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Hosffman Ospino (Ed.), *Our Catholic Children: Ministry with Latin@ Youth and Young Adults* - Review

Israel Diaz
Barry University

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Hosffman Ospino, ed. *Our Catholic Children: Ministry with Latin@ Youth and Young Adults*. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 2018. 247 pp. \$9.95 Paper. ISBN: 1681928654.

Hosffman Ospino's edited volume, *Our Catholic Children: Ministry with Latin@ Youth and Young Adults*, delivers a collaborative effort that presents the *realidad* of Catholic Latin@ youth and young adult ministry in the United States and proposes constructive approaches to ministering effectively to Latin@ youth and young adults. This collection of essays in English and Spanish is an indispensable resource for those engaged in ministry in the Catholic Church in the United States.

Ospino draws attention to the *realidad* that, while all Catholics are part of the one story of the “baptized women and men who live in relationship with Jesus Christ within the Roman Catholic tradition,” Latin@ Catholics in the United States are treated as comprising “a different story” (3). This, he suggests, is evident in how the *Pastoral Juvenil Hispana* is treated as a different story by pastoral leaders—including Latin@ leaders working with Catholic youth—who do not fully grasp the pastoral, theological, cultural, and psychological assumptions of *pastoral juvenil hispana* (5). Unless we understand that all Catholics in the United States are part of the same story, Ospino asserts, we will not be able to embrace our present *realidad* (3).

The contributing authors do well in presenting statistics that illumine the diversity in Catholic education, parish life, and leadership formation among Catholic Latin@s. In speaking of Catholic education, Ospino points to how Catholic schools are not benefiting Catholic minorities in the same way as they have benefited Euro-American white Catholics who, through Catholic education, are better prepared to succeed in society and to serve the church (21). The concern regarding the ability of Catholic institutions to minister to Latin@ youth and young

adults is further articulated by Vincent A. Olea. Olea describes how Catholic youth ministry often dismisses key areas that affect the lives of Latin@ youth such as mental health, the vulnerability of LGBTQ Latin@ youth, and identity (39). This, he suggests, is due to the supposition that the salvific potential of young people is measured by their involvement in parish ministry. This assumption disregards young people's salvific potential in their secular everyday lives (45). Similarly, as "many Catholics still perceive the Hispanic population as one isolated and difficult to understand minority," Antonio Medina-Rivera advocates for a renewed understanding of being Church in the United States. This renewed understanding is to make "ministering to this population, affirming their protagonic role, and finding ways to retain them by welcoming and nurturing in the Church" a top priority (65). With regard to leadership formation, Susan Reynolds and Steffano Montano stress how the vitality of Latin@ youth and young adults in the Catholic Church in the United States gives witness to their faith and builds vibrant ecclesial communities that demand that this population be engaged and nurtured (77). Reynolds's and Montano's assessment of Latin@ Catholic leadership formation identifies several obstacles to promoting leadership among Latin@ youth and young adults. The concrete impediments presented by these authors are accompanied by practical approaches to minister to this marginalized group and engage their *realidades* more effectively.

Our Catholic Children excels in generating a much-needed awareness of the complexities of ministering to Latin@ youth and young adults in the Catholic Church in the United States and in proposing ways to meet and move beyond these challenges. Ospino is correct in stating that the book is an important resource for "pastoral leaders, academics, educators, advocates, and anyone else committed to working with young Catholic people in the United States" (7). The book can be utilized as a primer to introduce lay ministers to the challenges facing Latin@ youth

and young adults and to foster discussion of new ministerial approaches that meet the needs of its intended audience. The writing style and chapter lengths of the book make it accessible to lay ministers. Moreover, since the book includes a both English and Spanish versions of the text, it allows for an inclusive conversation between English and Spanish speakers on how to engage Latin@ youth in Catholic institutions in the United States and how to consider a renewed understanding of being Church. The statistics and approaches submitted by the various authors have ecclesiological and missiological implications in their call for relevant learning outcomes and curricula of pastoral ministry programs in seminaries and Catholic universities in the United States.

Given that the pastoral leaders have not fully grasped the pastoral, theological, cultural, and psychological *realidades* of our Latin@ Catholic youth, the status of *pastoral juvenil hispana* has been relegated to a “different story.” These assumptions about Latin@ youth and young adults and the resulting implications related to carrying out a “different” ministry could have been more critically examined and further explored by the book’s authors. Nonetheless, *Our Catholic Children* is a welcome resource for parishes, dioceses, and scholars interested in the fields of ministry, ecclesiology, and missiology.

Israel Díaz

Barry University

Miami Shores, FL