2025 YEAR IN REVIEW

2025 AT A GLANCE

- 46 Equipados Participants
- 36 Equipados Graduates
- 100 Leadership Workshop Attendees
- 150 YA Leaders Encuentro Regional
- 200 CST Workshop Attendees

ONE CHURCH MANY CULTURES A SHARED MISSION

Throughout 2025, the Office of Hispanic Ministry continued to accompany Hispanic Catholics and support the parishes that serve them through formation, advocacy, leadership development, and collaboration. We are especially encouraged by the faith, generosity, and desire for belonging expressed by our Hispanic youth and young adults, whose gifts will help shape the future of the Church in our diocese. We remain committed to walking alongside pastors and parish leaders as they respond to the diverse cultural, linguistic, and generational realities present in their communities. None of this work is accomplished alone. It depends upon the shared efforts of clergy, parish leaders, diocesan offices, volunteers, families, and ministry partners who build with our communities in a spirit of communion. We are deeply grateful for Bishop Johnston's continued support of Hispanic Ministry and for his confidence in the gifts and potential of Hispanic Catholics throughout the Diocese of Kansas City–St. Joseph.

2025 YEAR IN REVIEW

FORMACIÓN, LIDERAZGO Y VIDA PARROQUIAL

Hispanic Ministry is not an event office, but a strategic pastoral office. Serving both people and parishes through formation, accompaniment, advocacy and collaboration.

EQUIPADOS: FORMING CATECHISTS

The first Equipados cohort reached a significant milestone in 2025. Of 46 participants, 36 completed the program and earned diocesan recognition. Bishop James V. Johnston Jr. served as principal celebrant for the May 31 graduation Mass, with Father Lopez concelebrating. Graduates returned to their parishes better prepared to serve as catechetical leaders and collaborators.

LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP

Approximately 100 participants gathered at the Chancery on September 20 for a Spanish-language leadership workshop with Dr. Gerardo Salazar. The day addressed healthy and unhealthy leadership, effective communication, conflict resolution and unity in the Church's evangelizing mission.

THE WAY: LISTENING ACROSS THE DIOCESE

Hispanic Ministry contributed throughout the year to planning and consultation for The Way, the diocese's youth-to-young-adult initiative. Listening sessions were held across the diocese, including Spanish-language gatherings, so that families and parish leaders could raise questions about Confirmation, parent support, implementation and access. This was diocesan work, not limited to Hispanic parishes.

FORMING DISCIPLES FOR MISSION

The office's formation work extended beyond Equipados. In September and again in December, Leyden taught a Catholic Social Teaching course for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, equipping participants to understand and apply the Church's social doctrine in pastoral and public life. On November 8, the office also presented a charisms workshop at St. Gabriel Parish, helping participants discern the gifts entrusted to them by the Holy Spirit and consider how those gifts might build up the Church and serve the common good.

2025 YEAR IN REVIEW

ACOMPAÑAMIENTO, COLABORACIÓN Y MISIÓN

ENCUENTRO JUVENIL REGIONAL

Approximately 150 young-adult leaders from across Region IX gathered July 25-27 at the Pastoral Center of the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas. Leyden served on the planning committee and, as part of a regional team, helped develop the program and select speakers and topics. The diocese brought a delegation of approximately ten young adults. Their feedback reinforced the need for parish life that reflects bicultural experience.

MIGRANT MINISTRY AND ADVOCACY

The office participated in the Catholic Social Ministry Gathering in Washington, D.C., national Justice for Immigrants calls, immigration working groups and meetings with Catholic partners, attorneys and public officials. These relationships helped the diocese remain informed and allowed the pastoral realities of immigrant families to be represented in conversations about policy and reform.

PARISH AND FAMILY ACCOMPANIMENT

Throughout the year, the office met with priests and parish leaders, supported youth and parish initiatives, and participated in celebrations such as Our Lady of Guadalupe. The office's role is not simply to organize events, but to help parishes recognize needs, strengthen access and build ministry with Hispanic communities.

DIOCESAN, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL SERVICE

Hispanic Ministry represented the diocese through Region IX collaboration, the National Catholic Association of Diocesan Directors of Hispanic Ministry, the USCCB Hispanic/Latino Advisory Group and ongoing work with diocesan departments. These partnerships extend the diocese's reach, bring formation and resources home, and ensure local experience contributes to the wider Church.

LOOKING AHEAD

The work of 2025 strengthened the foundation for the year ahead: deeper migrant accompaniment, continued catechetical formation, greater attention to families and bicultural young adults, and stronger collaboration with parishes. The Office of Hispanic Ministry remains committed to sharing information early, building with communities rather than for them, and strengthening access to the life and mission of the diocese.