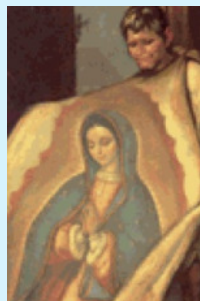


SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:

- **St. Juan Diego was one of the few Aztecs that converted to Catholicism, prior to the apparition.**
- **The Blessed Mother appeared to St. Juan Diego 3 times.**
- **The word Guadalupe was what the Bishop mistakenly heard from St. Juan Diego.**
- **A Tilma is a rough material that normally only lasts 20 years.**



Our Lady of Guadalupe

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History

In 1531 The Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to a 57 year old Aztec Indian in Mexico, his baptismal name was Juan Diego. St. Juan Diego was one of the few natives that the Franciscans had success in converting. December 9, 1531 Juan Diego was walking to Mass in a small village outside of Mexico City. As St. Juan Diego neared a hill called Tepeyac he heard beautiful music. On the hill, he beheld a beautiful vision – a lovely Lady dressed as an Aztec Princess, expecting a child. She spoke to him in his own language. She said to him:

First Apparition: December 9, 1531

Juanito, my dearest son, where are you going? Know and understand well,



you my most humble son, that I am the ever-virgin Holy Mary, Mother of the True God for whom we

live, of the Creator of all things, Lord of heaven and the earth. I wish that a temple be erected here quickly, so I may therein exhibit and give all my love, compassion, help, and protection, because I am your merciful mother, to you, and to all the inhabitants on this land and all the rest who love me, invoke and confide in me; listen there to their lamentations, and remedy all their miseries, afflictions and sorrows. And to accomplish what my clemency pretends, go to the palace of the bishop of Mexico, and you will

(cont. page 3)

St. Juan Diego

St Juan Diego Cuahtlatotzin (1474-1548). Little is known about the life of Juan Diego before his conversion, but tradition and archaeological and iconographical sources, along with the most important and oldest indigenous document on the event of

Guadalupe, “**El Nican Mopohua**” (written in Náhuatl with Latin characters, 1556, by the Indigenous writer Antonio Valeriano), give some information on the life of the saint and the apparitions.

Juan Diego was born in

1474 with the name “**Cuahtlatotzin**” (the talking eagle) in Cuautlitlán, today part of Mexico City, Mexico. He was a gifted member of the Chichimeca people, one of the more culturally advanced groups living in the Anáhuac Valley.

(Cont. page 2)



St. Juan Diego was canonized July 31, 2002, by St. Pope John Paul II



St. Juan Diego (cont. from page 1)

When he was 50 years old he was baptized by a Franciscan priest, Fr Peter da Gand, one of the first Franciscan missionaries. On December 9, 1531, when Juan Diego was on his way to morning Mass, the Blessed Mother appeared to him on Tepeyac Hill, the outskirts of what is now Mexico City. She asked him to go to the Bishop and to request in her name that a shrine be built at Tepeyac, where she promised to pour out her grace upon those who invoked her. The Bishop, who did not believe Juan Diego, asked for a sign to prove that the apparition was true. On December 12, Juan Diego returned to Tepeyac. Here, the Blessed Mother told him to climb the hill and to pick the flowers that he would find in bloom. He obeyed, and although it was winter time, he found roses flowering. He gathered the flowers and took them to Our Lady who carefully placed them in his mantle

and told him to take them to the Bishop as "proof". When he opened his mantle, the flowers fell on the ground and there remained impressed, in place of the flowers, an image of the Blessed Mother, the apparition at Tepeyac.

With the Bishop's permission, Juan Diego lived the rest of his life as a hermit in a small hut near the chapel where the miraculous image was placed for veneration. Here he cared for the church and the first pilgrims who came to pray to the Mother of Jesus.

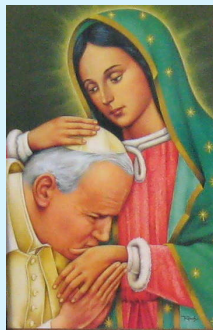
Much deeper than the "exterior grace" of having been "chosen" as Our Lady's "messenger", Juan Diego received the grace of interior enlightenment and from that moment, he began a life dedicated to prayer and the practice of virtue and boundless love of God and neighbor. He died in 1548 and was buried in the first chapel dedi-

cated to the Virgin of Guadalupe. He was beatified on May 6 1990 by Pope John Paul II in the Basilica of Santa Maria di Guadalupe, Mexico City.

The miraculous image, which is preserved in the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, shows a woman with native features and dress. She is supported by an angel whose wings are reminiscent of one of the major gods of the traditional religion of that area. The moon is beneath her feet and her blue mantle is covered with gold stars. The black girdle about her waist signifies that she is pregnant. Thus, the image graphically depicts the fact that Christ is to be "born" again among the peoples of the New World, and is a message as relevant to the "New World" today as it was during the lifetime of Juan Diego.

From https://www.ewtn.com/_saints/JuanDiego/index.htm

St. John Paul II



"...I would like to turn my thoughts to Tepeyac, to Our Lady of Guadalupe, Star of the first and the new evangelization of America. To her I entrust the pilgrim Church in Mexico and the American continent, and I fervently ask her to guide her children, so that they will enter the third millennium with faith and hope."

"The Guadalupe Event', as the Mexican Episcopate has pointed out, "meant the beginning of evan-

gelization with a vitality that surpassed all expectations. Christ's message, through his Mother, took up the central elements of the indigenous culture, purified them and gave them the definitive sense of salvation. Consequently Guadalupe and Juan Diego have a deep ecclesial and missionary meaning and are a model of perfectly inculturated evangelization."

"In accepting the Christian message without forgoing his indige-

nous identity, Juan Diego discovered the profound truth of the new humanity, in which all are called to be children of God. Thus he facilitated the fruitful meeting of two worlds and became the catalyst for the new Mexican identity, closely united to Our Lady of Guadalupe, whose mestizo face expresses her spiritual motherhood which embraces all Mexicans."

History (continued from page 1)

Say to him I manifest my great desire, that here on this plain a temple be built to me; you will accurately relate all you have seen and admired, and what you have heard. Be assured that I will be most grateful and will reward you, because I will make you happy and worthy of recompense for the effort and fatigue in what you will obtain of what I have entrusted. Behold, you have heard my mandate, my humble son; go and put forth all your effort."

Juan Diego did what he was told to do but was not well received by the Bishop's household. He spent hours waiting and eventually did get an audience with Bishop Juan de Zumarraga. Bishop Zumarraga was a kindly and saintly man. He was just and compassionate. Prior to this meeting he had built a hospital, library and university in Mexico for the natives. His job was to protect the natives from being abused and enslaved. When he asked Juan Diego that Lady's name, Juan Diego's response was "**Tlecuatlecupe**," she spoke in his native language of Nahuatl. Tlecuatlecupe means '**the one who crushes the head of the serpent**'. This is a very clear reference to Genesis 3:15, and an important symbol in the Aztec religion. It is not surprising that Bishop Zumarraga misunderstood the name to be Guadalupe, a major Marian Shrine in Spain. The Bishop listened patiently to Juan Diego and probably and understandably doubted the story.

Juan Diego reported

back to the Blessed Mother, he as yet did not realize that Our Lady of Guadalupe was the Mother of God. She sent him back to make his case again to the bishop.

Second apparition: December 9

"Hark, my little son, you must understand that I have many servants and messengers, to whom I must entrust the delivery of my message, and carry my wish, but it is of precise detail that you yourself solicit and assist and that through your mediation my wish be complied. I earnestly implore, my son the least, and with sternness I command that you again go tomorrow and see the bishop. You go in my name, and make known my wish in its entirety that he has to start the erection of a temple which I ask of him. And again tell him that I, in person, the ever-virgin Holy Mary, Mother of God, sent you."

St. Juan Diego returned to the Bishop's house where he was treated rather rudely by the Bishop's staff, but with patience and endurance he eventually got to see the bishop. The Bishop requested of Juan Diego to ask the Lady for a sign. Juan Diego planned to return to Tepeyec to request a sign for the Bishop but his return was delayed because his uncle Juan Bernardino had fallen deathly ill and Juan Diego had to take care of him. After 2 days when his uncle was near death, Juan Diego left him to get a priest. Juan Diego hurried past the hill at Tepeyec to avoid the Lady as he rushed for the priest, but the Blessed Mother called and told him not to worry his uncle would be fine.

Third apparition: December 12

"Hear me and understand well, my little son, that nothing should frighten or grieve you. Let not your

heart be disturbed. Do not fear that sickness, nor any other sickness or anguish. Am I not here, who is your Mother? Are you not under my protection? Am I not your health? Are you not happily within my fold? What else do you wish? Do not grieve nor be disturbed by anything. Do not be afflicted by the illness of your uncle, who will not die now of it. Be assured that he is now cured. Climb, my dear son, to the top of the hill; there where you saw me and I gave you orders, you will find different flowers. Cut them, gather them, assemble them, then come and bring them before my presence. My dear little son, this diversity of roses is the proof and the sign which you will take to the bishop. You will tell him in my name that he will see in them my wish and that he will have to comply to it. You are my ambassador, most worthy of all confidence. Rigorously I command you that only before the presence of the bishop will you unfold your mantle and disclose what you are carrying. You will relate all and well; you will tell that I ordered you to climb to the hilltop, to go and cut flowers; and all that you saw and admired, so you can induce the prelate to give his support, with the aim that a temple be built and erected as I have asked."

The quotes in this article are from Nican Mopohua, a 16th century historical account of the apparitions and miraculous event written in Nahuatl by Antonio Valeriano.

(cont. page 4)

**Patroness of the Diocese of
Metuchen**

History (continued from Pg 3)

Juan Diego did as he was instructed and then hurried to the Bishop with his proof: the flowers. He had to prevent the Bishop's household from grabbing the Tilma from him to see what he was hiding in it and again waited patiently for his meeting with the bishop. When St. Juan Diego finally showed the Bishop his 'flowers' the Bishop and his staff in attendance at that time all fell to their knees. The flowers were a good sign but more amazing than rare flowers in December was the perfect image of Our Lady of Guadalupe – the exact description Juan Diego had given the Bishop at his first meeting.

As amazing as the image is on the Tilma (a rough material that should have only lasted about 20 years), the most incredible fact was that the Aztecs who were slow to accept the Word of God, now embraced the church - within 10 years 6 million Aztecs and other natives had converted.

The Tilma, The Image, The Flowers, The Bishop, and other important parts of this apparition have their own stories. These will be covered in later issues of this paper.



Prayer to Our Lady of Guadalupe

Our Lady of Guadalupe, mystical rose, make intercession for the Holy Church, protect the Sovereign Pontiff, help all those who invoke thee in their necessities, and since thou art the ever Virgin Mary and Mother of God, obtain for us from thy most holy Son the grace of keeping our faith, sweet hope in the midst of the bitterness of life, burning charity and the precious gift of final perseverance. Amen.



The Shrine, Villa de Guadalupe, Mexico City, Mexico

*Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe
Basilica de Nuestra Senora de Guadalupe*

- **Consecrated October 12, 1976**
- **Replaced the original Basilica that was completed in 1709**
- **Can accommodate 10,000 people**
- **The New Basilica is circular so that the Image of Our Lady can be seen from anywhere in the church.**



The Old Basilica was sinking and no longer safe, after repairs, it is now safe and is a perpetual adoration Chapel.