

Hispanic Populations Growing the Charismatic Church

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A recent study by the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life found that Hispanics are changing American religion with their unique combination of Catholicism and Pentecostal beliefs. A third of all Catholics in the U.S. are Hispanic and more than half identify themselves as charismatic. Only one-eighth of non-Hispanics identify themselves as charismatic. Many Catholic Hispanics still believe in traditional Catholic teachings, but some also say they have experienced divine healings and direct revelation from God. "This is introducing a new way to worship, a new way of being the church," Luis Lugo, director of the Pew Forum, told ABC News. "You could call it bringing the fiesta spirit into the Catholic Church." The survey found that some Hispanics are leaving Catholic churches completely and joining evangelical churches. The report from the survey said that the No. 1 reason for these conversions was to experience a direct and personal relationship with God that could not be obtained in traditional Mass services. Researchers suspect that as the Hispanic population, which is the fastest-growing minority, continues to grow in this country the charismatic and Pentecostal movements will grow as well.