

PATRONESS OF THE  
DIOCESE OF METUCHEN

SPECIAL  
POINTS OF IN-  
TEREST:

- It was impossible to baptize all the converts individually.
- Bishop Zumarraga asked for a sign, he asked for Castilian Roses.
- The 'old' Cathedral is now a Perpetual Adoration Shrine.
- St. John Paul II visited the Shrine 4 times as Pope.
- 9 Million conversions in ten years.



# Our Lady of Guadalupe

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## Bishop Juan De Zumarraga



Juan De Zumarraga, the first Bishop and Archbishop of Mexico, was the man who received St. Juan Diego and was one of the first people to see the beautiful image of Our Lady of Guadalupe on St. Juan Diego's tilma.

Bishop Zumarraga, a native of the Basque region of Spain, was born in 1468. As a young man he joined the Franciscans and as a young priest he met Charles the V, King of Spain. It is probably because of this meeting and the impression that he made on the King that he was appointed one of the judges of the witch trials in

the Basque province. Young Fr. Juan De Zumarraga did not believe that the women were witches, he felt that they were the victim of hallucinations.

Charles V next recommended that the young Franciscan be sent to Mexico as its first Bishop and in 1527 as Bishop elect Fr. Juan De Zumarraga headed to the New World. His title of Bishop-Elect and Protector of the Indians gave him some authority in Mexico. He arrived in Mexico with civil leaders. From the first, he clashed with the civil government. The government men arrived in Mexico with the idea of getting rich and had no regard for the natives or even the working Spanish. The civil leaders were Senor Matienzo and Senior Delgadillo and arriving soon after and joining these two men was Nuno

de Guzman. Their cruelty and barbarism horrified Bishop Elect Zumarraga and the other Franciscans. The civil officials taxed the Indians heavily, branded them, sold them into slavery, assaulted the women and oppressed them in every way possible. Bishop Zumarraga, whose title was Protector of the Indians, did not have much authority or control over the secular administration of the colony. That fact that he was not yet officially consecrated a Bishop hurt his authority. Both the natives and the Franciscans begged him to help, a help that he could not give, lacking any real authority. He wrote many letters to the Spanish Crown and court but the government officials in Mexico successfully destroyed the letters or else censored them. Eventually one seaman, a Basque, was able to conceal a letter of Fr. (continued page 2)

## La Crosse, Wisconsin

The Shrine at La Crosse, Wisconsin

*In their mission statement "faithful to the message of the Blessed Virgin Mary through her appearances on the American continent in 1531... Spiritual needs ... ceaseless prayer ..."*

They further state the Shrine's fidelity to its mission

*Homage to the Blessed Virgin under the title Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mother of America and Star of the New Evangelization*

*Patroness of the Unborn*

*Instrument of the New Evangelization*

*Center of the Holy Eucharist and Reconciliation*

Cardinal Raymond Burk **"The Shrine in La Crosse recalls the appearances of 1531 and proclaims once again her message of God's mercy and love."**

## Bishop (continued)



Zumarraga's, he hid it in wax and then hid it in a barrel of oil smuggling it back to Spain.

The civil leaders were especially hateful of any of the natives that were followers or admirers of Cortez. These people suffered the most. When it was learned that Cortez was returning Guzman fled. Despite his leaving and the rumors of Cortez return the remaining two officials found a priest that was a friend of Cortez's and had him tortured and killed, as well as his native servant. Bishop Zumarraga put Mexico City under interdict and fled north into hiding with the Franciscans. This occurred in 1530. The following year the interdict was removed but the two men responsible for the murders of the priest and his native servant were excommunicated.

Cortez returned to Mexico with the title Captain General of New

Spain. He came with two new officials, The Bishop of Santo Domingo- Sebastian Ramirez de Fuenleal and Vasco de Quiroga a lawyer who would eventually become the first Bishop of Michoacan. The following era was a time of peace for Bishop Zumarraga and Mexico City. Matienzo and Delgadillo were sent to Spain in chains to be tried for their crimes. It was during this time of peace that Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared to St. Juan Diego. (December 12, 1513)

Sadly, after this joyous occasion for Mexico, the New World and the entire World Bishop Elect Zumarraga was called back to Spain in disgrace. Matienzo and Delgadillo had spread lies and rumors about the good bishop. Arriving in Spain Zumarraga faced his accusers and was able to clear his good name. Charles V had withheld Zumarraga's appointment pending the outcome of this dispute. On April 27, 1533 Juan de Zumarraga was installed as Bishop. He spent the next year in Spain obtaining

items for his charges in Mexico and receiving favorable concessions from the Spanish government for his colony. He brought several women back to Mexico to teach the Native girls. He no longer held the title of Protector of the Indians, since the new civil government treated the natives fairly. The year now was 1536 and over five million Mexican natives had been baptized.

In 1535 Antonia de Mendoza arrived in Mexico as its first viceroy. He was kind and paternal in his treatment of the Indians.

The next problem that Bishop Zumarraga faced was the huge influx of converts. It was impossible for the Franciscans, or anyone for that matter, to baptize and catechize all those wanting to join the church. The Franciscan missionaries devised a special form or way of administering the sacrament of baptism. The catechumens were sorted and arranged in order, the infants and children in front, followed by teens, adults and the elderly. Prayers were **(continued page 4)**

## A Personal Account



A personal visit to the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The year was 1980 and I flew to Mexico to visit the shrine and to leave a candle. For many people reading this, they will be familiar with the Bernardsville name of Bernie Mueller. He was a fellow parishioner and for many years he made the Pascal Candle for our parish church Our Lady of Perpetual Help. My family

asked him to make a Candle, approximately 12" tall for me to bring to the Shrine and leave as a gift.

Arriving in Mexico City I was surprised to see that it seemed so American. It was hard to believe I was in a different country as my cab drove down Henry Ford Avenue. My seatmate on the airline had prepared me for my visit to the Shrine. An elderly Mexican

man, who spoke fluent English, talked to me about the Miraculous Appearance and many other things. I asked him about the Shrine itself and he said, *we are a traditional people but the building is ugly.* Yes, the current Shrine looks like a stylized airplane hangar. The original Cathedral appeared to be a magnificent European styled church in the **(continue on page 3)**

## Personal Account, continued

*(continued from Page 2)*  
 style of the 1700's. At the time of my visit, it was closed. The weight of the Cathedral was causing it to sink, and over the centuries, it had sunk nearly 12 feet and was no longer deemed safe. It has undergone an intensive restoration and stabilization project to make it safe. Today it is again opened as a perpetual adoration shrine.

Arriving at the Shrine, which is located within the city limits, I was

amazed to see the numbers of people streaming into the Cathedral. I was equally amazed and impressed to see families, with the fathers on their knees, mother and children all touching or holding hands as they moved towards the entrance.

Once inside the church there was an aura of Holiness. The image on the tilma is as moving and impressive as one would expect, perhaps even more so. There were thousands of people in the Basilica, many reverently on the conveyor belt slowly passing in front of the miraculous image. It was hard for me to estimate the

numbers of people coming into the church and when Mass began the Basilica was packed. I have learned since that the Church holds 10,000. There was standing room only at the Mass I attended.

After Mass I was able to meet with the Rector – as I spoke to him, I remarked that he spoke English very well. The very Mexican looking priest responded, *I should I'm from Chicago*. He gladly accepted the Candle and said he would pray for our intentions.

## Castilian Roses



According to the University of Dayton, the Castilian Roses of Guadalupe have a 'special miraculous significance.' Besides the obvious fact that flowers would not be blooming in the Mexican climate in December, these roses were not native to Mexico and were unknown among the native population. Perhaps one of the very few people in Mexico that would recognize them and realize the great significance of Castilian Roses was Bishop de Zumarraga.

As amazing as this is the story of the roses begins before Our Lady's appearance in Mexico. In 1529, Bishop Zumarraga, horrified by the human sacrifices

of the Actezs and the brutality of the Spanish soldiers against the natives, prayed for intervention. He wrote, "If God does not act to remedy the situation as soon as possible, this land will be lost forever."

He prayed to the Blessed Mother to intervene. In Bishop Zumarraga's personal journal, he wrote that he asked the Blessed Mother to send him a sign that his prayers would be answered. The sign he requested were roses from Spain, Castilian Roses. It was in Her third appearance to St. Juan Diego that Our Blessed Lady sent him to pick flowers. She helped Juan Diego arrange the flowers inside his tilma. The Blessed Mother told Juan Diego to keep the roses hidden until

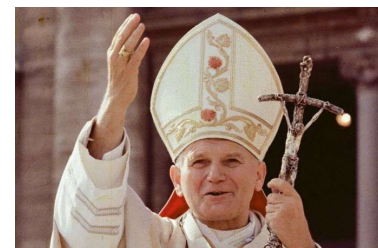
he saw the bishop. After a long wait, and having to fend off the Bishop's household from looking inside his cloak, St. Juan Diego finally had his audience with the Bishop. When the flowers fell out and the Bishop and his staff fell to their knees seeing the miraculous image, the course of Mexican history was changed.

Remarkable, was the fact that Bishop Zumarraga received a personal message from Our Lady of Guadalupe that his prayers would be answered. The message was the Castilian Roses.



**10 Million visit the Shrine at Guadalupe yearly – second only to the Vatican**

**24 Popes have officially honored The Virgin of Guadalupe  
 St. John Paul II visited the Shrine 4 times.**



## Bishop (continued from Pg 2)

said over all, with salt applied to a few and water poured over the head of each person without using chrism or holy oils. It was a 'mass' Baptism. This procedure worked fine with no objections until other religious orders arrived in Mexico. Many of them cast doubt on the validity of this type of baptism. Bishop Zumarraga sent the case to Rome for a decision by the pope. Pope Paul III, in his Bull 'Altitude divini consilii' (Profound Divine Councils) declared the Franciscans had not erred but from now on this form would only be used in extreme emergencies. There was no doubt of the validity of the baptisms.

Marriage was another major issue with the newly converted, in their pagan custom they had many wives and there was a dispute whether any of the marriages were valid. Once again, Pope Paul III issued a bull, decreeing that the first marriage was valid.

More on Bishop Zumarraga in the next newsletter.



## Shrines of Our Lady of Guadalupe

- The [Basilica of Guadalupe](#) in Mexico City
- The [Sanctuary of Saint Mary of Guadalupe](#), in Province of Caceres, Extremadura, Spain
- [Shrine of the Miraculous Relic Image of Our Lady of Guadalupe, The Holy Child and St. Joseph](#) Catholic Church, Bedford, England
- [Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe](#), Des Plaines, Illinois
- [Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe](#), La-Crosse, Wisconsin

## Prayer to Our Lady of Guadalupe

*God our Loving Father, We lift up our hearts in gratitude for sending Our Virgin Mother of Guadalupe to set hearts on fire in the "New World" with the saving message of the Gospel.*

*She is our compassionate Mother and she desires to remedy our troubles, miseries and pain by bringing us into a saving friendship with her Son Jesus Christ.*

*We turn again with renewed confidence and outstretched arms to our Virgin Mother of Guadalupe to set our hearts on fire in our Diocese of Metuchen as we prepare to be consecrated to her maternal care.*

*Give to each one of us a desire to be a missionary disciple—so that the world may come to know the transformative love of Christ through us.*



**Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Main Altar LaCrosse, Wisconsin**

[www.guadalupe Shrine.org/](http://www.guadalupe Shrine.org/)

## **Our Lady of Guadalupe Fast Facts:**

**Feast Day** – December 12

**Who:** She appeared to St. Juan Diego, a middle aged native.

**Where:** on the outskirts of Mexico City.

**What did She say:** "My dear little son, I love you. I desire you to know who I am. I am the ever-virgin Mary, Mother of the true God who gives life and maintains its existence. He created all things. He is in all places. He is Lord of Heaven and Earth. I desire a church in this place where your people may experience my compassion. All those who sincerely ask my help in their work and in their sorrows will know my Mother's Heart in this place. Here I will see their tears; I will console them and they will be at peace. So run now to Tenochtitlan and tell the Bishop all that you have seen and heard."

**What happened:** When asked for a sign, The Lady sent Juan Diego to pick flowers, rare Castilian Roses. He wrapped them in his tilma (cloak) and when he opened the cloak the flowers fell out but more importantly the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe was impressed on the tilma.

**What was the result:** 9 million conversions in 10 years.