

## V Encuentro in the Dallas Diocese

by Ken Eppes

“That they all may be one” (Jn 17:21) was Jesus’ prayer recorded in the Gospel of John.

Thus, the Fifth Encuentro was initiated by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. The V Encuentro is a four-year process to discern ways in which the Church in the United States can better respond to the Hispanic/Latino presence. It hopes to strengthen the ways in which Hispanics/Latinos answer the call to the New Evangelization as missionary disciples serving the entire Church.

The V Encuentro emphasizes the importance of involving young, second and third generation Hispanics/Latinos many of whom do not speak Spanish. To be inclusive the entire process is bilingual.

The Diocese of Dallas is a full participant. In 2015, Bishop Kevin Farrell appointed five diocesan delegates for the V Encuentro: Graciela Aviles, Sr. Silvia Garza, Sr. Beatriz Martinez, Claudio Mora, and Lynn Rossol. Their responsibility is to work closely with the bishop or his delegate to organize the diocesan Encuentro and to form and train the diocesan team of accompaniment.

Parish leaders were selected and given training at workshops around the diocese. In the Diocese of Dallas, leaders from **20** parishes have so far participated in facilitator training and are guiding their parishes through the five V Encuentro parish sessions titled:

1. Called to a loving Encounter with Jesus in the Church
2. With Words and Actions: Do It!
3. Walking Together with Jesus
4. Bearing Fruits of New Life
5. Celebrating the Joy of Being Missionary Disciples

Each session includes prayer, reflection and action, based on the Catholic Action model; See, Judge, Act.

San Juan Diego and St. Monica parishes have completed the five sessions with the parents of the children in faith formation programs—the V Encuentro is for everyone!

The U.S. bishops have said the V Encuentro is not solely for Hispanic Catholics. One of the bishops’ objectives is, “Call *all* Catholics in the United States to become authentic and joyful missionary disciples that give witness to God’s Love with a prophetic voice in a culturally diverse Church.” (Emphasis added.)

The diocesan V Encuentro celebration will take place at Bishop Lynch High School in Dallas on November 18, beginning with Mass celebrated by Bishop Edward Burns at 8:00 a.m.

But wait! There’s more.

Episcopal Region X will celebrate the V Encuentro April 13-15, 2018 in San Antonio. And the national celebration of the V Encuentro will take place on

September 20-23, 2018, at the Gaylord Texan Hotel and Resort in Grapevine, Texas. The process will continue even after that with communication of the V Encuentro and its outcomes and the development of resources.

In 2020, the learnings, recommendations and best practices will be implemented throughout the Catholic Church in the United States.