News



Deacon Martin Garcia participates in a breakout session April 14 at a regional encuentro in San Antonio. (CNS/Thao Nguyen, for North Texas Catholic magazine)



by Soli Salgado

View Author Profile
ssalgado@ncronline.org

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A recent consultation report shows that there are 23,000 U.S.-born Hispanic Catholics for every U.S.-born Hispanic priest, and that 55 percent of Catholics younger than 14 are Hispanic.

ENAVE — the National Team of Accompaniment that oversees the V Encuentro process — gathered statistical data from the dioceses that are participating in the grassroots consultations, which unite Hispanic Catholics throughout the United States.

With a 100 percent response rate, a diocesan survey of Hispanic ministry and Hispanics in ministry has been coupled with a research team's analysis of other surveys and Census data. The following are the top 10 highlights, according to ENAVE:

- There are 4,473 parishes with services directed to Hispanics — most frequently one or more Masses in Spanish — an increase of 105 from the 2013 CARA study.
- On an average weekend, about 2.7 million people attend the 7,900 weekly, monthly, or bi-monthly Masses in Spanish in the U.S. — about 340 per Mass.
- About 9% of Hispanic/Latino Catholics attend Mass in Spanish each weekend; over 80% of Hispanic Catholics speak at least some Spanish at home.
- The V Encuentro statistical model suggests that 52.4% of Hispanics were Catholic in 2016, for a total of 30.06 million — up from 29.7 million in 2010 according to CARA. The overall Hispanic population had increased by 6.9 million.
- In 2016, about 61% of immigrant Hispanics/Latinos were Catholic, as were 50% of the second generation and 43% of the third and higher generations.
- About 40% of all Catholics in the U.S. are Hispanic; 50% of Catholics ages 14 to 29 are Hispanic; and 55% of Catholics under 14 are Hispanic.

- There were about 303,500 Hispanic/Latino children enrolled in Catholic elementary and high schools (K-12) this year, up from about 290,000 in 2009. 17.2% of K-8 and 14.6% of 9-12 Catholic school students this year are Hispanic.
- Dioceses reported 2,705 active Hispanic priests and 280 inactive/retired Hispanic priests, 76% of whom were foreign-born.
- In the U.S. today, there are about 2,000 Catholics for every priest; 6,000 immigrant Hispanic Catholics for every immigrant Hispanic priest; and 23,000 U.S.-born Hispanic Catholics for every U.S.-born Hispanic priest.
- Dioceses reported about 2,300 Hispanic religious (men and women), 2,600 Hispanic Deacons, and 5,800 Hispanic lay ecclesial ministers. Twenty dioceses containing 26% of the Hispanic Catholic population did not report [lay ecclesial ministers].

The V Encuentro will end with a national gathering Sept. 20-23 in Grapevine, Texas. The two-year process is intended to unite and organize — as well as address the needs of — Hispanic Catholics throughout the U.S., who are quickly becoming a majority of the country's Catholics. Regional encuentros have been going on throughout the country since March and end in June.

[Soli Salgado is a staff writer for Global Sisters Report. Her email address is ssalgado@ncronline.org. Follow her on Twitter @soli_salgado.]

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