Church do for...?**

Ministries and advocacy that will keep them coming

- Marriage**
- Children**
- Grandparents**
- Extended family**
- Immigration and other Social Justice issues affecting the Latino population (i.e. discrimination, domestic violence, education)**

2. “LA FE” (LATINOS PREFER A VISIBLE AND TANGIBLE FAITH)

**Key question for Latinos when it comes to religious expressions:
Where in The Episcopal Church are the symbols, religious language,
expressions of popular piety, basic doctrines, biblical teachings and a
practical understanding of my relationship with God?**

What we can offer:

- Practical applications of the Word of God in our times**
- Eucharistic celebrations and familiar worship**
- Anglican/Episcopal identity: CATHOLIC, REFORMED AND EVANGELICAL**
- An understanding of church as “community” and not just “institution”**
- Greater emphasis on reason and not simply accepting dogmatic formulas**

3. “TRADICIONES” (FOLKLORE, FOOD, CULTURAL CUSTOMS)

Key question for Latinos:

Is The Episcopal Church interested in me, my culture, my ethos and where I come from?

What we can offer:

- Unique celebrations that unite family, faith and culture (i.e. Quinceaneras, Patronal feasts, devotions)**
- A reason to celebrate almost anything and always inviting God to the celebration.**
- To evangelize bringing Christ to the forefront – in place of past superstitions and pietisms**
- A truly biblical and theological understanding of Mary and the Saints**
- A deeper and more personal understanding of the meaning behind the rituals, symbols and practices throughout Christian history**

4. “SERVICIO” (HANDS-ON SERVICE AND FAITH IN ACTION ON BEHALF OF THE POOR, SICK AND OPPRESSED)

Key question for Latinos:

Does my church need me (or invite me) to do something concrete, besides giving my pledge and showing up on Sundays?

What we can offer:

- Latinos are not always the best at pledging or tithing, but they want to be available to help out and get physically and emotionally involved.**
- Help Latinos understand Stewardship as a way of life and as a type of real involvement.**
- Identifying talents and delegating the use of diverse gifts for the good of the community.**
- Engage Latinos in the political process of advocacy and educating them to embrace the prophetic call of baptism to bring about change in society and work for social justice.**

**So our challenge is: CAN WE PROCLAIM THIS
“LATINO GOSPEL”
in The Episcopal Church?**

“Si, se puede...” Yes, we can!

- **LA FAMILIA / FAMILY**
- **LA FE / FAITH**
- **TRADICIONES / TRADITIONS AND CUSTOMS**
- **SERVICE / SERVICIO**

Glory to God whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine: Glory to him from generation to generation in the Church, and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever. Amen.

Ephesians 3:20, 21
Book of Common Prayer

Gloria a Dios, cuyo poder, actuando en nosotros, puede realizar todas las cosas infinitamente mejor de lo que podemos pedir o pensar: Gloria a él en la Iglesia de generación en generación, y en Cristo Jesús por los siglos de los siglos. Amén.”

Efesios 3:20, 21
Libro de Oracion Comun