

## *V Encuentro: Hope and challenges in Hispanic ministry*

### Webinar Questions and Answers

1. Any suggestions for mainly English-speaking parishes who are starting Hispanic Ministry?
  - a. **I believe that the V Encuentro offers wonderful opportunities for the leadership of the parish to engage the Hispanic/Latino community and in addition, to surface new leadership. Participation in the five sessions, the whole parish (if not, certainly the Hispanic/Latino community) will not only inspire reflection, but also allow for evangelistic action. It will allow the parish to surface needs and best practices within the consultation portion of the process. On the V Encuentro website there are some readily available resources that might be helpful to you <http://vencuentro.org/hispanic-ministry-resources/> Be on the lookout for availability of the V Encuentro guide and manual to assist you in your efforts.**
2. Are you familiar with the USCCB "Convocation of Catholic Leaders" in July 1-4 2017? Yes. If so, to what extent will the convocation be similar or different from the Encuentros?
  - a. **I do not know the particulars of the event, other than what has recently been posted at <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/get-involved/meetings-and-events/usccb-convocation-2017.cfm> It appears that since the topics for the gathering are in some way inspired by *Evangelii Gaudium*, there will be some similarities. The convocation is an event for leaders and is invitation-only “for a strategic conversation, under the leadership of the bishops, on forming missionary disciples to animate the Church and to engage the culture.” The V Encuentro is a “four-year process of ecclesial reflection and action that invites all Catholics in the United States to intense missionary activity, consultation, leadership development, and identification of best ministerial practices in the spirit of the New Evangelization” that begins at the base with the folks in the pews, and aims to connect with a broader audience for consultation and will have “check-points” at various levels (parish, diocesan, regional and national that are marked by “events” at which delegates together with leadership will “discern ways in which the Church in the United States can better respond to the Hispanic/Latino presence, and to strengthen the ways in which Hispanics/Latinos respond to the call to the New Evangelization as missionary disciples serving the entire Church.”**
3. I live in San Diego CA, is there any person I can contact to have more information.
  - a. **I am aware that the Diocese of San Diego has a Diocesan Team for the V Encuentro. Contact Rodrigo Valdivia, Office for Cultural Diversity, [rvaldivia@sdccatholic.org](mailto:rvaldivia@sdccatholic.org) or (858) 490-8306 for more information and tell him Pedro Rubalcava says “hello”**
4. Hi Pedro! Do other bishop's conferences have a national encuentro process in their own countries too?
  - a. **While the Encuentro Process in the U.S. has been uniquely designed to the reality of Hispanics/Latinos in this country, the consultation processes of Encuentro have had a long history post Vatican II throughout Latin America.**
5. How do you suggest dioceses market this to the larger church - to the non-Hispanics and parishes that think they don't have any? The very name of it seems to say it is only for Hispanics. And how can we assure them that the actual results of the process apply to the church beyond Hispanics?
  - a. **That’s a very good question and I would honestly say that this might be the biggest challenge. It is my opinion that this will depend largely on the bishop(s) and clergy, as well as, diocesan and parish leadership not only promote, but to implement. Having seen drafts of the guide and five sessions, the material, which is available in Spanish and in English, is accessible and adaptable, regardless of culture or ethnicity. Pope Francis in his video message to the general assembly of U.S. Bishops <https://cnstopstories.com/2016/11/15/text-pope-francis-message-to-u-s-bishops-on-encuentro/> on Tuesday, November 15, put it this way: “the Encuentro seeks to acknowledge and value the specific gifts that Hispanic Catholics have offered, and continue to offer, to the Church in your country. But it**

is more than that. It is part of a greater process of renewal and missionary outreach, one to which all of your local Churches are called. Our great challenge is to create a culture of encounter, which encourages individuals and groups to share the richness of their traditions and experiences, to break down walls and to build bridges. The Church in America, as elsewhere, is called to 'go out' from its comfort zone and to be a leaven of communion. Communion among ourselves, with our fellow Christians, and with all who seek a future of hope." Perhaps this is what needs to be communicated. Again, to the extent that the local leadership is committed to communicate and use the findings and conclusions of the consultation process and apply them to the reality in prayerful discernment, is the extent that the results will be effective in the long run.

6. I have attempted to find copies of the NPPfHP (1988) and Challenge (2000) and cannot find them in print.. How do we at the ground level obtain copies? == I was part of the IIIEnc while serving the Diocese of ROckford. It seems most ministers here in Louisville are unaware of the content of the NPPfHP.
  - a. **These are now all available in one publication *A New Beginning: Hispanic/Latino Ministry Past-Present-Future* available through the USCCB publishing <http://store.usccb.org/hispanic-ministry-p/7-314.htm>**
7. What outreach has there been to Religious Communities re: VEnc? I am a franciscan and it seems like our formators are not informed on the value of this process.
  - a. **We have a few religious order priests and religious on the national accompaniment team. While I do not know of any specific effort, I will ask the question and request that there is an attempt made to inform and engage Religious Communities.**
8. Are diocesan coordinators being animated to include actively non-Spanish speaking Latinos?
  - a. **That has certainly been a spoken desire on the part of the leadership on the national team and several of the bishops since the inception of the training – to reach include Hispanic/Latinos of second and third generations, particularly youth and young adults since Latinos 18 and younger form over 60% of the Church in the U.S.**
9. I want to say thank you it is important to hear that the process of the encuentros works from someone that has participated in an encuentro before.
  - a. **I am grateful for the affirmation. I am happy to say that I am living proof of the effects of the Encuentros directly and indirectly.**
10. The biggest problem I have seen in my 20 years in Hispanic ministry is the formation of Hispanic leaders. It is usually the same 10 dedicated parishioners with no one willing to step up to learn and lead. How do we encourage leaders to step up? And what do you do when the hispanic leadership is not given the same respect or considerations as the anglo community?
  - a. **I agree with you that identifying and developing Hispanic/Latino leadership is a challenge that is directly and indirectly related to your second question. My experience and observation has taught me that the "who" that is doing the inviting is key, as is the "how" and "what" – throughout my life I have been invited by pastors and associate pastors, by clergy and religious (almost exclusively "anglo") who have recognized and affirmed gifts in me and, furthermore invited me to use those gifts in service and develop them, by investing in my formation and guided me through mentorship. While I am not ordained or a professed religious, I have followed this same model as a lay person and been effective – not to say that I have not failed along the way. With regard to your second challenge, I believe we are called to advocate for all, especially when it comes to raising new leaders. Because of who I am, I feel especially called to advocate for Hispanic/Latinos. Developing relationships of trust with leaders in the prevailing culture and being "bridge-builders" and "border-crossers" that leads to consciousness raising and advocacy is a long but necessary role that we must take, finding partners in this task and growing communities of faith along the way. It does not happen overnight, as you know, but I am hopeful that little by little we all begin to see the light of what it means to be in communion.**

- 11.** How can we find out who our Diocesan Encuentro leader is?
- If your diocese has a Director or Coordinator of Hispanic/Latino Ministry, or an Office for Multicultural Ministry, I would begin by contacting them and inquiring of them. Otherwise, I would recommend going to the V Encuentro web page <http://vencuentro.org/episcopal-regions/> and clicking on the map of the region in which your diocese is located and contacting the regional chair for information on who your diocesan contact is.**
- 12.** To the collection of information, who is doing that? How will the process ensure that conversations are documented in full and the information reaches the Regions and ultimately the large convening.
- In the manual calls for selection, delegation and training of small group facilitators, which will have a tool and direction (Small Group Facilitator Final Report). Likewise, there will be similar roles and tools at the various levels (i.e., parish, diocesan, regional national) to ensure that the consultation is appropriately recorded.**
- 13.** We starting an Encuentro team together for hispanic families in the Military. Suggestions on how to deal with the global location of our hispanic service members and their families.
- While I am not too familiar with how the Archdiocese for Military Services, USA is structured, my experience in the past has been in young adult ministry making connections through a representative Catholic chaplain in the diocese and attending to the realities in the particular diocese. Obviously, when it comes to a global effort, it becomes a bit more challenging, particularly when the gatherings are meant to be done in small groups. I wonder if using SKYPE as a tool would be effective. I would recommend contacting Mar Muñoz-Visoso, Director of the Secretariat for Cultural Diveristy in the Church (USCCB) for suggestions. Her email address is [MMunoz-Visoso@usccb.org](mailto:MMunoz-Visoso@usccb.org) I will look into this further myself.**
- 14.** What would you advice to ministries whom are open to the V Encuentro and wish they would have received this information last year so they could have planned accordingly, especially in the development of the budget?
- With regard to limited budget, at the parish level, it might be the case that it is possible to keep the costs to a minimum. The manual has a budget worksheet to help you see what might be needed. The manual will be downloadable for free from the V Encuentro website [www.vencuentro.org](http://www.vencuentro.org) and the guide you will be able to have mailed to you in the quantities that you need, and I believe you only have to pay for the postage to have it sent to you – chances are these will be mailed to the diocese, which will pay for the postage. The guide will also be available in digital format for download.**
- 15.** You mention 60% of Catholics under 18 are Hispanic/Latino. What initiatives are included in Encuentro to support/promote Catholic primary and secondary education?
- While there are no initiatives per se, since the V Encuentro is not a program, but rather a process, I would venture to say that in the conclusions this topic will be a relevant one and perhaps recommendations made to address it. Currently, there are efforts on behalf of a campaign by Notre Dame’s Alliance for Catholic Education, who’s co-chair, Fr. Joe Corpora is on the national Encuentro team. Similarly, the USCCB’s Committee on Catholic Education has had this topic on their radar for the last several years.**
- 16.** You mention more and more US born Catholics. I understood that to be the majority in US. Correct? If so it seems there will begin to emerge a more multicultural family. What initiatives are included in Encuentro for the culturally blended family?
- I meant to convey that the majority of Hispanic/Latino Catholics in the U.S Church are U.S. born (and not immigrants). If by multicultural family you mean, families that have “bi-cultural” offspring (immigrant parents that raise children in their own culture, but are influenced by the prevailing culture and thus are bi-cultural) – yes. If by multicultural you mean intermarriage between two Hispanic/Latino persons that have roots in different Latin-American countries – yes. If by multicultural**

family you mean intermarriage between an Hispanic/Latino and a non-Hispanic/Latino cultural or ethnic – yes. I think all the above have been occurring and will continue to occur. The V Encuentro does not have initiatives, but rather makes allowance for the small group sharing that is at the core of the process to happen in either English or Spanish (or any mixture there-in) depending on the ability of the small group facilitator to lead the specific group. It is our hope that the conversations will deepen our understanding at the different levels of how the Church in the U.S. will respond to the many realities that surface and allow for the laity to respond to the call of the New Evangelization as missionary disciples. New initiatives that address the reality that you describe could be an outcome of the process. Perhaps this video will give you a better idea of the efforts and hopes for this process <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MH2Qx5bpao8> (even though the narrator uses the word “initiative” right at the beginning: “...the bishops of the United States are launching the initiative of V Encuentro...”)