



JUST *Love* MINISTRY



# HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH



A Devotional Celebrating  
Faith, Cultures & Community

# SCRIPTURE READING

## Revelation 7:9 (NIV)

“After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands.”



## REFLECTION

Hispanic Heritage Month is a time to celebrate the rich cultural diversity, history, and contributions of Hispanic and Latino(e) communities. Central to Hispanic identity is a deep-rooted faith and commitment to family and community, which have shaped their cultures for centuries. The vibrancy of their traditions, such as music, food, and religious festivals, offers a glimpse of their devotion to God and how faith plays a central role in everyday life.

In Hispanic cultures, faith is often expressed in community settings—whether it’s the celebration of **Día de los Reyes Magos (Three Kings’ Day)**, the lively processions during **Holy Week (Semana Santa)**, or the daily prayers shared at home. This culture of shared faith highlights the biblical call to live in unity and mutual care.

As the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), we are called to walk alongside our Hispanic siblings, honoring their gifts and traditions. The ELCA celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month by lifting up the contributions of Hispanic leaders in

the church, creating spaces where their voices are heard, and supporting ministries that address the needs of Latino(e) communities.

One way the ELCA does this is through its *Asociación Lutera-na de Ministerios Latinos* (Latino Ministries Association), which works to develop new leaders, strengthen congregations, and foster relationships across different communities. By supporting bilingual and bicultural ministries, the ELCA aims to create a church that reflects the diversity of God’s kingdom and honors the unique gifts of every community.

Take a moment to reflect on the beauty of unity in diversity. Hispanic culture is vibrant and rich, filled with traditions, music, and expressions of faith. Consider how these elements have contributed to the broader Christian community. Think about the stories of faith that you’ve encountered in Hispanic traditions—perhaps the celebration of **Día de los Muertos** or the deep spirituality found in the **rosary**. Each tradition is a testament to the resilience and creativity of Hispanic communities.

## Notable Hispanic/Latino(a) Theologians

Hispanic theologians have made significant contributions to the field of theology, enriching our understanding of faith and community. Here are a few notable figures:



### **Ada María Isasi-Díaz**

A pioneer in Mujerista Theology, Isasi-Díaz focused on the experiences and struggles of Hispanic women, advocating for their voices to be heard in theological discourse.



### **Nancy E. Bedford**

An Argentinian theologian, Bedford has made significant contributions to feminist theology and is a professor at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary.



### **Gustavo Gutiérrez**

Known as the father of Liberation Theology, Gutiérrez's work emphasizes the importance of social justice and the preferential option for the poor.



### **Justo L. González**

A prominent historian and theologian, González has written extensively on church history and Hispanic theology, contributing to the understanding of the Latino/a experience in the church.



### **Virgilio Elizondo**

Known for his work on Mestizo Theology, Elizondo explored the cultural and religious identity of Mexican-Americans and their role in the broader church.

These theologians have enriched the church with their insights and perspectives, helping to create a more inclusive and diverse theological landscape.

## MUSIC MEDITATION

Listen to or sing along with a hymn from the ELW that resonates with you. Consider:

### **All Are Welcome (ELW 641):**

This hymn is often used in multicultural worship settings and reflects the spirit of unity and inclusivity, affirming that all people, from all cultures, are welcome in God's kingdom.

### **De Tierra Lejana Venimos (ELW 307):**

This is a traditional Spanish-language hymn that celebrates the journey of the Magi to meet Jesus. It's a wonderful reflection of faith within Hispanic culture and could connect well with the themes of the devotion, especially in highlighting how different nations come to worship Christ.

As you engage with the music, let it remind you of the ways worship transcends cultural boundaries, bringing us together in praise.

# PRAYER

*Gracious God, we thank you for the rich cultural diversity that reflects the beauty of Your creation. We celebrate the gifts of the Hispanic and Latino(e) communities in our church and beyond, and we pray that we may continue to learn from their faith, resilience, and joy. Help us to build a church that honors all cultures and languages, and to walk in unity as we share Your love with the world. Inspire us to engage in meaningful intercultural dialogue, fostering mutual understanding and respect among all people. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.*

# PERSONAL ACTION

Reflect on how you can honor and uplift Hispanic and Latino(e) culture(s) in your community. This might include:

- Attending a cultural event or service.
- Learning about a Hispanic saint or religious figure.
- Engaging with Hispanic art, literature, or music.
- Volunteering with a local Hispanic – Latino(e) ministries.

# RESOURCES

- [ELCA Latino Ministries](#)
- [Lutheran Hour Ministries Hispanic Heritage Month](#)



# KEY TERMS

## **Hispanic:**

Someone who is a native of, or descends from, a Spanish-speaking country. Compare this to “Spaniard” or “Spanish,” which is typically used to describe someone who was born in, or descends from, Spain.

## **Latino/Latina:**

Someone who is a native of, or descends from, a Latin American country. This includes Brazil but generally excludes Spain. Not all Brazilians will identify as Latino or Latina, but some do.

## **Latinx:**

A gender-neutral term to refer to someone with heritage from a Latin American country. This term was created by American-born people who wanted a more inclusive word to describe their identity that explicitly includes non-binary people.

## **Latiné:**

Another gender-neutral term that became mainstream in the late 2010s. Created by the Spanish-speaking LGBTQ\* community, Latin, like Latinx, replaces the gendered a/o (as in Latino/Latina), opting instead for the letter “e” from the Spanish language.