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## From the Editor

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## From the Editor

In a landmark joint pastoral letter entitled, “Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope,” dated January 23, 2003 (the fourth anniversary of Pope John Paul II’s apostolic exhortation *Ecclesia in America*), the Catholic bishops of Mexico and the United States observe: “In discerning the signs of the times, we note the greatly increased migration among the peoples of the Americas, and we see in this but one manifestation of a worldwide phenomenon—often called globalization—which brings with it great promises along with multiple challenges” (Available in *Origins* 32:34 [February 6, 2003]). If the symptoms of globalization include the blurring and redefinition of borders and a reconfiguration of relationships across those borders, then the cooperation of the Mexican and U.S. bishops in preparing this first joint pastoral letter is one important and hopeful sign. At the same time, they share grave concern over one of the most serious symptoms of the dark side of globalization, the harsh realities of migration in large numbers, especially across the border between Mexico and the United States. The pastoral points out that “Many persons who seek to migrate are suffering and in some cases tragically dying; human rights are abused; families are kept apart; and racist and xenophobic attitudes remain,” and it issues a prophetic call for pastoral and public policy responses that combine compassion, justice and respect for fundamental human rights. We applaud these pastors on both sides of the border, and we hope that their timely call to respond to the reality of globalization with a “globalization of solidarity” will be heard and heeded.

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In this issue of the *Journal of Hispanic/Latino Theology*, we continue to set before our readers the rich fare that is the result of the June 2002 ACHTUS Colloquium, at which participants focused their attention and energies on the theme of “U.S. Latino/a Theologies and the Questions Raised for it by Postmodernity, Postcolonialism and Globalization.” The craft of theology as viewed and constructed through the lenses of postmodernity is the concern to Dr. Michelle A. González of

Loyola Marymount University, in her essay, "One Is Not Born a Latina, One Becomes One": The Construction of the Latina Feminist Theologian in Latino/a Theology. Transposing Simone de Beauvoir's well-known words "one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman" into a theological key, Professor González tackles the thorny question of essentialism in a critical examination of the construction of discourse within Latino/a theology. Focusing specifically on the terms "Latina," "feminist," and "theologian," she brings an incisive hermeneutics of suspicion to bear on Latino/a theological discourse.

It is noteworthy that the essays by Dr. James B. Nickoloff and Dr. Carmen Marie Nanko were developed collaboratively, under the rubric of "Elbows on the Table: The Ethics of Doing Theology." In the months leading up to the Colloquium at which these essays were first presented, the authors exchanged ideas and several drafts of their essays, which took shape in deliberate conversation with each other's insights. The resulting essays, presented here, stretch the boundaries of theological discourse to address different dimensions of the politics of exclusion, to challenge exclusionary practices even within the craft of U.S. Hispanic theologies. In "Sexuality: A Queer Omission in U.S. Latino/a Theology," Dr. James B. Nickoloff takes on the fact that U.S. Latino/a theologians have thus far failed to engage in a "sustained examination of the consequences for theology of a serious consideration of sexuality or sex." In her contribution to this issue of the *Journal of Hispanic / Latino Theology*, "Elbows on the Table: The Ethics of Doing Theology. Reflections from a U.S. Hispanic Perspective," Dr. Carmen Marie Nanko reconceives the horizons of popular culture and popular religion to set an emphatically postmodern table, one at which U.S. Hispanic theologians are called to "be open to inclusion, open to invitations to other tables particularly those that stretch our comfort zones, and we must be hospitable to those we invite to our tables especially when it is most difficult and uncomfortable. We must also be honest and realistic, comprehensive inclusion is never really possible, the truly inclusive table is an eschatological hope."

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