

Latin Church Passing Torch to Next Generation

The Spirit-empowered church in Latin America has witnessed revival over the last few decades. As a new generation of leaders arises, the question is whether or not the revival will continue—and even grow.

Empowered21 (Empoderados21 in Spanish) is doing its part to make sure the next generation of **Latin-American Christians** catches the spirit of revival. Empowered21 co-sponsored Pasando la Antorcha (Passing the Torch) along with Enlace and the Luis Palau Association May 4-8 at the Expolit Convention in Miami.

The goal of the event: to discuss how to pass the torch of revival to the next generation of **Spirit-empowered** Christians in Latin America.

“At Empower 21 we are very concerned about the future of the Spirit-empowered movement among new generations,” Billy Wilson, executive director of the International Center for Spiritual Renewal and **Empowered21**, told Charisma News.

“There’s probably no place on earth where it’s more critical to pass the torch well than in Latin America. With a whole new generation rising, there’s a big transition going on in the movement in Latin America. If the revival is going to continue then this new generation really has to take the torch.”

Passing the Torch Sessions and workshops featured topics like passing the natural process of leadership and authority to the new generation at home and in the congregation so that the Spirit-empowered movement of Latin-American countries overflows to the whole world.

Ministry leaders such as Luis Palau, Andres Palau (a next

generation leader and son of Luis Palau), Otoniel and Omayra Font, Emilio Abreu, Claudio Freidzon, Jonas Gonzalez and Juanita Cercone, Esteban Solis (a next generation leader and son of Hugo and Ruth de Solis), Evelio Reyes and Omar Cabrera were on hand to bring together intergenerational, multi-denominational and Christian leaders. These leaders equipped and blessed a new generation with the power of the **Holy Spirit**.

"I am very excited to see how the Holy Spirit is moving in different **Hispanic ministries** with one sense: the need to prepare the coming generations to walk in the paths we have drawn," says Juanita Cercone of Enlace. "That is why we have decided to be a part of this initiative to train our leaders on how to pass the baton."

Cercone says Latin America is a young continent where the gospel has only a few years of history. As she sees it, the time of transition should not be abrupt—younger Christians must walk with their elders and take part of what they are doing even now.

"Our God is a generational God, he is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and that is how we should project ourselves in our ministerial lives," Cercone says. "I understand that the ministry is not just the pulpit."

Carlos Barbieri of the Luis Palau Association says the event is perhaps the most important for the Hispanic church in decades because the topic of Passing the Torch involves two generations: those who pass the torch and those who receive it.

"It speaks of a historic moment in the heart of a family, or of a congregation, or of a ministry in which the one who leads and carries the mantel of the Lord passes it with the authority and power of the Spirit," Barbieri says.

"It speaks of God's time for change. It speaks of a movement

forward, of an extension for His glory. How I wish thousands could attend this Congress in May! Because we are seeing a unique move of the Holy Spirit in all of Latin America, and we must be a part of that move. I encourage you to set these days off so that, guided by experienced servants of God; we may seek His face in His Word.”

Samuel Rodriguez, president of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference, believes God is empowering His church for the last match in the game.

“It is very encouraging to see different ministries bringing their callings, resources and passion for the strengthening of the **kingdom of God**,” Rodriguez says. “Our prayer is that the Hispanic ministries worldwide can capture the essence of Jesus’ prayer in John 17, and that we may have a greater impact in evangelism and missions on a global scale.”