

✦ Prophets of Hope ✦

Volume 1

Hispanic Young People and the Church's Pastoral Response

Prophets of Hope Editorial Team

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To young leaders, youth ministers, and pastoral agents
who are giving their lives to carry Christ to Hispanic young people
in the United States.

❖ Preface ❖

- 1 Every year, the Catholic church in the United States includes more Hispanic (or Latino) members, nearly half of whom are less than twenty-five years old. These young people and young adults represent both a challenge and a hope for us, our church, and our society. They provide us with a challenge because millions of them are not receiving adequate pastoral attention. They give us hope because by incarnating the Gospel in their lives, these young people can help renew our church, transform cultural values, and build the Reign of God. To confront this challenge and make this hope a reality, we need Hispanics—both young people and adults—who fulfill their mission as Christians in the world.
- 2 In 1987, Saint Mary's Press in Winona, Minnesota, joined the effort to provide foundation and direction for Hispanic youth ministry by developing materials for publication. To identify the most urgent program needs, Saint Mary's Press representatives consulted with Hispanic pastoral leaders throughout the United States. This research led to the development of a bilingual series for the evangelization of youth and young adults and to the hiring of Dr. Carmen María Cervantes as director of the publishing program for Hispanic materials.
- 3 The need to have a pastoral-theological framework that would provide consistency and direction for these publications gave rise to the first draft of this book. In August of 1988, Saint Mary's Press hosted a discernment meeting about this framework and about related Hispanic publications. Twenty-four pastoral agents, representing eleven different Hispanic groups and their diverse ministries, attended that meeting. These pastoral agents established the foundation of the project, planned the materials to be published, and revised the first draft of the framework. A month later, participants of the discernment meeting and Saint Mary's Press representatives developed an editorial board that has played a crucial role in planning and revising publications and in identifying appropriate people to write materials.

4 Thirty people from around the country, whose careful analyses and suggestions proved invaluable, reviewed the second draft of the framework. The third draft was translated into English and refined through bilingual consultation. The final manuscript emerged from this consultation.

5 Developing and writing the pastoral-theological framework was complex and exciting. The broad pastoral-theological vision shared by the editorial team took root in the reality of Hispanic young people and became a source of direction for their evangelization, but only after many hours of reflection, prayer, and sharing of experiences. Seven persons wrote significant pieces of the manuscript, and several others contributed with their advice and editing skills, making a truly collaborative work of what came to be the Prophets of Hope Editorial Team.

6 Consultations in Spanish and English with experts in different fields, pastoralists, pastoral agents, young leaders—Hispanics and non-Hispanics—provided the comprehensive perspective needed in a publication that was dealing with the reality of Hispanic young people in the United States and attempting to provide a pastoral-theological framework for their evangelization. Two surveys were conducted in areas of key importance for the evangelization of Hispanic young people. The first one identified the reality of Hispanic youth ministry in the country. The second one provided insight on who Jesus is, what the process of evangelization is, and what the church means for Hispanic young people.

7 The reflections and input by the translator and the editors in English were extremely valuable. The translation was bicultural, meaning that several concepts, theories, and philosophical and theological approaches identified as hard to understand or easy to misunderstand by a non-Hispanic reader were clarified. The respectful, sensible, and careful reactions of Yvette Nelson and Charles Capek, who were not familiar with Hispanic culture and religious life, helped the editorial team tremendously in two ways: to see and value the many points of unity between the mainstream and the Hispanic pastoral approaches and to further clarify the differences between them. This crosscultural dialog gave origin to new sections in the framework that reinforce the identity and pastoral-theological vision of Hispanics in the United States who are faced with honest questions and the desire to learn from American pastoral agents of non-Hispanic background.

8 The complexity of the reality of Hispanic young people and the need to provide a pastoral-theological framework for their evangelization led Saint Mary's Press to publish two volumes of *Prophets of Hope*. This first volume focuses on Hispanic young people and the church's pastoral response. The second volume focuses on evangelization of Hispanic young people.

9 In a very special way, the editorial team wants to express our deep gratitude to Saint Mary's Press for making the publication of these two books possible; to Stephan Nagel, for his constant support and direction as editor-in-chief; and to Br. Damian Steger, FSC, president of Saint Mary's Press, for his patience and encouragement. We also want to thank those persons who helped to shape the manuscript with their valuable insights and all the other people who made the books in the *Prophets of Hope* series possible.

◆ Introduction ◆

Jeremiah: Prophet of Hope

1 Many years ago, a young man named Jeremiah lived among a people lost to their own egoism and idolatry and threatened by war. God made Jeremiah a prophet and gave him the mission of calling people to conversion—away from the greed, infidelity, and injustice that characterized their society. But the people would not listen, because, as has often been the case, the truth wounded and threatened them.

2 Perhaps some people thought of simply shutting Jeremiah up, of putting him back in his place, silent and obedient, until he learned to speak sensibly. Very likely, some well-meaning people tried to convince Jeremiah to be a “good” Jewish young person, to respect the laws and customs of his day and not rock the boat. After all, what could a young man possibly have to say to the adults, the wise, and the powerful?

3 It has always been difficult for people to hear the word of God when that word calls for change. When the word arises on the lips of youth, the difficulty is greater still. The words that Jeremiah spoke, however, were not exactly his own. They were the words of God, who called Jeremiah to cry out the hope that comes from conversion. Thus, Jeremiah spoke not only words of protest and denunciation but cries of hope to political and religious leaders and to other young people like himself—his sisters and brothers. His was a message of hope for all those who heard him, turned their hearts back to God, and straightened their life paths.

4 In facing God’s call, Jeremiah felt afraid and insecure, felt his own inexperience and lack of qualifications:

“Ah, Lord GOD! Truly I do not know how to speak, for I am only a boy.” But the LORD said to [Jeremiah],

“Do not say, ‘I am only a boy’;
for you shall go to all to whom I send you,
and you shall speak whatever I command you.”

(Jer. 1:6–7)

Once he was convinced, Jeremiah fulfilled his mission with God's help, in spite of being misunderstood, scorned, and persecuted by most of his people.

- 5 Could God today be calling us through our young people? Do we hear them? Do the challenges and hopes presented by our young people call us to conversion? If we fail to hear the words of young Hispanics, if we fail to consider their actions, we once again fall deaf to God's prophetic cries. Today in the United States, Hispanic young people, like the prophet Jeremiah centuries ago, bring hope to a society often beset by greed, egoism, and idolatry.

Prophets of Hope

- 6 Prophets of Hope is a two-volume series that proposes a pastoral and theological vision for ministry with young and young adult Hispanics in the United States. This work brings together the social analysis, pastoral priorities, vision, and spirit of Hispanic youth ministry inspired by the three Encuentros Nacionales Hispanos de Pastoral, the *National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic Ministry*, and the call to a New Evangelization for America made by Pope John Paul II and ratified in 1992 at the Fourth General Conference of the Latin American Bishops in Santo Domingo.

- 7 The analysis of reality, reflection, guidance, and concrete suggestions for action that give substance to the pastoral and theological vision of Prophets of Hope is divided into the two volumes as follows:

- **Volume 1**, *Hispanic Young People and the Church's Pastoral Response*, is divided into eight chapters dealing with the personal, relational, cultural, sociological, and religious realities of Hispanic young people, and the response of the church to the pastoral needs of Hispanic young people.
- **Volume 2**, *Evangelization of Hispanic Young People*, is divided into eight chapters dealing with the evangelization of Hispanic young people, the evangelization process, a model of evangelization for small communities, and the role of Mary in these evangelizing efforts.

- 8 These two volumes are intended as *guides* for pastoral work and the formation of pastoral agents and young leaders. Volume 1's presentation of the reality of Hispanic young people and young adults is only a beginning and will continue to develop as this real-

ity is further studied and analyzed. The pastoral-theological vision is evolving and crystallizing through praxis and will be renewed as young Hispanics and those who minister with them put it into practice and reflect on that practice. Thus, to take full advantage of these books, readers must use their own creativity, experience, and reflection in adapting the material to their concrete reality. They must also avoid using the books as if they were textbooks or how-to manuals of techniques.

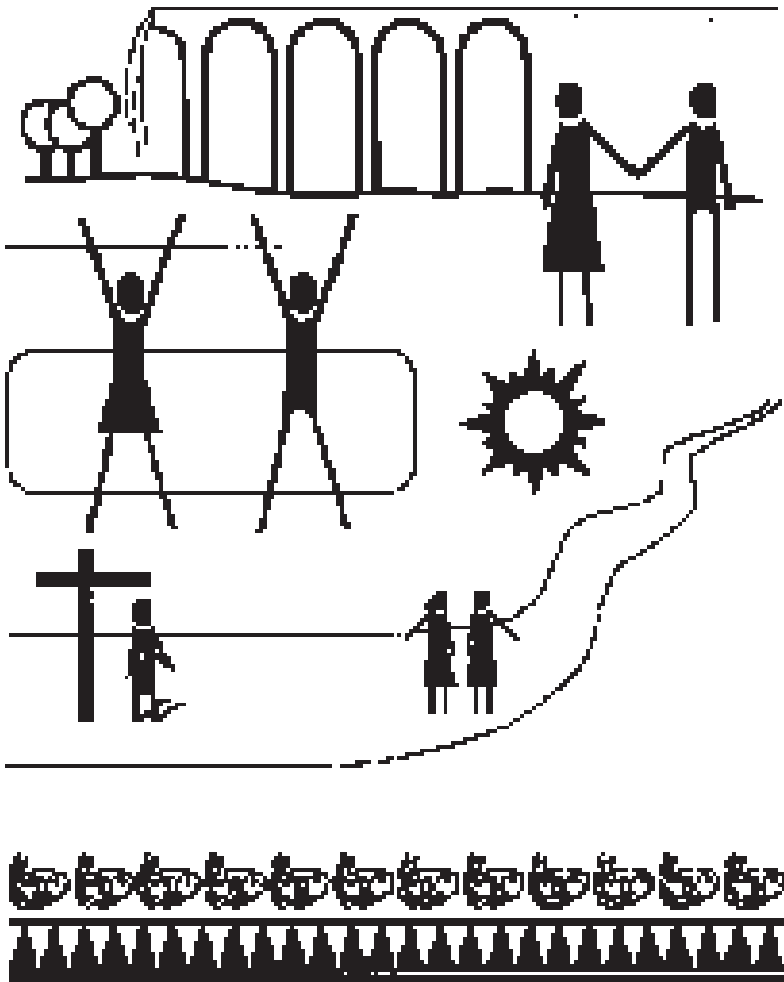
9 In using this volume, it is important to remember that the English concepts of *youth* and *young people* do not correspond to the Spanish concepts of *juventud* and *jóvenes*, although these are the correct equivalents in translation. References in this book to Hispanic youth or young people include Hispanic single young adults as well as Hispanic adolescents.

10 Special terms like *animation* and *mestizo* are boldfaced at their first occurrence in the book. A definition for all the boldfaced terms can be found in the glossary at the end of the book. Before beginning to read the chapters, we suggest that you scan the glossary to acquaint yourself with any terms that may be unfamiliar to you. Also note that the paragraphs in the book are numbered in the margin to make it easier for leaders to use both the English and Spanish volumes together in a bilingual setting.

11 We wrote this book for youth ministers, young leaders, pastoral agents, and adult advisers of young people. Prophets of Hope can also be useful to anyone who wants to understand more deeply the reality of young and young adult Latinos and improve their human and Christian formation. We share our hope that these books will stimulate dialog, reflection, and *pastoral de conjunto*, not only among Latinos but within the entire church.

12 We especially ask Mary to bless our young people and all those who minister to them. We pray that the Holy Spirit may fill us with enthusiasm and hope, so that our work will continue the work begun by Jesus, our brother and prophet of the Reign of God. In that way, we will fulfill with him his dream and his mission: to inaugurate the Reign of God among us.

Hispanic Young People and Their Process of Maturation

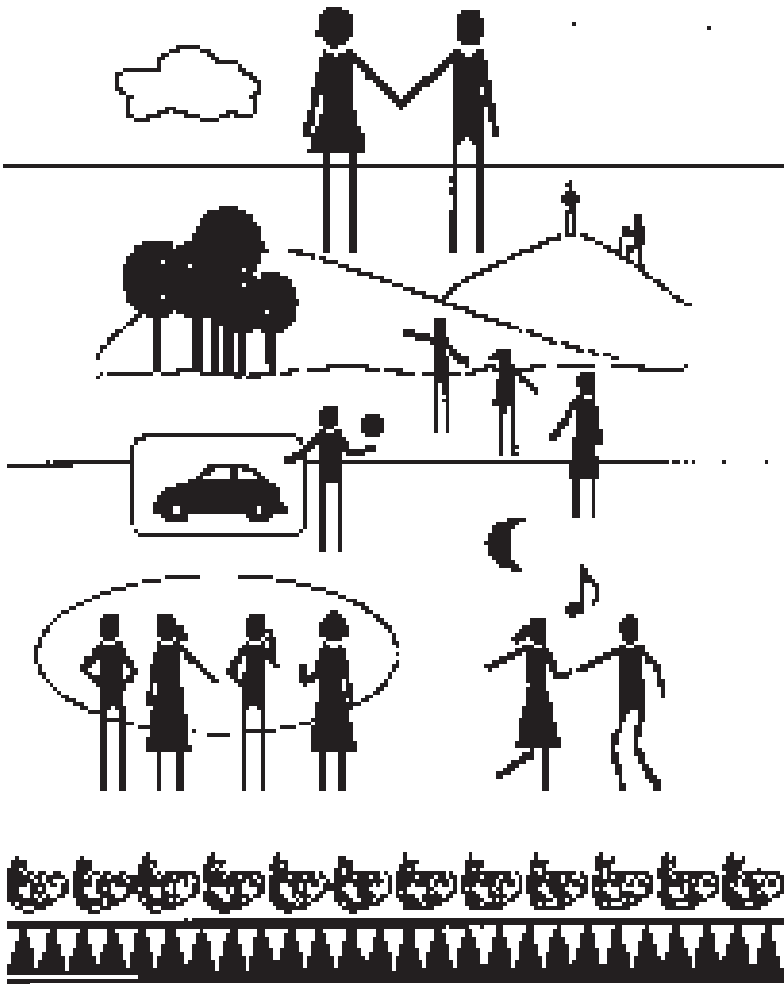


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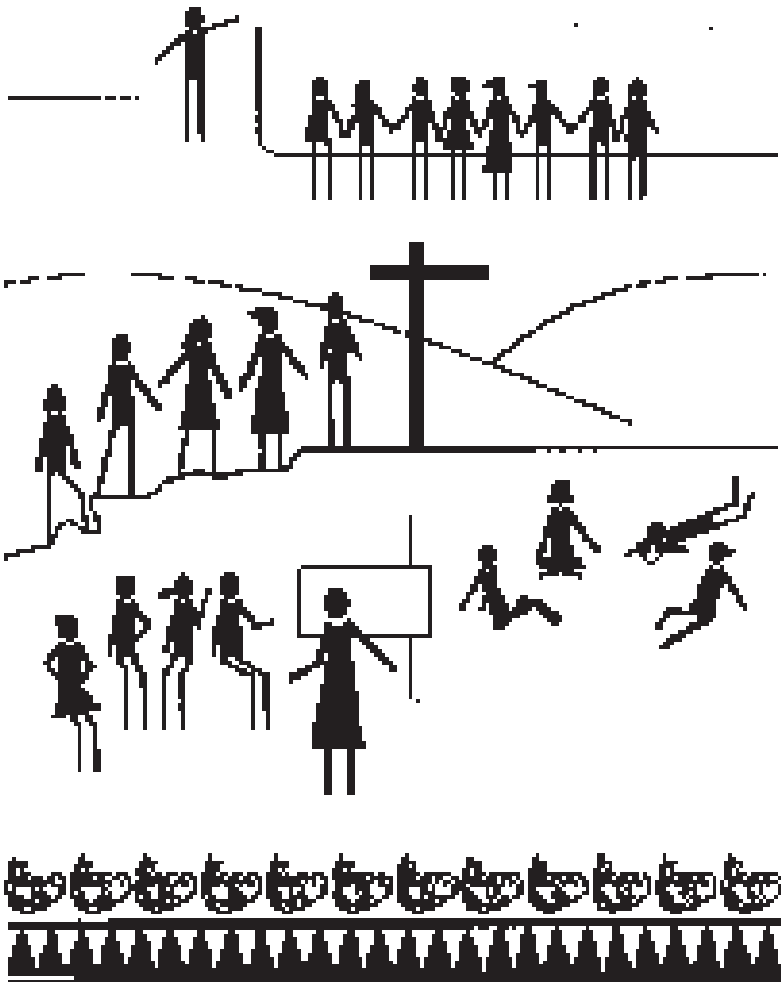
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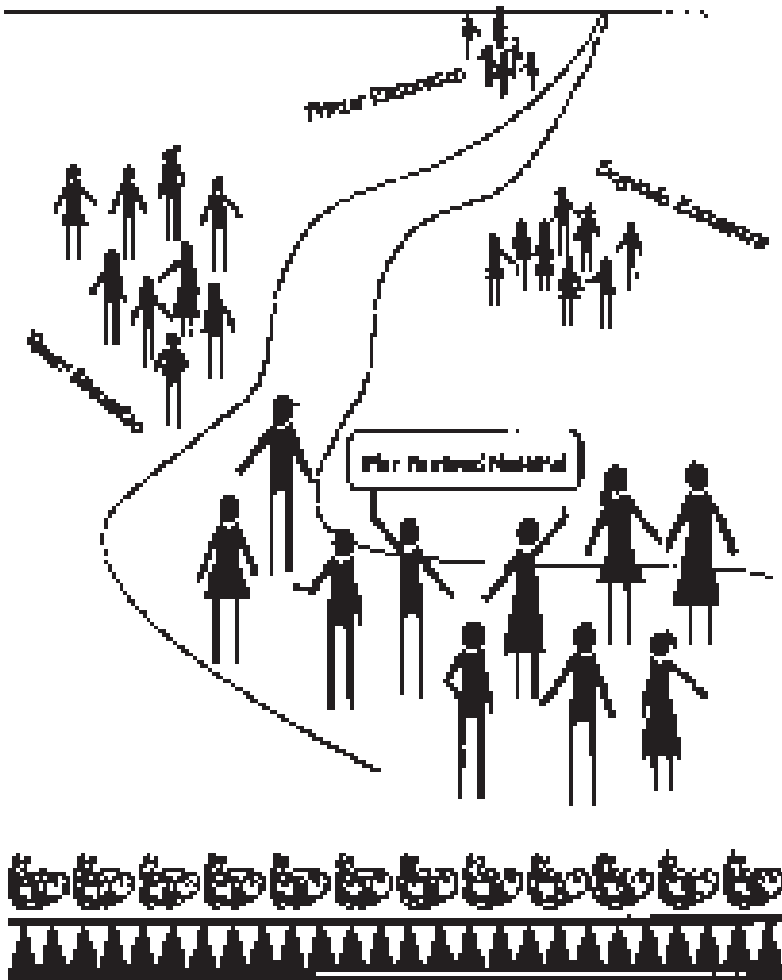
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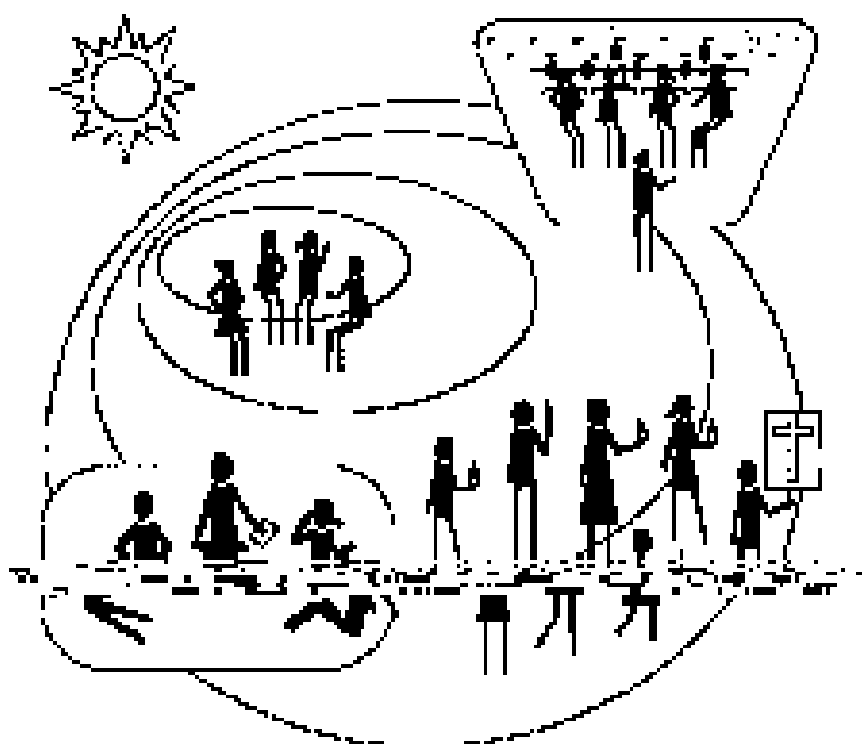


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Models of Organization in Hispanic Youth Ministry

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◆ Glossary ◆

Acculturation. A process that takes place when two or more cultures enter into direct contact; both the people involved and the cultures themselves are transformed, usually by adapting to or borrowing traits from one another, but without totally losing their own culture. *See also* **enculturation; endoculturation; inculturation; socialization.**

Acompañamiento, acompañante. Activities, attitudes, and the behaviors used by peers, leaders, ministers, and pastoral agents to guide, support, and motivate young people in their Christian journey. An *acompañante* is the person who fulfills this role.

Agentes de cambio. Literally, “agents of change.” Persons who, consciously and intentionally, display a lifestyle and act concretely to produce a specific transformation in society or church.

Animation, animadores. Animation describes the role and attitude of a leader in a small ecclesial community, apostolic movement, youth group, parish program, or specific ecclesial activity. Animation involves motivating each person and the whole community, facilitating the community’s prayer life, nurturing hospitality and mutual care among members, and sustaining the community in times of difficulty. This role extends to the whole life of the community; it is not limited to meetings. People who fulfill this role are called *animadores* (animators) and are different from coordinators, whose role is to facilitate the meetings of the community. *Animadores* need a certain charisma and appropriate training to succeed in their role.

Antagonism. Substantial or habitual opposition to a group of people, a principle, an ideology, or a political position that often leads to hostility between factions.

Anthropology, anthropological. The study of human beings—their origin; history; culture; physical characteristics; social, political, and economic dimensions; relationship with the divine; and so on.

Antivalues, disvalues. Concepts used in Latin American philosophy and in Spanish philosophy to identify values that are against God and the dignity of the human person.

Autonomy, autonomous. A person's capacity to assume responsibility for, and give direction to, his or her life. Autonomy does not imply separation or independence from one's broader community; rather, within a community, it implies respect for the self-direction and moral freedom of others, and a responsible interdependence.

Caciquismo, caciquista. Oppressive, abusive, and tyrannical system created by people in positions of power over others, particularly over those who are economically or politically dependent on powerful people. Hispanics in the United States, especially immigrant workers, most often suffer *caciquismo* under the *capataces* and *mayordomos* (forepersons or overseers) in agricultural and industrial work.

Cariño. An affectionate feeling characterized by tenderness, empathy, caring, and warmth.

Catechesis. An educational process by which people are instructed in the Christian faith according to the Catholic Tradition and are assisted in reflecting on their life in light of their faith in order to mature as Christians, become authentic disciples of Jesus, and live the Gospel.

Charisma. The gift of the Holy Spirit to be used for service to individuals and communities, in view of the formation of the Body of Christ and the building of the Reign of God.

Chemical dependency. An illness acquired by the intoxication of a person with a chemical substance. It has direct effects in disrupting the mental functioning, psychomotor performance, and social behavior of the person. *See also codependency.*

Christian discernment. A personal or communitarian process of reflection from a faith perspective to discover God's will, used when facing various life situations that require decision making.

Christology. The theological understanding, study, and interpretation of the person and mission of Jesus.

Cliques. Narrow, exclusive, and *closed* circles or groups of persons held together by common interests, views, or purposes.

Codependency. An unhealthy situation in which one person in a relationship suffers from a psychiatric illness, chemical dependency, or behavioral problems, and those close to the dependent person create defense mechanisms in order to survive in a dysfunctional relationship. *See also* **chemical dependency.**

Communitarian. A description meaning “related to a community.” For Hispanics, a community is always formed by persons and not by individuals. The community is not a simple accumulation of individuals, but a reality that exists as a result of the interrelationships among its members. In Hispanic conceptual terms, a person cannot exist outside of a community, because it is the community that validates a person as a human being.

Compadres, comadres. People who form family-type social relationships in Hispanic culture by becoming godparents to people’s children. The relationship between the godparents of a child and the child’s parents is called *compadrazgo*. A *compadre* is a godfather; a *comadre* is a godmother. *Compadres* and *comadres* are members of the extended family.

Compañeros. People joined to mutually support and assist one another, to accompany one another in certain activities, or to journey together in a particular aspect of life. *Compañeros* differ from friends in that *compañeros* do not necessarily forge strong personal ties or share their whole lives with one another. And they differ from *acompañantes* in that *acompañantes* usually have a higher level of maturity and experience than the person they accompany in their journey of faith. Loyalty, understanding, respect, and interest in one another’s well-being characterize *compañeros*.

Conscientization. The process by which people: (a) become critically aware of the cultural, social, economic, political, and religious aspects of their life, and (b) acquire a commitment to change those things that go against the dignity of the human person.

Consumerism. A viewpoint that considers individuals and communities as instruments of production and objects of consumption. Also, a strong tendency to always produce more, buy more, and have more.

Convivencia. In a general sense, sharing and celebrating life with other people. In pastoral ministry, events or meetings that build or strengthen friendship, understanding, and community among the participants.

Cooperaciones. Cooperative efforts by family members and friends who collect monetary aid, food, clothing, or other articles for someone facing an unexpected financial need.

Cultural dynamics. The patterns of development and change shown by cultures, including the forces that cause the development or change.

Defense mechanism. An intellectual or emotional reaction to a problem that allows people to avoid fully confronting the problem, especially if the problem threatens a fundamental belief or state of being.

Dueño de sí mismo. Literally, “owner of oneself,” a concept that in English may have a business connotation. In Spanish, *dueño de sí mismo* corresponds to the psychological definition of freedom. The concept specifically encompasses self-knowledge, self-acceptance, and self-possession—three elements that form the foundation for a person’s conscious and responsible exercise of freedom.

Ecumenical councils. Worldwide official gatherings of church leaders. In the Catholic church, meetings of the bishops, summoned by the pope, to deliberate and decide on doctrinal, moral, or pastoral matters and to provide direction to the church. The Second Vatican Council (1962–65) marked the beginning of an era of strong church renewal based on the Scriptures and on efforts to relate faith to modern culture.

Ecumenism. Efforts of various Christian churches to find unity among all Christians. From the perspective of the churches, ecumenism involves a constant renewal in order to be more faithful to their vocation; a conversion of heart to heal and avoid further divisions; common prayer for the unity of all Christians; better mutual knowledge and dialog among theologians and the faithful; collaboration in the various fields of social service; and an ecumenical formation of all members of the church, especially ordained ministers.

Encuentros Nacionales Hispanos de Pastoral. National meetings officially convened by the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops, at which leaders, participants, and pastoral agents gather, after conducting an organized process of pastoral needs assessment and theological reflection, to determine direction, coordination, and support for Hispanic ministry. There have been three Encuentros Nacionales to date—in 1971, 1976–77, and 1982–85. The Segundo (second) and Tercer (third) Encuentros encouraged active participation and pastoral-theological reflection by laypeople at the grassroots level, and encuentros at the diocesan, regional, and national level.

Enculturation. The process by which people acquire their culture, both at home and in society. *See also* **acculturation; endoculturation; inculturation; socialization.**

Endoculturation. The process by which people acquire their culture at home through sharing the values, beliefs, and traditions that are lived and taught in the family, especially by their parents. *See also* **acculturation; enculturation; inculturation; socialization.**

Euthanasia. The act or practice of putting to death incurable or terminally ill patients painlessly. Also called “mercy killing,” euthanasia is rejected in traditional Judeo-Christian belief.

Evangelization. Implies a continuous, lifelong process of conversion by which a Christian makes an ever-deepening effort to establish a personal and communal relationship with Jesus and a commitment to live Jesus’ message—the Gospel—and to continue his mission of bringing about the Reign of God. *See also* **New evangelization.**

Existential. The word existential has a down-to-earth meaning among Hispanics. To speak about the existence of a person is to refer to his or her whole life, particularly as related to the circumstances in which he or she lives.

Functionalist attitudes. Attitudes and behaviors that respond to a particular situation in a practical way without having as a frame of reference a worldview and a values system.

Fundamentalist. One who follows a movement emphasizing the literal interpretation of the Scriptures without considering the

literary style, the historical context, and the intentions of the authors who wrote the Scriptures.

Hedonism. Doctrine that affirms that pleasure or happiness are the most important goods or goals in life.

Heterogeneous. Refers to something made up of a diversity of elements, such as groups made up of people with different characteristics.

Hispanic, Latino. These two terms are being used interchangeably in this book to refer to people originating from Caribbean countries, Latin America, and Spain, where the Spanish language and culture predominate, and their descendants in the United States, who may speak English or Spanish.

Holistic, integral. Terms that emphasize the totality of the human person and the interconnectedness of people's many dimensions—physical, psychological, religious, cultural, and so on.

Homogeneous. Refers to something composed of similar elements or to groups made up of people with similar characteristics.

Idiosincrasia. The psychological traits and culture embedded in the personality and “way of being” of a particular person or ethnic group.

Inculturation. The infusion of the Gospel within a culture to such an extent that the culture is reshaped and embraces Jesus' message and mission as its central guiding principle. *See also* **acculturation; enculturation; endoculturation; socialization.**

Indigenas. Indigenous or native people who lived in America before the arrival of Europeans; also, present-day descendants of the indigenous people who have not become *mestizos* in race or culture.

Integral education. Holistic education that includes the emotional, social, intellectual, spiritual, and skills domains at the personal level, and the cultural, economic, social, political, and religious areas at the structural level.

Mañanitas. Special serenades given at dawn for a loved person on his or her birthday or feast day (the day dedicated to his or her patron saint). Mexicans have a long-standing tradition of bringing

mañanitas to the Virgin of Guadalupe on her feast day—usually around four o’clock in the morning—and following these serenades with a communitarian celebration and breakfast before going off to work.

Materialism. A theory that physical matter is the only or fundamental reality and that all beings, processes, and phenomena can be exclusively explained as manifestations or results of matter. Also refers to assigning an absolute value or a very high value to material progress.

Mestizaje. The intermingling between people from two different races or cultures that gives birth to a new people. Usually, the Hispanic culture in Latin America is identified as the “first *mestizaje*” and the Latino–North American culture in the United States as the “second *mestizaje*.”

Mestizo, mestiza. These terms refer broadly to people whose parents or ancestors are from different racial groups. Used in a narrower, more specific sense, they refer to children of Spanish and *indígena* parents. *Mestizo* designates a male and *mestiza* designates a female. Used as an adjective, *mestizo* (“mixed”) also describes the new people, and *mestiza* the new culture, formed from the intermingling of different races or cultures.

Ministry. Specific service to people and communities in response to a personal vocation on behalf of the church community, officially recognized and sponsored by the diocese or parish. *See also* **pastoral action; pastoral agents; *pastoral de conjunto*; pastoralists; pastoral planning; youth and young adult ministers.**

Mística. A set of ideals, attitudes, values, and feelings that enlighten and motivate individuals or groups in their faith journey, inspiring their response to God and producing a spirituality that animates their life and pastoral ministry.

Modern culture. In a strict sense, modern culture refers to the period between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries when the Industrial Revolution gave way to a new social, economic, and political order that affected all aspects of human life, especially through science, technology, democracy, capitalism, and secularization. In this book, modern culture is used in a broader sense to

refer to the type of culture that has incorporated these elements as essential parts. *See also* **traditional culture**.

Moral relativism. A view affirming that ethical truths depend on the preferences of individuals and groups, negating the existence of objective and general norms of behavior based on Christian moral principles.

New evangelization. A call to conversion and hope that rests on God's promises and derives from Christ's Resurrection, which is the primary proclamation and the root of all evangelization, the foundation for all human advancement, and the principle of all genuine Christian cultures. It is likewise the effort to inculturate the Gospel in order to respond to the new situation people are facing as a result of the social and cultural changes of modernity.

Novios. Men and women who are in a love relationship that they expect will lead to marriage in the future. *Novios* are in a particular stage in a love relationship, a stage called *noviazgo*. *Noviazgo* includes two phases: going steady with a commitment not to date other people, and being *prometidos* (engaged persons), with a set date for marriage and practical preparations to establish a home.

Occultism. A belief in mysterious, spiritualist doctrines and practices to explain and control the supernatural phenomena of life.

Pastoral action. Organized ecclesial activity to facilitate and nurture the Christian growth of persons and communities, promoting their missionary action to foster the Reign of God. *See also* **ministry; pastoral agents; *pastoral de conjunto*; pastoralists; pastoral planning; youth and young adult ministers**.

Pastoral agents. Persons who, in responding to their vocation and as members of a church community, have a commitment to the mission of the church in the area of pastoral ministry.

Pastoral de conjunto. The action of all pastoral agents, ministers, and committed Christians—each in her or his own specific ministry—animated and directed by a common vision and coordinated in a spirit of communion and coresponsibility. Broadly, the harmonious coordination of all elements, ministries, and structures of the local and universal church in their work of bringing about the Reign of God.

Pastoralists. Persons with professional formation, practical skills, and experience in the field of pastoral ministry who are capable of doing pastoral planning, conducting pastoral-theological reflections, and elaborating theories for the development of pastoral ministry.

Pastoral planning. Effective organization of the church's action in fulfilling the mission of being leaven of the Reign of God in the world.

Pastoral-theological framework. Theological and pastoral guidelines originating from a specific vision and understanding of church. In this series, the framework is based on the Second Vatican Council's vision of church and on the pastoral guidelines of the *National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic Ministry*.

Person. In English, there is a frequent tendency to equate the words *person* and *personal* with the word *individual*. In the Hispanic philosophical framework, *individual* refers to the human characteristic of being a unique person; *individualista* (individualistic) refers to a human being in isolation, in himself or herself only. *Person* refers to the human being in himself or herself and in relationship with others.

Popular Catholicism. The set of Catholic beliefs and practices characteristic of the majority of Catholic persons in a particular culture. Hispanic popular Catholicism is usually influenced by either an *indígena* or African religious perspective and culture. Most forms of popular Catholicism are complex and diverse in their expressions and have different levels of coherence with official Catholicism.

Popular (pop) culture. Refers to the general culture of the United States when emphasizing that instead of being an expression of people's life, it is intentionally created for people's consumption. Pop culture is formed through the economic system and the mass media, which promote values that degrade the human person and nurture materialistic, superficial, and changeable attitudes toward others.

Popular religiosity. A set of religious beliefs, experiences, and celebrations that form the individual and collective consciousness

with which a people perceive, feel, and live the mysteries of God. *See also religiosidad.*

Posadas. Nightly celebrations that precede Christmas and include a procession to nine different houses, asking for lodging for Mary and Joseph; reciting the rosary or other devotional prayers; the breaking of a piñata (a big papier maché figure filled with fruit, candy, and party favors); and food and organized games for children. People of all ages participate in *posadas*.

Positivism. A philosophical school of thinking based on the idea that knowledge of truth is based only on scientific description and explanation of measurable data.

Praxis. A Latin word that translates literally as “practice” or “action.” Christian praxis involves people’s discipleship and their critical reflection about their actions—all in light of the Gospel.

Prophetic pastoral guidelines. Pastoral-theological principles agreed on in the Tercer Encuentro Nacional Hispano de Pastoral to set the direction and spirit of Hispanic ministry.

Proselytism. The attempt to convert followers from one church or religious group to another, often through direct and aggressive attacks of their beliefs. *See also proselytizing sects.*

Proselytizing sects. Independent religious groups proclaiming that they are the only ones who will achieve salvation and whose methods to win followers are based on proselytism. *See also proselytism.*

Pseudoreligious groups. People united by some beliefs and rituals related to the transcendental dimension of life, but not necessarily to God as the source and goal of human beings.

Reality. A holistic concept that encompasses the life experience of a person, the concrete environment in which he or she lives, and the active influence of the economy, government, culture, religion, and educational institutions on the person.

Reign of God. Jesus’ vision of God’s primacy in people’s hearts, minds, and actions; also, a state in which all personal relationships and social systems are guided by freedom, justice, peace, and God’s love.

Religiosidad. A broad concept that includes the natural tendency of people toward the divine; their relationship with God and with the sacred world; the religious environment in which they live; and their concrete religious beliefs and experiences.

Religious syncretism. A process that integrates two or more religious systems with the aim of uniting their doctrines, rites, and experiences to harmonize them with the life and culture of the group.

Santería. The worship of African gods under the appearance of Catholic saints, resulting from the cultural and religious acculturation of the Caribbean people.

Satanism. An obsession with or affinity for evil, usually expressed in a cult of Satan, characterized by a parody of Christian rites and directed toward extreme cruelty or viciousness.

Secularism. A belief that rejects or is indifferent toward religion; considers the construction of history as a sole responsibility of the human being, without a place for God's intervention; is a threat to faith and culture; and promotes divorce between faith and life. *See also secularization.*

Secularization. A process linked to the development of science, technology, and urbanization maintaining that the material realities of nature and humanity are in themselves "good," that their laws should be respected, and that God respects the human freedom needed for self-realization. Secularism affirms the autonomy of science and art from religion, leads to sociocultural progress, and fosters the universalization of culture. The church views secularization as a process that challenges faith and presents serious pastoral problems. *See also secularism.*

Signs of the times. Different situations that characterize the reality of life in a particular place and time and that challenge Christians to discern God's will and act accordingly.

Small ecclesial communities. A way of being and living as church in which small groups of people have direct interpersonal relationships, share their faith with a constant spirit of prayer, unite with other small communities, participate in their local church, and are signs of Christ in the world.

Small youth communities. Small communities of young people and young adults.

Socialization. Process by which persons acquire their culture through society. *See also* **acculturation; enculturation; endoculturation; inculturation.**

Traditional culture. Refers to the culture of a population segment or a particular person characterized for having a worldview, values, and ways of economic production and socialization that were typical before the generalization of modern culture in Europe, North America, and more developed sectors of other countries. *See also* **modern culture.**

Voodoo. A religion derived from African ancestor worship and characterized by rites of appeasement and by communication with animistic deities through trances.

Youth and young adult ministers. Persons in a diocese or parish who are responsible for the pastoral care of youth and young adults. *See also* **ministry; pastoral action; pastoral agents; *pastoral de conjunto*; pastoralists; pastoral planning.**