



Parish Encuentro
Participant
Guide

V ENCUENTRO

MISSIONARY DISCIPLES: WITNESSES OF GOD'S LOVE
DISCÍPULOS MISIONEROS: TESTIGOS DEL AMOR DE DIOS





Prayer for the Fifth National Encuentro of Hispanic/Latino Ministry

God of infinite Mercy,
you sent your Risen Son
to encounter the disciples on the way to Emmaus.
Grant us today a missionary spirit
and send us forth to encounter
our sisters and brothers:

to walk with them in friendship,
to listen to their hopes and dreams
with compassion,
and to proclaim your Word with courage,
so that they might come to know you once again
in the breaking of the Bread.

Make us all missionary disciples, and stay with us always,
as we seek to share the joy of the Gospel
with people of all generations,
from every race, language, culture, and nation.

We ask you this with burning hearts,
filled with the Holy Spirit,
in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and through the loving intercession of
our Blessed Mother Mary, Our Lady of Guadalupe,
Star of the New Evangelization in the Americas.

Amen.

Parish Encuentro Participant Guide

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Overview of the V Encuentro Process

Hispanic/Latino Catholics are a blessing from God, called to be a prophetic presence in our parish. Over the last 45 years, the process of national Encuentros has significantly changed the ways in which the Church responds to the Hispanic presence and the ways in which Hispanics respond as church. The V Encuentro provides another renewing experience, which is creating opportunities to prepare missionary disciples ready to serve the entire Church and society in the United States through the abundant gifts bestowed on the Hispanic/Latino community.

The V Encuentro process was named as a priority activity in the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Strategic Plan 2017-2020, and our parish has taken up the Bishops' call to participate in this nationwide conversation and missionary action. The **main goal** of the V Encuentro is to 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.

The V Encuentro is a four-year process of ecclesial reflection and action that invites 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. The V Encuentro **starts at the grass-roots level**, namely in small groups in parishes, schools, movements, and other Catholic organizations, reflecting on what is needed to better serve the fast-growing Hispanic population in local communities and movements, in light of the theme: ***Missionary Disciples: Witnesses of God's Love.***

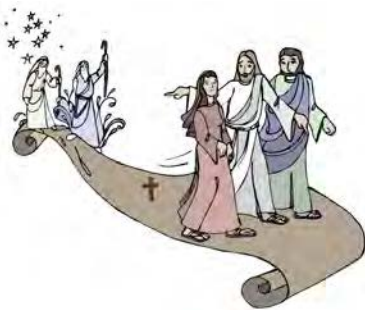
All leaders in (arch)dioceses, parishes, lay ecclesial movements and other Catholic organizations and institutions have been invited to participate by reaching out to Hispanic/Latino Catholics, particularly those living in the periphery, through the missionary process of evangelization and consultation of the V Encuentro.

At the heart of the V Encuentro process is a **five-week experience** of reflection, evangelization, and consultation guided by five themes inspired by Pope Francis' call to foster a culture of Encounter (cf. *The Joy of the Gospel*, n. 24). Everyone gathered in our Parish Encuentro has either participated in those reflection sessions or been contacted by someone who did. As the diagram on page 3 shows, we have now reached the second stage of this process: our **Parish Encuentro**. For the subsequent stages, delegates will be discerned and commissioned to represent our parish or (arch)diocese at the Diocesan, Regional, and National Encuentros. See the *Parish Encuentro Schedule* handout for locations and dates.



Goals of the Parish Encuentro

1. **Gather** members of the distinct parish groups who participated in the five sessions and missionary activities to share what they experienced during the five weeks of reflection, discernment, consultation, and evangelization.
2. **Reflect** together on the various social, cultural and pastoral realities experienced by Hispanics/Latinos in their parish and in the United States.
3. **Propose** practical responses to specific needs and aspirations in a process of reflection and discernment.
4. **Make** concrete commitments to advance the New Evangelization as a parish, small communities, lay ecclesial movements, and other groups.
5. **Celebrate** through our sharing, prayer, and worship.



Moment 2 – Getting Involved

Objectives:

1. To listen carefully to one another about what we have heard and experienced during the five-session experience, the missionary activities, and the consultation process.
2. To review and deepen our understanding of the needs and possibilities to better serve Hispanic Catholics in the parish, with emphasis on Hispanic/Latino youth and young adults.

Reflection on the Voices of Hispanic/Latino People in the Peripheries

Small group sharing (45 minutes)

Each small group should have a facilitator, a note taker, and a reporter. The note taker can also serve as a reporter, and the facilitator should make sure the group stays on schedule.

Step 1 (10 minutes): In pairs or groups of three, share the blessings you have experienced during the five sessions and missionary activity by answering the following questions. Each person has three to five minutes.

1. *Where did you see the presence of God in the lives of the people you encountered?*
2. *Did you discover something new about yourself during the Encuentro process? Explain.*

Step 2 (10 minutes): Review the responses in the *Parish Working Document* under the sections “Demographics of Hispanic/Latino People in the Peripheries” and “The Voices of Hispanic/Latino People in the Peripheries.” Note the following:

What, if anything, do you disagree with in these responses? _____

Based on your personal life experience, is anything missing/incomplete? What would you add?

Step 3 (25 minutes): In pairs or groups of three, take 10 minutes to identify one or two recommendations for each of the following questions, utilizing the information from the sections of the *Parish Working Document* you just finished reading. Remember to pay particular attention to the needs of youth and young adults.

1. *How can the gifts and talents of Hispanics/Latinos help create a strong sense of belonging and overcome the structures or patterns of behavior that have made some in the Hispanic/Latino community feel unwelcome in the Church?*

2. *How can the gifts and talents of Hispanics/Latinos be used to address the obstacles, needs and situations that require pastoral attention in order to help Hispanics/Latinos reach their potential in U.S. society?*

3. *How can the parish as a whole address the obstacles, needs and situations that require pastoral attention and avoid potential threats to the Hispanic/Latino community?*

4. *What more can the parish do to support the dreams and aspirations of the Hispanic/Latino community?*

Come together as a small group and take 10 minutes to share the responses to these questions while the note taker records each distinct suggestion. You will then have five minutes to select one recommendation to share in the plenary.

Plenary (30 minutes)

One person representing each small group shares their top insight or recommendation. Everything else should be submitted to the Parish Team in writing.

Recommendation to report in the Plenary:

Moment 4 – Being Fruitful

Objectives:

1. To reflect on and discuss the responses in the *Working Document* under “Listening to the Voice of the Parish Community” and “New Leaders.”
2. To discern pastoral priorities to better serve the pastoral and spiritual needs and aspirations of Hispanic Catholics, especially young people.
3. To collect information from potential delegates who will formally represent the parish at the Diocesan Encuentro.

Discernment of Parish Priorities and Recommended (Arch)diocesan Priorities

Small group sharing (60 minutes)

Each small group should have a facilitator, a note taker, and a reporter. The note taker can also serve as a reporter, and the facilitator should make sure the group stays on schedule.

Step 1 (15 minutes): Read the sections “Listening to the Voice of the Parish Community” and “New Leaders” in the *Parish Working Document*.

Step 2 (10 minutes): Brainstorm areas of priority that need to be addressed for pastoral and missionary action **at the parish level** over the next two years. Go around to each person and share ONE idea. Continue going around until everyone has run out of ideas or time is up. The note taker writes down all ideas. There should be no interruptions or criticism.

My ideas: _____

Step 3 (15 minutes): As a group, organize the ideas into categories (i.e. inactive Catholics, at-risk youth, families, young adults, new leaders, vocations, people with disabilities, unemployed and working poor, marginalized people, civic/social leaders, etc.). Choose one idea to share in the plenary. Everything else should be submitted to the Parish Team in writing.

Step 4 (10 minutes): Choose a new note taker. Brainstorm areas of priority that need to be addressed at the (arch)diocesan level to support the evangelizing mission of our parish. Go around to each person and share ONE idea. Continue going around until everyone has run out of ideas or time is up. Write down all ideas. There should be no interruptions or criticism.

My ideas: _____

Step 5 (10 minutes): As a group, organize the ideas into categories (i.e. inactive Catholics, at-risk youth, families, young adults, new leaders, vocations, people with disabilities, unemployed and working poor, marginalized people, civic/social leaders, etc.). Choose one idea to share in the plenary. Everything else should be submitted to the Parish Team in writing.

Break (15 minutes)

Plenary (45 minutes)

Listen to as many different voices during the plenary as possible, giving priority as much as possible to young people. A team of two or three people should take notes at the time of the plenary.

Step 1 (15 minutes): Each small group shares one recommendation at the parish level and one recommendation at the (arch)diocesan level.

Step 2 (10 minutes): After hearing the recommendations from the other small groups, each small group discusses and chooses one top priority, either parish or (arch)diocesan, from those identified during the plenary.

Step 3 (10 minutes): Each small group shares what they chose as their top priority. The plenary note takers will then give a preliminary summary of the top 2 or 3 priorities they heard at each level [parish and (arch)diocesan] from the entire Parish Encuentro.

Step 4 (10 minutes): Identification of possible Parish Delegates to the Diocesan Encuentro.

Criteria to Be a Parish Delegate to the Diocesan Encuentro

1. Have participated in all five sessions and missionary actions of the V Encuentro process.
2. Be involved or plan to be involved in the life of the faith community that they will represent.
3. Openness to learning more about missionary discipleship and being a pastoral leader in the Catholic Church in the United States.
4. Willingness and availability to represent the parish at the Diocesan Encuentro.
5. Availability and openness to be selected as (arch)diocesan delegates to the Regional and National Encuentros.

Final Announcements and *Encuentro Prayer*

Before dismissing the participants to prepare for the Liturgy, give instructions for the evaluation and any other announcements. Then close the session by reciting the Prayer of the V Encuentro.

Moment 5 – Celebrating

Objectives:

1. To celebrate the joy of being missionary disciples of Jesus Christ as a Eucharistic community.
2. To present *Commitment & Delegate Ballots* with the contact information for the potential delegates to the Diocesan Encuentro.
3. To offer in prayer the core pastoral priorities of the parish and those recommended for the (arch)diocese to better serve Hispanic Catholics and promote their leadership for service in the Church and society.

Evaluation

Individuals not serving in the closing liturgy should take 15 minutes to complete and turn in their Evaluation, while the liturgical ministers may go immediately to prepare the liturgy. They should complete their evaluations after the dismissal from the liturgy and return them to the Parish Encuentro Team.

Closing Liturgy

Everyone proceeds to the designated church or chapel for the closing liturgy, whether it be a prayer service or the Eucharist. It is here that the good work of the day and the sincere commitments of potential delegates are celebrated and offered as a pleasing sacrifice to God.





Parish Encuentro Evaluation

Parish: _____ Participant: _____ Email: _____

[1 = poor 2 = satisfactory 3 = good 4 = excellent]

Logistics and Hospitality:

Communication prior to the Encuentro	1	2	3	4
Personal preparation for the Encuentro	1	2	3	4
On-site coordination (registration, use of time, etc.)	1	2	3	4
Hospitality	1	2	3	4
Meeting space(s)	1	2	3	4
Food	1	2	3	4

Comments: _____

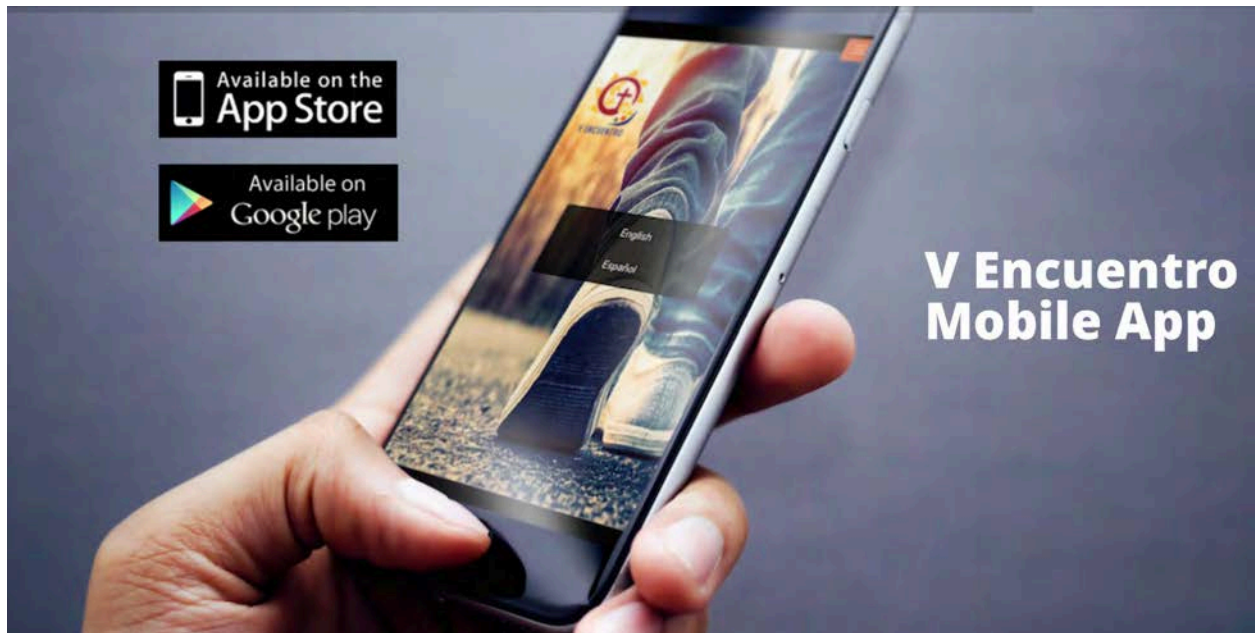
Process and Organization of the Parish Encuentro:

Introduction and Opening Prayer	1	2	3	4
Moment 1 (Taking the First Step) met its Objectives (p. 4)	1	2	3	4
Moment 2 (Getting Involved) met its Objectives (p. 5)	1	2	3	4
Moment 3 (Accompanying) met its Objectives (p. 7)	1	2	3	4
Moment 4 (Being Fruitful) met its Objectives (p. 8)	1	2	3	4
Moment 5 (Celebrating) met its Objectives (p. 10)	1	2	3	4
Overall, the Parish Encuentro met its Goals (p. 3)	1	2	3	4

Comments: _____



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