



# St. John's Newsletter



## Our Lady of Guadalupe

As the patroness of the Americas and Mexico, Our Lady of Guadalupe is one of the most recognized images of Our Lady appearing to people on Earth. In December we celebrate the event as well as the humble young man who saw her and followed her instructions.

On Dec. 9, 1531, a peasant in Mexico named Juan Diego was climbing the Hill of Tepeyac when he saw a vision of a beautiful woman. She spoke to him in the Aztec language and identified herself as the Virgin Mary, "the mother of the very true deity," emphasizing a monotheistic God amidst the Aztec culture that adored multiple gods. Mary requested that a church be built on the Hill of Tepeyac, and Juan immediately approached the archbishop of Mexico City, who did not believe the story. Undaunted, Juan again told the bishop about his vision the following day. At that point, the bishop asked for a sign from Our Lady in order to prove the validity of the vision. When Juan told Our Lady about this, she promised to send one the next day, Dec. 11. However, Juan was obligated to tend to his sick uncle, so he was unable to go back to the Hill and meet Our Lady and receive the awaited sign. On Dec. 12, his

uncle had fallen gravely ill, so Juan Diego set out for a priest to administer Confession and the Last Rites.

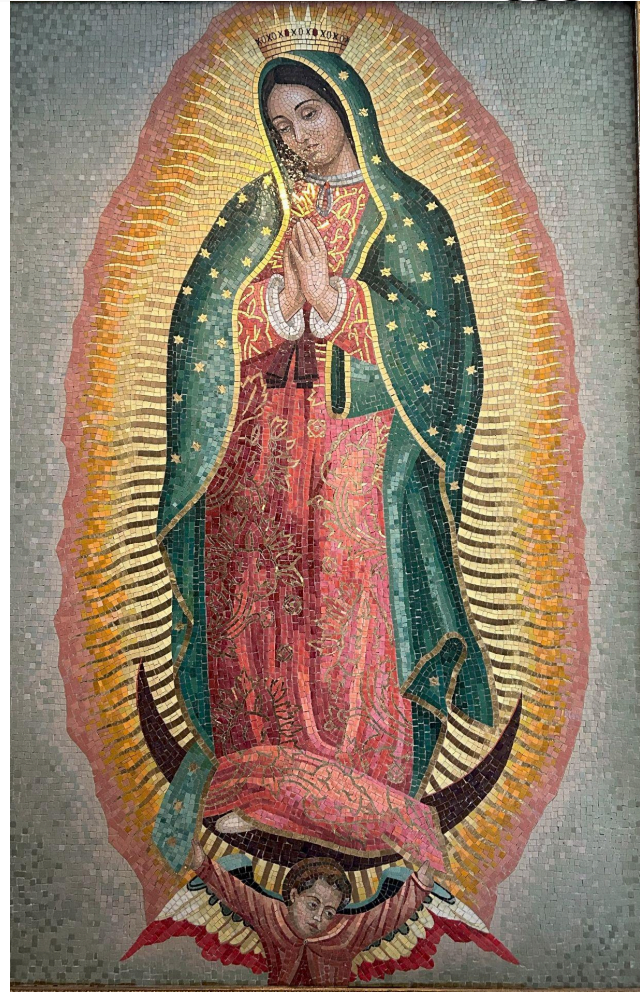
Ashamed that he had not met Mary the day before, he set out on a different path than the one by the Hill. Even so, Mary intercepted his journey. At this point, several miracles occurred.

First, Mary assured Juan Diego that his

uncle would make a full recovery. Second, she instructed Juan to gather the flowers he'd find at the top of the Hill, which was impossible, given that it was the month of December when no flowers were in bloom.

Juan ended up gathering a beautiful bouquet of Castilian roses that he found at the Hilltop. This variety of roses wasn't even native to Mexico. Third, Mary arranged the flowers inside Juan's tilma (cloak), and when he approached the bishop for the third time, the roses cascaded out of his cloak, revealing a beautiful imprint of Our Lady on the inside of the tilma. The miraculous image convinced the bishop to believe and the church was built on the site,

To date the image cannot be explained by science. The image on the tilma was able to do what up to that time the missionaries were not able to do significantly. Namely, clearly explain Christianity to the Indian people. The proof is in the fact that after the apparitions, eight million natives of Mexico converted to Catholicism from 1531 to 1538.



### The Image on the Tilma

*\*A pictograph which could be read and understood by the Aztec Indians.*

*\*Our Lady appears as a beautiful young Indian maiden and Queen.*

*\*Her eyes are looking down with humility and compassion.*

*\*She is wearing a blue-green mantle (the color worn by royalty) covered with stars.*

*\*The stars signify she comes from heaven – the Queen of Heaven. The constellations are in the exact position as appeared before dawn on the morning of December 12, 1531.*

*\*Her robe is colored rose or pale red and covered with Aztec flowers, symbolic of an Aztec princess.*

*\*In the center of her robe, overlying her womb, is a four petal quincunx flower in the shape of a cross, a sign of the Divine and the center of the cosmic order to the Aztec.*

*\*Her hands are joined in prayer so she is not God and she points her finger to the cross on her brooch.*

*\*Her fur cuffs symbolize royalty.*

*\*She wears a black maternity band signifying she is with Child.*

*\*A black cross is on the brooch around her neck signifies she is a follower of the God of the Spanish Missionaries,*

*\*She stands in front of the sun. The sun symbolizes the greatest Aztec god – announcing the God who is greater than their sun god.*

*\*She stands on the moon. The crescent moon symbolized the Aztec feathered serpent moon god. She has clearly crushed and defeated him.*

*\*An angel with eagle's wings supports the Mother of God. The eagle was the "bird of the sun." Here the eagle is the servant of the Virgin. She holds her mantle in one hand and robe with the other, signifying the Son she bears is from both heaven and earth.*

The celebration of the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe will be held at St. John's on Dec. 12 at 5:30 am with Mananitas followed by refreshments in the Parish Hall and 6 pm Mass with Matachines and Danza with another reception afterward in the Hall.

Sources: <https://guadalupeshrine.org/our-lady-of-guadalupe-shrine/#message>

<https://www.coraevalans.com/blog/article/everything-you-need-to-know-about-our-lady-of-guadalupe>

Volume 15 - December 2024- St. John's Newsletter is a once-a-month publication aimed at providing you with items of interest about our Catholic faith. If there is a topic you are interested in, please contact the parish office and we will try to address it in future issues. – Submitted by Mary Jo Peters