

MESSAGE FROM ELDER R. ERNEST CASTILLO
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It is no secret that our Hispanic ministry is one of the fastest growing ministries here in the North American Division. From the 15 original Hispanic church members in a little Spanish Church in Sanchez, Arizona in 1899, the Hispanic membership here in the North American Division has mushroomed to about 250,000.

An interesting story, that I would like to share with each one. This story appears in the book *“The Untold Story”*, pgs. 20,21, written by Elder Manuel Vasquez.

“In 1913, José Sánchez, one of the converted sons of the patriarch Lorenzo Sánchez, was working at the academy in Angwin, CA, to support his son Ismael, who was a student there. One day Abel decided to visit Mrs. White in Elmshaven and was given a message of encouragement concerning the Hispanic work.

When Abel arrived at the two-story house in the country, Mrs. White graciously invited him in. While getting acquainted, she noticed his Spanish accent and asked where he attended Church. ‘I’m a member of the Spanish-speaking Adventist church in Sánchez, Arizona,’ Abel told her. She then related to him the only known inspired words regarding the Spanish-speaking work in the North American Division.

‘It has been shown me that the Spanish work will be placed at the “vanguard”, and march at the head of the cause of God in the United States.’ “

As we have entered the twenty-first century, we praise God for our many Hispanic pioneers who paved the way in many ways. But there are still challenges to be met. Challenges that always confront a growing ministry.