



### Queen of the Americas Guild

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His Eminence Raymond Leo Cardinal Burke



Bishop Juan Miguel



Monsignor Fernando B. Felices Sanchez



Father Gerald Murray

#### QUEEN OF THE AMERICAS GUILD CONFERENCE

## RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IN CATHOLIC TEACHING and its DENIAL IN NEOPAGAN WESTERN CULTURE

HOSTED BY HIS EMINENCE RAYMOND LEO CARDINAL BURKE OCTOBER 20 & 21, 2023 | OPEN TO EVERYONE





## Prom the Property President Presiden

By Christopher Smoczynski

Guild President Christopher Smoczynski

hank you to all members for your continued prayers and support of the Queen of the Americas Guild. This year, we welcomed a new Board Member, Father Paul Check, Executive Director of the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in La Crosse, Wisconsin. Father Check holds a Baccalaureate in Sacred Theology from the Gregorian University and Licentiate in Sacred Theology from the University of the Holy Cross. After serving as the Director of Courage International from 2008 - 2016, he served as Rector at St. John Fisher Seminary in the Diocese of Bridgeport, Connecticut for four years. In 2020, Father Check was appointed Executive Director of the Shrine by His Eminence Raymond Leo Cardinal Burke. Father Check's work with the Shrine and our annual conference there led to his natural fit on our Board of Directors. I welcome Father Check and look forward to working with him. You can read his first article contribution on page 23.

The change in timing of our annual conference at the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in La Crosse, Wisconsin from July to October last year was a welcome adjustment and worked very well for both our speaker guests and pilgrims in attendance. We were blessed with beautiful weather and friendly camaraderie while learning a great deal about Our Lady's appearance in literature. This year's conference continues in the new time frame and will be held October 20 & 21, 2023. Our theme of "Religious Liberty in Catholic Teaching and Its Denial in Neopagan Western Culture" promises to be an interesting and thoughtful look into the state of our faith today. Full conference details can be found on pages 14-17.

For the past several years, the Guild has also been working diligently behind the scenes to come to a resolution regarding the use of the property in Mexico City, which sits adjacent to the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe. As some of you may know, we have had this property for many years, after my father, Frank Smoczynski, was able to acquire it for the Guild. The original intention was to build a retreat center there for pilgrims to have a place to gather, rest, and hold meetings while visiting the Basilica. For over 30 years we have been struggling with countless legal issues and roadblocks that have left us unable to complete this project. Legal limitations, changing political climate, and surrounding Basilica building projects have led us to the decision that the original project is no longer practical for a US based Catholic Organization like the Guild to manage remotely. We are now working through the process of transferring the property to another worthy Catholic organization that is headquartered in Mexico and already maintains a physical presence near the Basilica. Cardinal Burke was with us on the journey of reviewing and selecting an appropriate organization that will use the property as envisioned by the Guild, and also collaborate with us on sharing the space in the future as requested. We still have quite a few legalities to work through, but we hope to be able to complete this transfer within the next year. We will keep you updated throughout this project.

I look forward to continuing to serve Our Lady and the Queen of the Americas Guild members to the best of my ability. Please continue to keep our work, Our Board of Directors, and all our members in your prayers.

#### Queen of the Americas Guild Board of Directors



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## ON THE COVER

By Rebecca Nichols

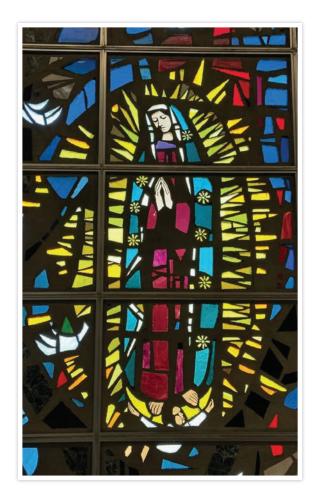


his beautiful stained glass window depicting Our Lady of Guadalupe resides in St. Mary of the Woods Church on the far northwest side of Chicago, Illinois.

The modern church, designed by Gaul & Voosen, was completed in 1953. Eight stained glass windows, designed by world-renowned 20th century artist Max Ingrand, each feature the Blessed Mother under one of her titles, from Our Lady of Guadalupe to Our Lady of Czestochowa. Each depiction tells a story about the history and practices of the Roman Catholic Church, while presenting the Blessed Mother in poses and dresses unique to each tradition. While these traditions come from a variety of cultures, all of the windows place Mary in a woodland setting, creating a "forest" of stained glass which represents St. Mary of the Woods parish.

A deep look into the stained glass windows can be found in a new video series, "The Marian Stained Glass Windows", which explains the tradition of each window depiction in its own episode. The production gathered a variety of experts, from art historians to clerics, who present viewers with a unique look at the artistry of the glass, but also contextual references to historical events surrounding the various Marian apparitions. The episodes also contain historical artworks relating to the events surrounding each story, including hand-drawn illustrations from previous centuries, brilliant frescos and early photographs.

The entire series is free to watch and can be found on the St. Mary of the Woods YouTube page (@smowcatholic). The church is located at 6955 N. Hiawatha Ave., Chicago, IL 60646 and is highly worth a visit.



Close-up view of Our Lady of Guadalupe stained glass at St. Mary of the Woods Church

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#### Don Antonio Valeriano:

### Literature as a Messenger of the Mother of God



#### SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE, LA CROSSE, OCTOBER 22, 2022





His Eminence Raymond Leo Cardinal Burke

#### INTRODUCTION

Literature is a premier expression of the culture of the time. When we read good literature, we see the reflection of the Supreme Good, of God Who is the source of all good. We understand in some way, oftentimes veiled and limited, the good order with which God has created the world and, above all, the heart of man, the only earthly creature whom He created in His own image and likeness. To the degree that a culture recognizes the good and, in so doing, also, in some way, recognizes the Supreme Good, to that degree it will inspire literature which is good. In the time before Christ, we see already in the *lliad* and *Odyssey* of Homer, and in the Aeneid of Virgil, for example, reflections of the goodness with which God created the human heart. One thinks, for example, of the pietas (filial devotion) of Aeneas toward his father Anchises, as it is presented in Virgil's Aeneid. With the Redemptive Incarnation – with the Virginal Conception, Birth, Life in the Holy Family, Public Ministry, Passion, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Our Lord Jesus Christ – , the Supreme Good chose to come to us, to unite

Mystery of the Redemptive Incarnation clearly inspires good literature to a degree which is immeasurable and unceasing.

The Holy Bible must be mentioned, from the beginning, as the preeminent form of all literature. It is inspired by the Holy Spirit, that is, the human authors of the various books of the Holy Bible wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. In the words of the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, Dei Verbum, of the Second Vatican Council,

To compose the sacred books, God chose certain men who, all the while he employed them in this task, made full use of their powers and faculties so that, though he acted in them and by them, it was as true authors that they consigned to writing whatever he wanted written, and no more.1

In the case of the Holy Bible, literature is part of the culture of Divine Love, the culture which God desires to be integral to all cultures. The written word of the Sacred Scriptures is ultimately the expression of the Incarnation, of the Word of God made flesh, in the words of the Prologue of the Gospel according to Saint John. Thus, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, quoting Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, declares:

Still, the Christian faith is not a "religion of the book." Christianity is the religion of the "Word" of God, a word through the Holy Spirit, "open [our] minds to understand the Scriptures."2

our human nature to His Divine Nature, and to dwell with us always. The

which is "not a written and mute word, but the Word which is incarnate and living." If the Scriptures are not to remain a dead letter, Christ, the eternal Word of the living God, must,

Sacrosanctum Concilium Oecumenicum Vaticanum II, "Constitutio Dogmatica de Divina Revelatione, Dei Verbum." 18 Novembris 1965, Acta Apostolicae Sedis 58 (1966) 823, n. 11. English translation: Vatican Council II, Vol. 1 - The Conciliar and Postconciliar Documents, rev. ed., ed. Austin Flannery (Northport, NY: Costello Publishing Company, 1996), pp.

1 "In sacris vero libris conficiendis Deus homines elegit, quos facultatibus ac viribus suis utentes adhibuit, ut Ipso in illis et per illos agente, ea omnia eaque sola, quae Ipse vellet, ut veri auctores scripto traderent."

2 Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 108.

The written word, literature, gives premier testimony to the truth of the Redemptive Incarnation. It is at the service of the Divine Economy of Eternal Salvation as an irreplaceable tool in opening our minds and hearts to God's presence and action in our midst.

Although Christian literature cannot claim the Divine Inspiration which guided the Sacred Writers of the Holy Bible, to the degree that writers are attuned and responsive to God, good literature gives expression to the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit and relates in some way to Sacred Scripture. In the case of the Nican Mopohua, the most ancient account of the apparitions of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the author, Antonio Valeriano, gives expression to all that Our Lady desired to communicate and do by her appearing to Saint Juan Diego, to his uncle Juan Bernardino, and, through Saint Juan Diego and Juan Bernardino, to Bishop Juan de Zumárraga and his assistants. Even as Our Lord wanted the figure of Our Lady of Guadalupe to remain with us by its miraculous imprint on the *tilma* of Saint Juan Diego, Divine Providence wanted also the testimony of Saint Juan Diego to all that Our Lady said and did during the privileged days of her appearing on Tepeyac Hill from December 9th to 12th of 1531 to be handed down to the succeeding generations. Hence, the title of my presentation, "Don Antonio Valeriano: Literature as a Messenger of the Mother of God."

While Saint Juan Diego remains the messenger of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Antonio Valeriano, through his literary work memorializing all that Saint Juan Diego had experienced during the apparitions of Our Lady, participates, in a premier way, in the irreplaceable mission of Saint Juan Diego. Our Lady of Guadalupe came to establish a culture of Divine Love and Mercy among her children of America and of all the world. The Nican Mopohua is a premier or privileged expression of the Guadalupan culture as it has continued from 1531 until today.

#### WHO IS ANTONIO VALERIANO?

In God's Providence, we are blessed to have a most reliable account of the apparitions of Our Lady of Guadalupe in a document entitled *Nican* Mopohua, written by Antonio Valeriano in Nahuatl, his native tongue and the native tongue of Saint Juan Diego. Antonio Valeriano, also Native American, was a good friend of Saint Juan Diego. He, too, had received the gift of faith and baptism. Hence, his Christian name. Sadly, we do not know his Native American name. He became a respected scholar and political leader, serving as Governor of the Native Americans of the City of Mexico for some thirty years.

Born in 1520 in Azcapotzalco, not far from Tepeyac Hill, Valeriano is said to be the nephew of the Emperor Montezuma. At the age of 16, he entered the College of the Holy Cross, the first college in the Western Hemisphere, founded in 1536 by Fray Juan de Zumárraga, the first Bishop of Mexico. The College was comparable to our high schools.

He was a member of the first class of the College, graduating with honors in Latin and Greek, and, after his graduation, was retained at the College to teach these subjects. He eventually became Professor of Philosophy and served as the Dean of the College for 20 years. He was much esteemed by Fray Bernardino de Sahagún.

It is important to say something about Fray Bernardino because of his influence in the formation of Antonio Valeriano. Bernardino de Sahagún (1499-1590) was a Franciscan friar who, from 1529 until his death, participated in the evangelization of what is today the nation of Mexico. He is especially known for his work in ethnography, the study of cultures, in this case, of the Native American or Aztec culture in Mexico. He learned Nahuatl, the language of the Native Americans and studied carefully the Aztec religion, culture, and history. Being primarily a missionary, while at the same time an eminent scientist, he translated the Psalms, the Gospels, and the Catechism into Nahuatl.

Fray Bernardino is still known and revered today for his compilation, Historia general de las cosas de la Nueva España (General History of the *Things of New Spain*). The most famous extant manuscript of the work is called the Florentine Codex. It is a bilingual – Spanish and Nahuatl – work which is greatly enriched by the illustrations provided by native artists. A twelve-volume work, it provides a complete documentation of the Aztec history and culture. The last or twelfth volume gives an account of the conquest of Mexico. Fray Bernardino's esteem of Antonio Valeriano is an indication of Valeriano's exceptional qualities as a brilliant scholar, while, at the same time, a brilliant public servant.

Antonio Valeriano was an intimate friend of Bishop Juan de Zumárraga, Juan Bernardino, and Juan Diego. He was blessed to hear his friend Juan Diego recount many times the wonderful story of the apparitions of Our Lady of Guadalupe. It is important to recall that, from the time of the apparitions, Juan Diego devoted the rest of his life to the work of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Once the chapel had been built, as Our Lady requested of Bishop Juan de Zumárraga, and the tilma was installed there, Juan Diego made his home near the chapel, at which he continued to be Our Lady's faithful messenger until his death some 17 years later. It is impressive to note that the chapel was completed on December 26, 1531, just two weeks after the final apparition of Our Lady. Dr. Charles Wahlig, who studied deeply the apparitions of Our Lady of Guadalupe tells us:

On December 26th, only two weeks after the Sacred Icon appeared on Juan Diego's tilma, Spaniards and the Mexicans, working shoulder to shoulder, completed a chapel at the foot of Tepeyac Hill to house the Sacred Image. Fray Juan de Zumárraga, Bishop of Mexico, put Juan Diego in complete charge of the chapel and the Sacred Image. We can imagine that the bishop was confident that there was no more

6 Queen of the Americas Guild 2023 National Newsletter capable and worthy a person than Juan Diego to remain quardian of the world's greatest treasure.<sup>3</sup>

Saint Juan Diego died in 1548 at the age of 74. From the time of the apparitions of Our Lady of Guadalupe, he had devoted his full time to recounting to pilgrims the wonders of the apparitions.

Gifted with scholarship, Antonio Valeriano carefully recorded what Juan Diego had reported so faithfully regarding the Virgin of Guadalupe. It is said that Antonio Valeriano frequently visited with Saint Juan Diego at Our Lady's chapel.

As I mentioned, Antonio Valeriano was also a friend of Juan Bernardino, Juan Diego's uncle, and of Bishop Juan de Zumárraga, who would have been easily able to confirm what Juan Diego had told him. Their memories would have been especially important for the final part of the account, in which the miraculous healing of Juan Bernardino is recorded, including Our Lady's indication to him of the name by which she wished to be called in this apparition: "The Perfect Virgin, Saint Mary of Guadalupe." Regarding Antonio Valeriano, Dr. Charles Wahling writes:

Valeriano was an intimate friend of all the principal characters in the miracle of Guadalupe: Bishop Zumárraga, Juan Gonzalez, Juan Bernardino, and Juan Diego. According to tradition, he was especially friendly with Juan Diego, and often went to visit him at the chapel in Tepeyac where the Sacred Image of Our Lady was venerated. Most of the historians agree that Valeriano carefully and accurately wrote down the conversations between Juan Diego and the Blessed Virgin, and all the other essential details of the great event as well. It is said that Valeriano enjoyed reciting the story of the miracle whenever he had an audience, which left a strong oral tradition of the miracle. <sup>5</sup>

Divine Providence was wonderfully at work in the friendship of Antonio Valeriano with Saint Juan Diego and in his devotion to the Virgin Mother of God under her title of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

#### WHAT IS THE NICAN MOPOHUA?

The title of Antonio Valeriano's account, *Nican Mopohua*, is, in fact, the first two words of the account, namely, "Here is told." <sup>6</sup> The full title reads:

Here is told and set down in order how a short time ago the Perfect Virgin Holy Mary Mother of God, our Queen, miraculously appeared on the Tepeyac, "nose of the hill," widely known as Guadalupe. First she caused herself to be seen by an Indian named Juan Diego, poor but worthy of respect; and then her precious and beloved image appeared before the recently named bishop, Don Fray Juan de Zumárraga. <sup>7</sup>

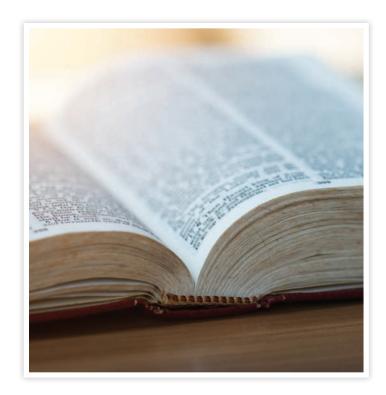
These opening words set forth clearly the program of the work. It is an account of events known through three principal witnesses, Saint Juan Diego, Juan Bernardino, and Bishop Juan de Zumárraga. In fact, the text is marked by its linear character and the originality of its language.

In the presentation of the *Nican Mopohua*, in both Spanish and English, found in the book of the then Supreme Knight of the Knights of Columbus Carl E. Anderson and Monsignor Eduardo Chávez – one of the most recognized experts on Our Lady of Guadalupe, Postulator of the Cause of Saint Juan Diego, Co-Founder and Dean of the Instituto Superior de Estudios Guadalupanos, and Honorary Canon of the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe – , *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe*. *Madre de la civilización del amor (Our Lady of Guadalupe: Mother of the Civilization of Love)*, we read:

Textually, the account contains a mixture of both Spanish and Náhuatl idioms and expressions characteristic of the time. Notably, the indigenous elements appear in how the narrative and dialogue between Juan Diego and the Virgin reflect the high forms of indigenous speech, the huehuetlahtolli, the speech of the elders. As the Náhuatl scholar Miguel León-Portilla notes, this suggests that the author was familiar with ancient Indian rhetoric and songs. Náhuatl rhetoric in the account includes the frequent use of poetic phrases (such as "your face, your heart" to mean "your person"), the unique expressions of honor through both



<sup>4 &</sup>quot;LA PERFECTA VIRGEN SANTA MARÍA DE GUADALUPE." "Apendice A, El Nican Mopohua," in Carl A. Anderson y Mons. Eduardo Chávez, Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe. Madre de la civilización del amor (México, DF: Random House Mondadori, S.A. de C.V., 2010), p. 225, n. 208. [NM]. English translation: "Appendix A – The Nican Mopohua," in Carl Anderson and Eduardo Chávez, Our Lady of Guadalupe: Mother of the Civilization of Love (New York: Doubleday, 209), p. 183, no. 208. [NMEng].



titles of rank and diminutive titles of affection (such as "My Mistress, my Lady, my Queen, my littlest Daughter, my little Girl"), and multiple phrases to compound an idea, creating a cascade of images (such as when Juan Diego approaches the beautified Tepeyac hill, saying, "By any chance am I worthy, have I deserved what I hear? Perhaps I am only dreaming it? Perhaps I'm only dozing? Where am I? Where do I find myself?"). Although this form of speech may seem archaic to our ears, it has been retained in translation to give the reader the chance to experience naturally the rhetorical ebb and flow. 8

Although readers will find some of the language unusual, once they have understood the form of the literature, it will open for them the profound truths conveyed.

Regarding the Nican Mopohua, Dr. Charles Wahlig wrote:

It is very edifying for the human race to have in its midst a perpetual miracle brought from the unseen world into the world of physical reality, but what is its purpose and meaning? That is the vital part, so we must be very certain about the words spoken by Our Lady to Juan Diego and Juan Bernardino. In a certain sense these, together with the message in the Sacred Image itself, are for Guadalupe what the Bible is to the foundations of Christianity.

The more one thinks about it, the clearer it becomes that the Blessed Virgin Mary could hardly have selected two men more suitable for her purposes: Juan Diego, the virtuous one, worthy to receive her message, and Don Antonio Valeriano, the Mexican of great intellect and gifted writing talent for transmitting her words to posterity. <sup>9</sup>

The introduction to the translation of the *Nican Mopohua* from Nahuatl into Spanish by Father Mario Rojas Sánchez, one of the noted scholars on the apparitions of Our Lady of Guadalupe, also underlined the clear presence of Divine Providence in the writing of the *Nican Mopohua*. The introduction comments on two theories regarding the origin of the document.

The first theory is that it is the fruit of the study of indigenous scholars working in a commission under the direction of Fray Bernardino de Sahagún, and the second theory, which seems more credible to me, is that it is the fruit of the many encounters of Antonio Valeriano and Saint Juan Diego, during which Saint Juan Diego recounted the apparitions of Our Lady at Tepeyac Hill. The analysis concludes: "Be what may of these observations, all agree in recognizing a depth of supernatural help in this account of the Guadalupan Miracle, to the degree that the most serious scholars call it 'The Gospel of Mexico' and its author 'The Evangelist of the Apparitions'."

#### CONCLUSION

Monsignor Eduardo Chávez in his book, *Our Lady of Guadalupe and Saint Juan Diego: The Historical Evidence*, writes:

The Guadalupan Event was the response from God to a humanly impossible situation: the relationship between

<sup>5</sup> Charles Wahlig, "First Author of Historic Account on Guadalupe: Don Antonio Valeriano," in A Handbook on Guadalupe (New Bedford, MA: Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate, 1997), p. 52.

<sup>6 &</sup>quot;Aquí se narra." NM, p. 212. English translation: NMEng, p. 172.

<sup>7 &</sup>quot;Aquí se narra, se conjunta, cómo hace poco, de manera portentosa, se apareció la perfecta Virgen Santa María Madre de Dios, nuestra Reina, allá en el Tepeyac, nariz del monte, de renombre Guadalupe. Primero se dignó dejarse ver de un indito, su nombre Juan Diego; y después se apareció su preciosa y amada Imagen delante del recién electo obispo don fray Juan de Zumárraga." NM, p. 212. English translation: NMEng, p. 172.

<sup>8 &</sup>quot;El texto presenta una mezcla de los idiomas náhuatl y español, y expresiones características de la época. Llama la atención que los elementos indígenas se manifiestan en la manera en que la narrativa y el diálogo entre Juan Diego y la Virgen reflejan las formas elevadas del lenguaje indígena, el huehuetlahtolli o discurso de los ancestros. Como señala el erudito Miguel León-Portilla, esto sugiere que el autor estaba familiarizado con la retórica y los cantos antiguos de los indios. La retórica náhuatl se manifiesta en el relato en el uso frecuente de frases poéticas (como "tu cara, tu corazón" para referirse a "tu persona"), las singulares expresiones de respeto mediante títulos de rango y denominaciones de afecto en diminutivo (como "Señora mía, Reina mía, muchachita mía"), y frases múltiples que conforman una idea, lo que da lugar a una cascada de imágenes (como cuando Juan Diego ve el Tepeyac trasformado y dice: ";Por ventura soy digno, soy merecedor de lo que escucho? ;Tal

vez estoy sólo soñando? ¿Quizá solamente lo veo como entre sueños? ¿Dónde estoy? ¿Dónde me veo?"). Aunque esta manera de hablar puede parecer arcaica, se ha conservado en la traducción para da al lector la oportunidad de experimentar naturalmente el vaivén retórico." NM, pp. 211-212. English translation: NMEng, pp. 171-172.

<sup>9</sup> Charles Wahlig, "First Author of Historic Account on Guadalupe: Don Antonio Valeriano," in A Handbook on Guadalupe (New Bedford, MA: Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate, 1997), p. 54.

<sup>10 &</sup>quot;Sea lo que fuere de estas aseveraciones, todos coinciden en reconocer un fondo de asistencia sobrenatural en esta relación del Milagro Guadalupano, en grado tal, que los más serios investigadores la llaman 'El Evangelio



the world of the Indigenous and that of the newly arrived Spaniards. The Christian Indigenous, Juan Diego, was the link between the non-Christian, old Mexican world and the Christian missionary proposition which arrived through the Hispanic mediation. The result was the enlightenment of a new Christianized people. Juan Diego was neither a Spaniard arriving with Cortés, nor a Spanish Franciscan missionary; he was a native belonging to that old world rich in culture. A sculptural group that today can be seen on the hill of Tepeyac, where we find in contemplation before Holy Mary of Guadalupe the Indigenous Juan Diego, the Bishop Juan de Zumárraga, and other men, women, and children, almost in a kind of procession contemplating Holy Mary, expresses with a strong plasticity this fact and this message. This is the particularity of the ecclesial mediation of Juan Diego, the "ambassador envoy of Holy Mary of Guadalupe," as the Nican Mopohua calls him. Juan Diego was therefore the missionary of this encounter in which Christ was to become embodied in a concrete cultural humanity through the mediation of Holy Mary. One of the 12 Franciscan Apostles of Mexico, Friar Toribio Paredes de Benavente, Motolinia (Motolinia meaning "the poor man"), in one of his letters to the king of Spain saw the encounter as humanly impossible, if it were not by the work of the Grace of God. For that reason the Indigenous neophytes invoked the friars along with Virgin Mary for such a miracle. The miracle was to happen as a totally unimaginable and unexpected Grace and it would be a liberating reality. Those two worlds, until then strangers to each other and enemies, with all premises for hatred or the fatalistic acceptance of defeat on the part of one, for the scorn or the exploitation on the part of others, for ambitions and rivalries and civil wars among all, began to recognize

in Holy Mary of Guadalupe the Mother of all. She requested through Juan Diego to be constructed in that place a house, home for all. Thus the Christian faith totally took root in the Mexican cultural world. It is the birth of the Mexican and Latin American Catholic people. Forgetting this story can always produce new ruptures and old antagonisms. Only the Christian Event can constantly illuminate a people. Guadalupe and Juan Diego remind us of this Event. <sup>11</sup>

Employing his gift of writing, Antonio Valeriano produced an extraordinary work of literature, which is indeed an instrument by which the Virgin Mother of God continues to communicate her message of Divine Mercy to mankind, to the children whom Our Lord confided to her maternal care at His dying, represented by the Apostle and Evangelist Saint John who stood with the Mother of God at the foot of the Cross. As He was dying on the Cross, our Lord Jesus gave us His Mother to be our own; He said to Mary: "Woman, behold, your son!"; and He said to Saint John the Evangelist, representing the whole Church: "Behold, your mother!" 12

In thanking God for the apparitions of Our Lady of Guadalupe, let us thank God also for Antonio Valeriano and for his *Nican Mopohua*.

By his writing, Antonio Valeriano truly shares with Saint Juan Diego the wonderful mission of Messenger of the Mother of God. At the same time, his writing reminds us of the mission of all good literature to reflect the truth, the goodness, and the beauty of God – the All True One, the All Good One, and the All Beautiful One.

- Mo -

Raymond Leo Cardinal BURKE



# Our Lady of Guadalupe,

Mother of the Eucharist

By Bishop Juan Miguel Betancourt, SEMV



his summer, we begin the Eucharistic Revival year at the parish level, intending to strengthen the faithful celebration of the Eucharist and devote adoration to the Blessed Sacrament in our local communities through preaching, missions, and other events. Since its inception at the Last Supper, the Eucharist is always intended to be a celebration within a community of faith. Even when we pray before the Lord after receiving communion at Mass or during Eucharistic Adoration, we are never engaged in private prayer or contemplation. The whole Church is involved, and so is the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church (cf. *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, 53). However, what relationship exists between the Eucharist and the Most Holy Mary? Can we justly call Mary "Mother of the Eucharist"?

After her *fiat* to the Archangel Gabriel at the Annunciation, Mary became the first Tabernacle where Christ placed his dwelling, receiving from his mother the first adoration



Bishop Juan Miguel Betancourt, S.E.M.V.

<sup>11</sup> Eduardo Chávez, Our Lady of Guadalupe and Saint Juan Diego: The Historical Evidence, tr. Carmen Treviño and Veronica Montaño (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2006), p. xxi.

<sup>12</sup> Jn 19, 26-27.

as the Son of God who assumed human nature to redeem humanity. We can imagine how Mary treated Jesus in her womb, like any happy young mother, what conversations of love with that God she nurtured and at the same time from whom she received love day and night. We can contemplate the gentleness and reverence towards that Son when she worked, cooked, or went to the fountain. But moreover, we can appreciate how Mary, during those nine months, lived the theological virtues that, as disciples of her Son, we are called to live as well.

Mary lived by faith. She deeply believed that the Son growing in her womb was God Incarnate. And she provided him a human body and a caring heartbeat (cf. Luke 1: 30-35, 45). The Virgin also lived by hope. When the fullness of time had come (Galatians 4:4), and the hope of many in the promised Messiah was almost gone, Mary became the bearer of that hope that had already come true (Luke 1: 30-33; John 2: 1-11). Finally, the Blessed Mother lived always by love, a love of devoted surrender to her Son. Mary gave her body and infused her blood to her Son. If there is no blood offered, love is incomplete. Love is authenticated and assessed only with blood and sacrifice (cf. Luke 2: 32-35; 22:19; John 19: 26-27).

Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Eucharist is his Body that is given, and it is his Blood that is shed for food and salvation of all men (John 6: 51, 53). Therefore, the same Body we receive in Communion is the same flesh Mary gave so that Jesus would incarnate and become man. Consequently, we must appreciate, value, and devoutly receive in communion not only the Body of Christ but also that body which Mary gave him, but under the appearance of bread and wine (cf. *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, 55-56).

The Blessed Mother led a Eucharistic existence all her life. She continuously thanked God for having been chosen to be the Mother of God. She lived interceding for us, the children of Eve, who lived in exile, waiting for the coming of the Messiah and true deliverance. And therefore, as Pope Saint John Paul II affirmed in the encyclical on the Eucharist, Mary is a "woman of the Eucharist" (num.53) because she lived the dispositions of every Eucharist celebrated: she is a woman of faith, she is a sacrificial woman, and her presence comforts her children. Is not the Eucharist a mystery of faith, sacrifice, and presence?

The Eucharistic life that Mary lived was mysterious, spiritual but real. Her life was marked by her dedication to her Son and to others. Christ in the Eucharist is sacrifice, food, presence, and Mary in the Eucharist is present in the sacrifice of her Son once again because each mass is to live Calvary, and Mary was at the foot of Calvary. In the Eucharist, Mary gives us her Son again to nourish us. In the Eucharist, next to the Heart of her Son, beats the heart of the Mother. Consequently, at every Mass we experience the presence of Christ and Mary. The presence of Mary in the Eucharist is certainly not a presence like that of Christ, real, substantial. However, Mary offers us the Body of her Son, since in each mass he is born, dies, and rises victorious for the salvation of men and the glorification of the Father (cf. Ecclesia de Eucharistia, 56).

With the appearance of Mary and her image left on San Juan Diego's tilma on that beautiful December of 1531, a whole nation came to faith, and an entire nation began to recognize Our Lord in the sacraments, especially in the Eucharist. Our Lady of Guadalupe draws people in with open arms to introduce them to the "great God of Truth who gives us life" in the Eucharist. On the tilma, she did not appear by herself. She came with our Lord Jesus Christ in her womb. She announced the coming of the Lord into the New World as the Word made flesh. Mary is the mother of God; Mary is also the mother of the Eucharist; she only wants to guide us to Jesus (cf. *Nican mopohua*, 26-29).

During this time of Eucharistic Revival, let us pray that we can approach the Eucharist by remembering how faith came and transformed the Americas. Let us always remember that Mary, our Mother of Guadalupe, came herself to take us to her Son. Let us pray that if we become afraid or forget or do not know how to approach Jesus, we can come to her confidently and know that she will gladly take us by the hand and gently, lovingly lead us to Him.



And therefore, as Pope Saint John Paul II affirmed in the encyclical on the Eucharist, Mary is a "woman of the Eucharist"



## In Memoriam... Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI April 16, 1927 – December 31, 2022



Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI passed away at the age of 95 on Saturday, December 31, 2022 at his Vatican residence. After serving as Pope from April 19, 2005, Pope Benedict resigned on February 28, 2013 due to failing health.

#### Shortly after Pope Benedict's passing, His Holiness Pope Francis shared this remembrance:

"We are moved as we recall him as such a noble person, so kind and we feel such gratitude in our hearts, gratitude to God for giving him to the church, and to the world," Francis said in Saint Peter's Basilica while leading traditional vespers ceremony ahead of New Year's Day.

"Gratitude to him for all the good he accomplished and above all for his witness of faith and prayer, especially in these last years of his life. Only God knows the value of his sacrifices for the good of the church," Francis added.

Prior to his burial in the crypt at St. Peter's Basilica, Pope Francis offered the following prayers at the funeral Mass on Thursday, January 5. 2023.

#### At the end of the Eucharistic Prayer III offered in Latin:

Remember your servant Pope Emeritus Benedict, whom you have called from this world to yourself. Grant that he who was united with your Son

in a death like his, may also be one with him in his Resurrection, when from the earth he will raise up in the flesh those who have died, and transform our lowly body after the pattern of his own glorious body. To our departed brothers and sisters, too, and to all who were pleasing to you at their passing from this life, give kind admittance to your kingdom. There we hope to enjoy forever the fullness of your glory, when you will wipe away every tear from our eyes. For seeing you, our God, as you are, we shall be like you for all the ages and praise you without end, through Christ our Lord, through whom you bestow on the world all that is good.

#### **Final Commendation and Farewell:**

Dear brothers and sisters, in celebrating the sacred mysteries we have opened our minds and hearts to joy-filled hope; with confidence we now offer our final farewell to Pope Emeritus Benedict and commend him to God, our merciful and loving Father.

May the God of our fathers, through Jesus Christ, his only Son, in the Holy Spirit, Lord and Giver of Life, deliver Pope Emeritus Benedict from death, that he may sing God's praises in the heavenly Jerusalem in expectation of the resurrection of his mortal body on the last day.

May the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of the Apostles and Salus Populi Romani, intercede before the Eternal Father, that he may reveal the face of Jesus his Son to Pope Emeritus Benedict and console the Church on her pilgrimage through history as she awaits the Lord's return.

Gracious Father, we commend to your mercy Pope Emeritus Benedict whom you made Successor of Peter and shepherd of the Church, a fearless preacher of your word and a faithful minister of the divine mysteries.

Welcome him, we pray, into your heavenly dwelling place, to enjoy eternal glory with all your chosen ones. We give you thanks, Lord, for all the blessings that in your goodness you bestowed upon him for the good of your people.

Grant us the comfort of faith and the strength of hope.

To you Father, source of life, through Christ, the conqueror of death, in the life-giving Spirit, be all honor and glory forever and ever.

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#### QUEEN OF THE AMERICAS GUILD CONFERENCE

## Religious Liberty in Catholic Teaching and its Denial in Neopagan Western Culture

HOSTED BY HIS EMINENCE RAYMOND LEO CARDINAL BURKE OCTOBER 20 & 21, 2023 | OPEN TO EVERYONE

JOIN THE QUEEN OF THE AMERICAS GUILD FOR A 2-DAY CONFERENCE/ RETREAT EXAMINING RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IN TODAY'S WORLD. THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE FOR THE QUEEN OF THE AMERICAS GUILD IS OPEN TO ALL THOSE WHO WISH TO ENHANCE THEIR FAITH AND LEARN MORE ABOUT THE CURRENT STATE OF CATHOLIC TEACHING AND THE HISTORY OF OUR FAITH.



#### His Eminence Raymond Leo Cardinal Burke

His Eminence Raymond Leo Cardinal Burke will be our keynote speaker. As the founder of the shrine, His Eminence has extensive knowledge of Our Lady of Guadalupe and her role in defending Religious Liberty. Cardinal Burke was appointed the Cardinal Patron of the

Sovereign Military Order of Malta in November of 2014 and also serves on the Queen of the Americas Guild Board of Directors.



#### His Excellency, Bishop Juan Miguel Betancourt

A native of Ponce, Puerto Rico, Bishop
Juan Miguel Betancourt is an Auxiliary
Bishop of the Diocese of Hartford,
Connecticut and Queen of the
Americas Guild Episcopal Moderator.
His Excellency is a member of the
Society of the Servants of the Eucharist

and Mary and has served as Vicar General of the Community. At the time of his appointment to Auxiliary Bishop, His Excellency served on the faculty of The St. Paul Seminary School of Divinity in St. Paul, MN, as Vice Rector of Formation, Associate Academic Dean and Assistant Professor of Sacred Scripture, and as the Pastor of the Church of St. Francis de Sales of St. Paul in St. Paul, MN. Currently, Bishop Betancourt serves as the Director of Seminarians for the Archdiocese of Hartford. At the USCCB, Bishop Betancourt serves on the Administrative Committee, the Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations Committee, the Hispanic Affairs Committee, the Priorities and Plans Committee, the Subcommittee for Translation of Scripture and the Subcommittee on the Catechism.



#### **Marty Rotella**

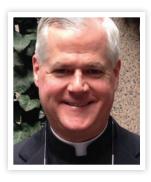
Enjoy music by Grammy-nominated
Catholic singer, songwriter, and producer
Marty Rotella. Marty has appeared on
EWTN, written, performed and produced
many musical CDs, and produced
docudramas and documentaries on a
variety of religious subjects. Marty will also
serve as our Master of Ceremonies.



#### **Msgr. Fernando Felices**

Monsignor Fernando B. Felices Sanchez was born in San Juan, PR in 1953. He is a Diocesan priest. He earned his BA in History from Dartmouth College (1975), Juris Doctor (Harvard Law School, 1978), Masters in Theology, Boston St. John's Seminary (1982), Licentiate in Spiritual Theology

(Gregorian Univ., Rome, 2004). He was Rector and Professor at the San Juan Major Seminary (1984-1999), Chancellor of the Archdiocese of San Juan (1999-2003), Pastor of Gruta de Lourdes Parish in Trujillo Alto (2004-2020), and Archdiocesan Censor (2004-2020). Mons. Felices has written 5 books De Camino con Santa Teresa, The Holy Rosary according to St. John Paul II (3rd edition) in Spanish, La paternidad espiritual del Sacerdote, El Santuario dela Gruta de Lourdes (1925-2005), Via Lucis and many articles on historical and theological themes (including 3 for the New Catholic Encyclopedia). He founded the Chaplaincy at the UPR Medical School. Mons. Felices is fluent in Spanish, English, French and Italian, and has preached retreats in the USA and Puerto Rico, especially to the Missionaries of Charity of St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta. He is currently working on a book on the Soteriological significance of Christ's Descent to the Dead.



#### **Father Gerald Murray**

Father Gerald Murray was born in Brooklyn, New York in May, 1959 and attended Regis High School and Dartmouth College. He entered St. Joseph's Seminary, Dunwoodie and was ordained a priest on December 1, 1984. He was assigned to various parishes in the Bronx and Manhattan before being

sent to the Gregorian University in Rome in 1993 to study Canon Law. He was awarded a Doctorate in Canon Law in 1998 and then served briefly as a judge on the Metropolitan Tribunal before being named Pastor of St. Vincent De Paul Church in 1998. In 2012 Fr. Murray was named Pastor of Holy Family Church. Fr. Murray has appeared on various television and radio outlets, including EWTN, EWTN Spanish, Fox News, Fox Business News, MSNBC, NY1, Radio Maria, Relevant Radio, Fox News Radio and the Voice of America. He is fluent in French, Spanish and Italian. He served in the U.S. Naval Reserve Chaplain Corps from 1994 to 2005.







#### WWW.QUEENOFTHEAMERICASGUILD.ORG | 630-584-1822

#### FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20

limited seating - pre-registration required -

9:30-11:00	Conference check-in / registration	9:30 AM	Speaker — Msgr. Fernando Felices
11:15 AM	Boxed lunch — optional (pre-purchase required)	10:30 AM	Refreshment break
11:45 AM	Rosary/Confessions available	11:00 AM	Speaker — Fr. Gerald Murray
12:15 PM	Opening Mass — Main Celebrant His Eminence	11:45 AM	Rosary/Confessions available
	Raymond Leo Cardinal Burke	12:15 PM	Holy Mass — Main Celebrant His Eminence
2:00 PM	Speaker — Bishop Juan Miguel Betancourt		Raymond Leo Cardinal Burke
3:00 PM	Exposition and Divine Mercy Chaplet	1:30 PM	Lunch buffet
4:00 PM	Benediction/Reposition	2:30 PM	Keynote address — <b>His Eminence Raymond</b>
5:30 PM	Cocktail ½ hour with entertainment by Marty Rotella		Leo Cardinal Burke
	(cash bar)	3:00 PM	Exposition
6:00 PM	Dinner with honored guests <b>His Eminence Raymond</b>	4:00 PM	Benediction/Reposition
	Leo Cardinal Burke, Bishop Juan Miguel Betancourt,	5:00 PM	Concert by Marty Rotella
	Msgr. Fernando Felices and Fr. Gerald Murray		

#### **REGISTER ONLINE AT:** WWW.QUEENOFTHEAMERICASGUILD.ORG



#### **CONFERENCE & DINNER PACKAGE**

Culina Mariana

Includes conference attendance Friday & Saturday, Friday evening gourmet dinner with Cardinal Burke, Most Rev. Juan Miguel Betancourt, Msgr. Fernando Felices and Fr. Gerald Murray, Saturday refreshment break and buffet lunch. Conference & Dinner package is limited to the first 100 registrants.

#### **HOTEL, CONFERENCE & DINNER PACKAGE**

Includes all of the above, plus two nights lodging (Friday and Saturday nights) at the Radisson La Crosse. Based on double occupancy. Limited number of rooms available - rooms held only until September 20. If there will be just one person in the hotel room, please add the additional single supplement charge.

#### **VALUE PACKAGE**

Due to the limited seating at the Friday night dinner, we are offering this package, which will allow you to attend all conference activities on both days, excluding the Friday dinner. Includes conference attendance on Friday (excluding dinner) and Saturday, refreshment break and buffet lunch.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21

#### **OPTIONS**

We will also be offering an optional boxed lunch on Friday; reservations are required. Please indicate your preference on the registration form. Due to food ordering requirements, no refunds will be given after October 10.

#### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

Name(s):	
Address:	
City:	
State:	Zip:
Tel. #: ()	
E-mail:	

#### PACKAGE OPTIONS

Item	# Attending	Price/pp	Total	
Conference & Dinner		\$110.00		
Value Package (no Friday dinner	r)	\$60.00		
Hotel, Conference & Dinner Package*		\$280.00		
Single Hotel Room Supplement		\$170.00		
Friday Box Lunch		\$15.00		
Please choose: □ Veggie □ Turkey				

conference October 20 & 21, 2023.

#### CANCELLATION

For Conference & Hotel packages, no refunds will be given on the hotel portion after September 20. All other cancellations will be refunded only if notification is received by October 10.

#### DIRECTIONS

The Shrine's physical address is 5250 Justin Road, La Crosse, WI 54601. From I-90, exit onto US-53 S via Exit 3 towards La Crosse. US-53 becomes 3rd Street south, which becomes South Avenue, then Mormon Coulee Road. Watch for signs for Hwys 14/61. 14/61 turns left (East). Justin Road is the third road on the right. Take Justin road south until you see the Shrine sign on the right.

#### Send registration form with payment to:

Rebecca Nichols, National Coordinator Queen of the Americas Guild 311 Kautz Rd., St. Charles, IL 60174 Phone: (630) 584-1822 Fax: (630) 587-2200 E-mail: staff@queenoftheamericasquild.org REGISTER ONLINE AT: www.queenoftheamericasquild.org

#### PAYMENT OPTIONS

☐ Enclosed is my check in the amount of:  \$	☐ Charge my desired package to my credit card (fill out information below)				
Please make checks payable to: Queen of the Americas Guild					
Please circle: Visa MasterCard Discover Amex	Expiration date				
Name on card	3- or 4-digit security code:				
////Card number					

**TOTAL DUE:** 

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## 2022 Queen of the Americas Guild Conference Recap

SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE | LA CROSSE, WISCONSIN

fter a move from July to October, a lovely group of pilgrims was happy to join us for our annual conference at the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in La Crosse, Wisconsin last October 21 & 22, 2022. The theme of the conference was "Our Lady in Literature", which proved to be both educational and interesting.

As always, the conference began with the opening Mass celebrated by His Eminence, Raymond Leo Cardinal Burke in the beautiful Shrine Church. After Mass, His Eminence spent a great deal of time greeting each pilgrim and offering his blessings.



Cardinal Burke prepares for Mass at the Shrine church.

Mr. Joseph Pearce, an internationally acclaimed author, gave the first talk of the afternoon. His topic of "Our Lady and the Poetry of Christendom" was a lovely look at many of the poems devoted to Our Lady. The events continued with the Divine Mercy Chaplet, followed by Evening Prayer and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.



Dr. Robert Royal

As always, one of the highlights of the conference was the Friday evening dinner with Cardinal Burke, Bishop Juan Miguel Betancourt, Joseph Pearce, and Dr. Robert Royal. This year's dinner venue was changed to the Wisconsin room at the Radisson hotel, which made a convenient commute for those staying in our room block there. This reservation-only

event always sells out quickly, as it is a lovely chance to mingle with His Eminence and our other speakers.



Votive Candle Chapel at the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe

Saturday's program began with an address by Dr. Robert Royal, founder and President of the Faith and Reason Institute in Washington, D.C. Dr. Royal spoke on "Columbus, Guadalupe, and the Crisis of Civilization". His thoughtful and educational topic was well-received by pilgrims.

After a brief break, another talk by Joseph Pearce was on the agenda. This time, Mr. Pearce spoke on "Our Lady in the Narrative Fiction of Christendom". His experience as a Catholic author, as well as his uniquely British sensibilities and humor, made for a thoroughly enjoyable take on this topic.

Holy Mass was again celebrated by His Eminence, Raymond Leo Cardinal Burke, followed by a lunch for all conference participants. After a brief break, His Eminence presented the keynote address, "Don Antonio Valeriano: Literature as a Messenger of the Mother of God". As always, His Eminence's erudite and unique look at the subject at hand left pilgrims with a deeper

understanding of Our Lady.

After Holy Hour in the Church, the conference came to a close with a lively concert by Marty Rotella, who shared both his personal story and his beautiful music. New friends parted with plans to join us again next year.



Joseph Pearce

## 😽 St. Juan Diego Statue 💡



#### at the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe - La Crosse, Wisconsin

This article is the sixth in a series highlighting the devotional areas at the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in La Crosse, Wisconsin.

he Statue of Saint Juan Diego that greets pilgrims as they begin their pilgrimage at the Shrine is a gift from His Eminence, Norberto Cardinal Rivera Carrera, Primate of Mexico, on the occasion of the dedication of the Church of the Shrine, July 31, 2008.

This bronze, almost life-sized statue is situated on the walkway leading to the pilgrim center. As most outdoor areas are at the Shrine, it is surrounded by beautiful flowers in the summertime. It is an appropriate start to a pilgrimage, as it depicts the most important part of Our Lady of Guadalupe's miracle – the reveal of St. Juan Diego's tilma showing her image, along with the Castilian roses that she placed there.

Upon arrival at this spot, it is the perfect time to recite the following prayer to St. Juan Diego. Copies of this prayer card can be obtained on our website at www.queenoftheamericasguild.org.



#### PRAYER TO ST. JUAN DIEGO

Wecome to you, dear Juan Diego, chosen messenger of Our Lady of Guadalupe. We ask you now to be our messenger. Take this, our petition, to the throne of God, but take it first to Our Merciful Mother, and receive her approving sign.

Then your voice will be magnified and will ring with the sweet authority of her own.

May you intercede on our behalf, and may blessings fall from heaven,

as roses fell from your mantle and revealed to us Mary's sacred image

painted there by the finger of God for us to cherish forever.





Saint Juan Diego

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## Our Lady on the Battle Flag

The Virgin of Guadalupe and the Mexican Cristero War

By Clarke Ross

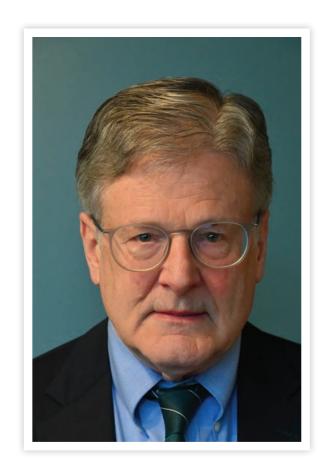


hat would you do if your government forbade you to practice your religion in public? If it told priests not to wear clerical garb, and punished them if they did? If it regulated the number of priests in each region, and could reduce that number to zero if politicians so decided? That's what happened in Mexico in the late 1920s under the administration of a former general, president Plutarco Elias Calles.

Catholics who were persecuted by the state first tried peaceful protest. When persecution escalated, they took up arms against what they saw as not only an anti-clerical but a frankly atheist government. They fought with poor equipment in appalling conditions. Our Lady of Guadalupe was so important to these *Cristeros* that they put her image on their flag. Why?

During the Cristero War (1926-1929), Mexicans demanded to be able to live as Catholics: not only inside a church building, but in everyday life. Popular processions and noisy fiestas were part of their faith, and they refused to give them up. They wanted freedom for their priests, too. They fought for all those things in ragged bands at first, but by August 1927 they had consolidated their movement and started attacks on the federal troops garrisoned in their towns.

The so-called National League for the Defense of Religious Liberty then went so far as to hire a general: Enrique Gorostieta, a retired army man who was originally a skeptic. Inspired by the faith of the



Clarke Ross

men he led, he began to wear a large cross around his neck. In speeches, Gorostieta openly admitted his reliance on God. Our Lady of Guadalupe went to the front as Queen on the banner of struggle.

Viva Cristo Rey! Viva la Virgen de Guadalupe! "Long live Christ the King! Long live the Virgin of Guadalupe!" – these were the battle cries of the Cristeros. But they are also prayers. They gave peasants and urban people, most of whom were amateurs at war, the courage to enter into combat. They were the last words on the lips of those Catholic soldiers who were martyred: bound and blindfolded, their backs against a wall, before a federal firing squad.

But why was Our Lady of Guadalupe so important to these soldiers? Why was this particular image the one they chose?

For one thing, they were Mexicans. By the time of the Cristero War, Our Lady of Guadalupe had been revered in Mexico for 295 years. She had appeared in 1531 to Saint Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin a man of Aztec descent who had converted to Christianity, on Tepeyac Hill, which is now in a suburb of Mexico City. So her story is entwined with the people and geography of that country.

But there's more: the Virgin of Guadalupe is an image of Our Lady as the greatest enemy of Satan – the Virgin as the woman of the Book of Revelation, prophesied in the Book of Genesis, who crushes the head of the Serpent. In order to understand the connection, we have to recall the historical context of the apparition of the Mother of God to Juan Diego.

Between 1519 and 1521, Hernán Cortés and a small band of men brought down the Aztec empire in Mexico. Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared only 10 years later. Poor Juan Diego may have been a convert to the Faith, but the memory of the paganism of the Aztecs was still fresh for him and almost everyone else in Mexico.

We call her as we do because when the Virgin appeared to Juan Diego's uncle and healed him, she told him that she wanted the image that she has imprinted on Juan Diego's *tilma* to be called "the Virgin of Guadalupe." That is quite peculiar. Why should Our Lady choose the same name of a popular shrine in Spain, Guadalupe, that had no relation to the New World? Usually, the Virgin Mother wants to be known by the name of the place where she appears, as was the case at Lourdes in the foothills of the Pyrenees, or at Fatima in Portugal.

It has been suggested that the name "Guadalupe" might have arisen from a misunderstanding between the Spanish speakers in the Mexican Church hierarchy and the Aztec natives, who spoke the Nahuatl language. It may be that Our Lady, when asked to identify herself, actually said the Nahuatl word: "coatlaxopeuh." Most of us have never heard that word. It is pronounced "quatlasupe" and sounds similar to the Spanish word *Guadalupe*.

Perhaps when Saint Juan Diego told the initially-skeptical Bishop Juan de Zumárraga what Our Lady had said to his uncle, the bishop misunderstood and chose a Spanish word instead. But the Nahuatl word "coatlaxopeuh" or "quatlasupe" contains its own meaning, and this meaning is highly suggestive in the context of the Cristero conflict. "Coatlaxopeuh" can be translated as a phrase: it means "crush the snake."

It seems that Our Lady wanted to tell the Mexican natives that she was the one "who crushes the serpent." The Indians would have understood the meaning of this expression, even if they were ignorant of the Book of Revelation (12:7-9), which speaks of "the ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan." Why? Because one of the Aztecs' most important gods from the time before Cortés was Quetzalcoatl, a false deity with the head of a serpent who was probably a demon incarnate.

We recall that the religion of the Aztecs was based on bloody human sacrifice, including the sacrifice and even the eating of children. The Aztecs gladly admitted their cannibalism to Spanish chroniclers, just as today's pagans urge each other to "Shout your abortion." The Aztec kingdom, before it was conquered for Christ, was an empire of the Devil

This explains the incredible hatred the forces of Hell displayed in the persecution, four centuries later, of the Mexican Church and the Indians converted by Our Lady. While one side shouted "Long live the Virgin of Guadalupe!" the other side – troops led by atheist and often Masonic officers – shouted "Viva el Demonio!" Long live the Devil!" As horrifying as that slogan is, it makes the stakes of the conflict perfectly clear.

Instead of destroying the Faith, the 20th century government persecution of Catholicism in Mexico would provoke loyal sons of the Church to rally behind Our Lady of Guadalupe. In the end, they won back many liberties for the Church. In defiance of Hell and their own mortality, the Cristeros waved the image of Our Lady – in the Devil's face!



## FATHER PAUL CHECK NEW GUILD DIRECTOR



The Queen of the Americas Guild was pleased to welcome Fr. Paul Check as a new board member during our annual board meeting last October 21.

r. Paul N. Check was ordained a priest of the Diocese of Bridgeport, CT in 1997. He holds a Baccalaureate in Sacred Theology from the Gregorian University and a Licentiate in Sacred Theology from the University of the Holy Cross. Fr. Check has taught courses in fundamental moral theology, sexual and medical ethics, Christian anthropology, the Beatitudes, and the Parables. For twelve years, he taught a two-week moral theology course annually to St. Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity in Calcutta, and more recently, he has a taught regularly for the Augustine Institute, and for FOCUS. He has given several retreats and days of recollection to diocesan clergy, religious, and seminarians.

Fr. Check earned a BA in history and political science from Rice University in 1981, after which he served as an officer in the US Marine Corps for nine years, and prior to entering seminary. He has been a parish priest and a high school chaplain. From 2008-2016, Fr. Check was the Executive Director of Courage International, presenting to clergy in many dioceses the Church's teaching on homosexuality and her pastoral response. Fr. Check was then assigned as the Rector of the St John Fisher Seminary in the Diocese of Bridgeport for four years, during which time he also served as director of ongoing priestly formation. On August 15, 2020 and with the permission of his Bishop, he was appointed the Executive Director of the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in La Crosse, WI, by His Eminence, Raymond Leo Cardinal Burke, and the Shrine's Board of Directors.

We welcome Fr. Check to the Guild board and look forward to working with him.



Father Paul Check



### GOOD FRIDAY AND MARY, OUR MOTHER

Father Paul Check



"Grace perfects nature," St Thomas says. Consider, for example, this verse from St John's Gospel: "Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." In nature, we find such sacrifice noble. In grace, when the God-Man lays down His life, we find such sacrifice salvific. Grace elevates nature.

In the natural order, each of us has a mother. She gave us the gift of life, and praise God, she taught us about grace....although she herself could not impart grace. Even so, the very idea of motherhood comes from the mind of God. So, in this sense, a mother's heart is something sacred, which explains why all children—no matter their age—treasure the love of their mother.

"Woman, behold your son....[Son], behold, your mother!" That Mary becomes our mother at Calvary and not at Bethlehem bespeaks the wisdom and goodness of God, whose generosity to His children blesses us with a mother in the order of nature, and now, with an incomparable Mother in the order of grace.

May I propose three things—surely, there are many others—that mothers teach their children in the natural order, and then, that the Mother of Divine Grace teaches us—her beloved sons and daughters—in the supernatural order.

**First**, mothers help their children to regain their serenity, their peace of mind and heart, when something threatens their composure, their calm. Little children, especially, instinctively turn to their mothers in



what they perceive to be a crisis, a cause of turmoil. For their part, mothers naturally know how to receive their children, and how to ease their fears.

From St John's Passion narrative: "...**standing by the cross** of Jesus [was] his mother..." Mary *stands* at the foot of the cross. The word tells us not just about her physical posture, but it expresses something about her spiritual posture, as well: her faith, her courage, her trust... all in the face of what was excruciatingly painful. Simeon's prophetic

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words are fulfilled: a sword has pierced our Mother's heart...and yet, she remains on her feet. She has not lost her peace, even in the most acute pain.

We suffer for the death of Jesus on Good Friday. The greater our purity of heart, the greater the sorrow. By our sins, we are complicit, in some measure, in the sufferings of Christ, in His body and in His soul. But in our guilt and in our pain, we turn to Mary, who is both Mother of Sorrows, and, paradoxically, Queen of Peace...and she consoles us, and guides to us to a more pure heart, through renewed and deeper contrition, a more firm purpose of amendment, and greater confidence in the goodness and power of her Son.

**Second**, mothers teach children to *forget* themselves and to *give* themselves, because their maternal hearts know, particularly through the experience of childbearing and the raising of children, how our hearts will be fulfilled, and indeed, how they will flourish. Though unselfishness and kindness may be a challenge to achieve, we are drawn to these qualities in others. Why is that? Not simply because we want to be the beneficiaries of such virtue, but because we want to *develop* such virtues in ourselves.

Why is the **Visitation** the second *joyful* mystery of the Rosary? Surely, there was the joy that pregnancy brought to Mary and Elizabeth. But more than that, Mary *hastens*—she moves with purpose and with self-forgetfulness—to assist her cousin. And not only does she give herself, but she also gives or brings *Jesus*...and so natural joy—good and rich as it is—becomes Christian joy.

**Third**, and finally, mothers teach us how to look past the here and now, the immediate, to search for the deeper meaning, even the mystery, of things. They teach us how to be still and silent, how to reflect, and how to be patient and to persevere.

"Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you," Gabriel says to Mary at the **Annunciation**. Had we received such a greeting from an angel, we might have become giddy, or dizzy, or worse, self-absorbed. But not Mary. She *pondered* what the greeting meant, and she was *troubled* by it. Why?

Because she knew the Scriptures—the story of salvation history, thus far—thoroughly. She knew the prophecy of Isaiah—that the virgin would be with child—and that her Son would be the Man of Sorrows. She was troubled because she *understood* the mystery, the deep meaning, of the angel's words. She foresaw the sacrifice and suffering that Calvary would call forth from her and from her Son...for the salvation of the world...*and* she realized in an instant the stunning truth that *God was going to be her Child*. She grasped the sorrow and the joy, and she said..."Yes." Only grace could make such a marvel possible.

As the Mother of God and the Mother of Sorrows, Mary surrendered heart. "Into your hands, Father, I commend my spirit." These are Jesus' words, and they are likewise Mary's. As we contemplate the Passion, our Mother in Heaven encourages us to embrace these words, too, and to enflesh them. It is proper to both natural and divine maternity to know that *love inspires surrender*, and to know that *it is love that heals*.

God chose Mary to be His assistant in the work of the redemption, and that is why she, unlike even the very best of earthly mothers, can impart grace. She is Mother of the Redeemer, and she is Mother of the Redeemed.

But there is one final point. The Father also chose Mary so that His Son would have something He lacked. "He who had only a Father, now had a Mother, too." (St John of the Cross) *The Father did not want His Son to be alone in the spiritual combat with sin and death*, and so strikingly, does nature come to the aid of grace, when Mary gives birth to Jesus.

Jesus was not alone on the via Crucis and on the Cross. St Thomas told us that grace perfects nature, and he would say that it was "fitting" that Mary becomes our Mother not at the Virgin Birth, which was unique to her, but in pain, sacrifice and suffering, which are common to us all.

Thus, we return to and praise the Father's wisdom and goodness.

Jesus was not alone during His greatest trial, and neither are we.

"Woman, behold your son....[Son], behold, your mother!" ■

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## THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION in the History of the Americas

## Sacred History Records What Secular History Forgets: Devotion to Mary is Part of our National Heritage

By Dr. Rosalie A. Turton
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Let us trace throughout our history how much America belongs to Mary through her Immaculate Conception. This is a great gift from God, the gift of Mary to the Americas.

I won't begin by starting with 1492 when Christopher Columbus discovered America because the formulation of Christianity in the Americas began much earlier with our ancestors.

#### **FOURTEENTH CENTURY**

**1337**–The Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe was begun in Spain. The word Guadalupe means "hidden river." They had found a little statue calling it "Hidden River," and in those days a river was the source of great graces.

#### FIFTEENTH CENTURY

**1400** – Spanish and Portuguese explorers early-on were deeply devoted to Our Lady's Immaculate Conception. When they sailed they carried everywhere their devotion to *La Purisma*, the pure one, "the One Immaculately Conceived."

**1492**–October 12, the day Columbus landed, a statue of Mary, "the Immaculate One," was crowned by the King and the Cardinal at Guadalupe in Spain as Queen of Spain and *all* her territories.

**1492**—The first Christian prayer recited in the New World was the *Salve Regina*, by Columbus and his men on San Salvador. The first island that Columbus discovered in his flagship, the *Santa Maria*, he named "San Salvador" or "Holy Savior," but two days later, he sailed to a second island naming it "Santa Maria de la Concepcion" or "Holy Mary of the Immaculate Conception," now called Conception Island.

**1493**—Columbus placed his second voyage under the protection of the Immaculate Conception. His mortal remains today rest either in

Santa Domingo or in the Cathedral of Havana, in the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception.

#### SIXTEENTH CENTURY

**1528** – December 6, just before the feast of the Immaculate Conception, Archbishop Juan de Zumarraga arrived as the second Bishop of New Spain (Mexico) and consecrated all the lands of the Americas to the Immaculate Virgin. He wrote to the explorer Cortes, "I wish *all* the lands of this continent to be consecrated to Mary's Immaculate Conception."

**1531**—In the eighth century, the Eastern Church celebrated the Feast of the Immaculate Conception on December 9. Thirty-nine years after Columbus discovered America, Our Lady appeared to Juan Diego, a Christian Indian, in Mexico City for the first time on December 9, 1531. She also appeared to his uncle, Juan Bernardino, identifying herself as (phonetically) "Te Quat le Supe." The Spanish thought she said "de Guadalupe."

The actual words in the Aztec language mean, "I am the Immaculate Conception, she who crushes the head of the serpent." A letter was found written by Bishop Zumarraga mentioning that fact, yet most people do not realize the Mary identified herself at Guadalupe as the Immaculate Conception.

#### **SEVENTEENTH CENTURY**

**1617**–Franciscan Venerable Mary of Jesus of Agreda, author of the *Mystical City of God*, wrote the four-volume book as a biography of Our Lady as it was given to her by revelation from Heaven. She petitioned the Holy See to define clearly two points, made de Fide in our time – the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin and the infallibility of the Sovereign Pontiff.

**1617**–The dogma of the Immaculate Conception was promulgated in the Spanish Kingdoms and many Franciscans, including Mary of Agreda, began wearing blue habits. Gifted artists there began painting scores of paintings of the Immaculate Conception, some of them now being world famous such as those by Murillo.

**1620** – The Confraternity of the Immaculate Conception was established in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and still exists today. They honor a miraculous statue over three and a half centuries old brought from Mexico and called *La Conquistadore*, or "She Who Conquers." (Isn't that really the Immaculate Conception, she who conquers the head of the serpent?)

**1634**–English Catholics came to the new world calling it Mary's Land, now Maryland. The first Mass in the New World was said on St. Clement's Island on the Feast of the Annunciation. Their chaplain, Rev. Andrew White, SJ, recorded how the Catholics of the

group consecrated the future colony to Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception. They called their first settlement and capital St. Mary's City and they named the Chesapeake St. Mary's Bay.

**1673**–Fr. Jacques Marquette accompanied another explorer, Louis Joliet, down the Mississippi River to the mouth of the Arkansas River, making careful notes as well as maps in his diary that proved to be of great historical value. He named it River of the Immaculate Conception.

#### **EIGHTEENTH CENTURY**

**1746**–Pope Benedict XIV publicly referred to Our Lady of Guadalupe as Blessed Mary Immaculate of Guadalupe. (This was over one hundred years before the dogma of the Immaculate Conception was declared.)

#### **NINETEENTH CENTURY**

**1802**–Archbishop John Carroll, Bishop of Baltimore and the first bishop of the United States, immediately placed his diocese (then our entire country) under the protection of the Immaculate Virgin.

There are four visions of the Immaculate Heart that happened rather quickly in succession, three of them in France and one in the United States.

1830 – Catherine Laboure at Rue de Bac, France

**1836**–Our Lady of Victories in France

1840 – Blangy, France (where the Green Scapular was given)

**1841**–It was reported by Jesuit Fr. Peter de Smet in Bitter Root, Montana, that an Indian boy in his pastoral care named Paul saw Our Lady with her Immaculate Heart.

**1846** – At the sixth Provincial Council in Baltimore, on May 13, the Bishops unanimously chose the "Blessed Virgin Mary, Conceived Without Sin," as the Patroness of the United States. To Our Lady in her Immaculate Conception, they dedicated themselves and all the souls in the Americas.

**1854** – Proclamation of the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception, on December 8 by Pope Pius IX.

**1858**—To Bernadette Soubirous, Our Lady at Lourdes identified herself as the Immaculate Conception.

#### TWENTIETH CENTURY

**1910**—Our Lady of Guadalupe was designated as "Patroness of Latin America" by Pope Pius X.

**1913**–The cornerstone was laid for the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C.



**1915** – Vincentian Fathers came to Germantown, Philadelphia, and established the Central Association of the Miraculous Medal. They distributed widely a medal having the inscription, "Oh Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to Thee." (Catherine Laboure was also in an order started by St. Vincent de Paul.)

1930 – On May 30, a locution of Jesus to Sister Lucia, visionary of Fatima. Many people don't realize that at Fatima there was some relationship to the Immaculate Conception. The bishop said to Lucia, "Ask Jesus, why five First Saturdays . . . [when] there are nine First Fridays?" Jesus said the reason for the five First Saturdays is to make up for the blasphemies against Our Lady. The first one is the denial of her Immaculate Conception. The other four are: the denial that she is the Mother of God; refusal to declare her as our Mother and to bring children to Mary; lack of veneration of her holy images; and the denial of her constant virginity.

**1933** – Beatification of Catherine Laboure. Because of the Miraculous Medal, two Church authorities declared, "The cause of Catherine Laboure is the cause of the Immaculate Conception."

**1945**–Pope Pius XII placed the whole Western Hemisphere under the care of the Virgin of Guadalupe to be known as the "Empress of America."

**1946**–On December 8, Fr. Harold V. Colgan was taken to the hospital dying and given no chance of recovery. Because it was the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, he prayed to Mary asking that if she would intercede for him, he would spend the rest of his life spreading devotion to her Immaculate Heart and promoting the Fatima message. That was the beginning of The Blue Army, a prayer organization that now has over twenty million members.

**1947**–Canonization of Catherine Laboure. In 1920, fifty-seven years after her death, Catherine's body was exhumed and found to be incorrupt. Her eyes that gazed upon Mary's lap for two hours were fresh and supple. Another testimony of the truth of Mary's Immaculate Conception.

**1949**–The beginning of the reputed apparitions to Sr. Mildred Mary, a Benedictine contemplative of Fostoria, Ohio (approved by her spiritual director of thirty-two years, Archbishop Paul Leibold). In 1956, Sister was told by Mary to have a special Immaculate Conception medal struck, providing to those who wear it or carry it the grace of intense purity. Mary promised the protection of St. Michael the Archangel to those who exercise the devotion to her under the title of Our Lady of America.

**1959**—Dedication of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. It is the ninth largest religious building in the world and the largest Catholic church in the Western Hemisphere. It can accommodate six thousand people and it contains fifty-seven chapels and three oratories. Every day there are at least three Masses, the Rosary is said and confessions are heard in the morning and afternoon. One million people visit the shrine annually.

**1987**–On December 8, Feast of the Immaculate Conception, President Ronald Reagan and Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev signed an agreement calling for the most dramatic reduction in nuclear weapons ever proposed since the advent of the Atomic Age.

Having our country dedicated to her Immaculate Conception means that we too must dedicate ourselves to her and be her disciples. We must discipline ourselves – mind, body and soul – fashioning ourselves after her behavior and likeness. This requires a love of God – purity, humility, kindness, industry, honesty, prayerfulness – within each one of us.

As Maximilian Kolbe said to his Knights of the Immaculata:

"Love the Immaculata. Love the Immaculata. Love the Immaculata. She will make you happy. Confide in her. Consecrate yourself to her entirely and unreservedly. I wish that you would love her so much as to be incapable of living without her.

"Try to do everything as she herself would do it, especially in loving God the way she loves him... But that you can learn only on your knees."



### Guadalupe is a Message of Communion Among Mixed Cultures

By Pope Francis





Monastery of Santa Maria de Guadalupe in Extremadura, Spain

n February 17, 2023, Pope Francis sent a message to Archbishop Francisco Cerro Chaves of Toledo, Spain, on the occasion of the Guadalupe Shrines in Spain and Mexico becoming "sister shrines". Archbishop Cerro and Cardinal Carlos Aguiar Retes, Archbishop of Mexico City, both participated in the ceremony in Guadalupe, Spain on February 13.

In his message, Pope Francis stated the following:

"Mary, our Mother, is always a bond of communion for her People. Both Scripture and apostolic tradition show her gathering the apostles and the community around her in an atmosphere of prayer. This is how Saint Luke expresses it in the Acts of the Apostles: "All these with one accord devoted themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers" (1:14). This founding experience of the first Christian community transcends time and place, and the Mother of Jesus, in a simple way, continues to call to us. This has been expressed in many places in the world with the invitation to build a temple that would be a house with doors always open to all, a house of prayer and communion.

Today you are gathered by the sweet name of Mary, more precisely, an ancient invocation which even in its etymological root speaks to us of *mestizaje* [fusion], of encounter with God and with mankind. *Mestizaje* because scholars cannot agree whether we should read the title "Guadalupe" in Arabic, Latin or Nahuatl. But it is curious



that what could be seen as a conflict can in fact be read as a sign from the Holy Spirit who makes his message of love heard to all in their own language. Thus, in Arabic the word could sound like "hidden river", as was that source of living water that Jesus promised to the Samaritan woman, that force of grace that, even in times of rejection and misunderstanding, keeps the Church alive (cf. *Jn* 4:10). As shepherds, this allusion should spur us to always seek in the other that hidden river of grace, that Love of God which makes him or her a priceless treasure. Everything would change if, like Our Lady, we could see in the other that hidden secret; how many setbacks and conflicts we would avoid!

However, mixing with the Latin, the word would speak to us of a "river of wolves" and, in that sense, of a haven of peace for those who are troubled by their own sins, by violence, by the many internal and external wars that make man a wolf to man. It is the same hidden river of grace that in dialogue with Jesus shows us our reality (v. 29), opening us to hope. Like with Saint Francis, in his famous encounter with the wolf, the Virgin Mary again challenges us to be a leaven of communion and reconciliation between God and mankind, encouraging so many of the faithful who come to the shrine for this purpose.

Finally, combining with the Mexican root, Our Lady of Guadalupe is proclaimed as the one who conquers the serpent, with a touching evocation of the proto-gospel of Genesis. Mary Immaculate is thus the true mother of all those who live; of those who have been called together today in this shrine, together with their pastors, to proclaim their faith in the Son of God, in he who, by making all things new, has reconciled the world to himself. I encourage you to bring forth in the hearts of the men and women of our time that river of living water which surges toward heaven, to worship God in Spirit and Truth (cf. vv. 14, 23)."

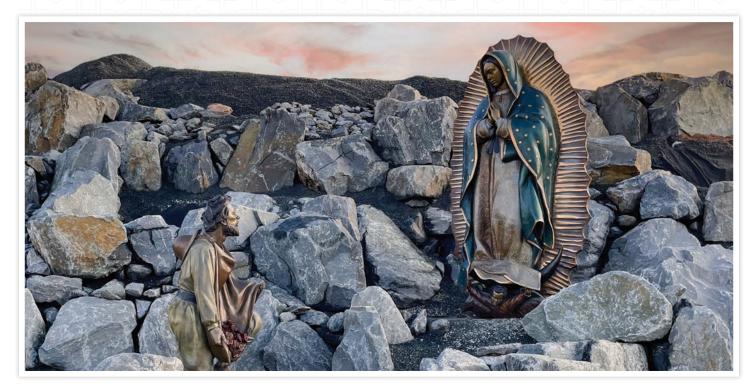
The royal monastery of St. Mary of Guadalupe in Spain was constructed in the 14th century on the site where tradition holds that Mary appeared to a farmer who discovered a dark-skinned statue of Mary. Many Spanish conquistadors who traveled to the New World came from the area around Guadalupe and had a strong devotion to the Marian figure.

The Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City, houses the tilma of St. Juan Diego, the one true self-portrait of Our Lady. An estimated 12 million people visited the shrine in 2019, the year before the COVID-19 pandemic, making it Catholicism's most popular Marian shrine.



Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mexico City

## Here & There



Guadalupe Plaza at Shrine of Christ's Passion

#### **OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE PLAZA**

The Shrine of Christ's Passion in St. John, Indiana recently dedicated their Our Lady of Guadalupe Plaza. The plaza features 11/3 life-size bronze sculptures of Our Lady of Guadalupe and St. Juan Diego nestled on a rocky hillside recreated to mimic Tepeyac Hill in Mexico City where Our Lady first appeared. The plaza also features a small, but beautiful chapel offering pilgrims a place to meditate.

Begun in 2001 by Frank and Shirley Schilling, the shrine is located at 10630 Wicker Ave. (U.S. 41) in St. John, Indiana. It features a half-mile winding Prayer Trail that depicts the last days of Jesus Christ's life. The shrine is funded solely through donations and there is no charge to visit.

The shrine is also the permanent home to Our Lady of the New Millennium, a 33 ft. tall stainless steel sculpture. Long-time Queen of the Americas Guild members may recall founding president Frank Smoczynski's involvement with Our Lady of the New Millennium

when she traveled to parishes throughout the Chicago area for several years around the turn of this century.

#### **FEAST DAY 2022**

A record 12.5 million pilgrims visited the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe on and around her feast day this past December 12. Pilgrimages typically reach their peak on the night of December 11, when hundreds of thousands fill the basilica and its plaza to sing "Las Mananitas" to the Virgin of Guadalupe, a traditional Mexican song for birthday celebrations. Many of the devotees spend the night in the plaza.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021, pilgrims were not allowed to spend the night in the plaza. Authorities believe this led to the record crowds for 2022, with pilgrims anxious to return to see Our Lady. The Government Secretariat of Mexico City noted that the gatherings took place "in peace and without injuries or incidents".



Virgin Mary statue survives Turkey earthquake

#### **OUR LADY SURVIVES IN TURKEY**

A statue of the Virgin Mary was left untouched after the devastating earthquake the hit Turkey and Syria on February 6, 2023. The image of Our Lady was unharmed in the quake that brought down Annunciation Cathedral in the city of Alexandretta in the Turkish province of Hatay. The cathedral was the main church of the Apostolic Vicariate of Anatolia.

Much like the survival of the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe after a bombing of the Basilica in 1921, Jesus has once again protected Our Lady. Please keep the Turkish and Syrian people in your prayers for their recovery from this tragedy and the loss of their citizens.

#### FIRST PHOTO OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

The Archdiocese of Mexico City recently shared the first photograph ever taken of the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe. In a Facebook post, the archdiocese said that "on the afternoon of May 18, 1923, photographer Manuel Ramos had the honor of being the first to photograph the image of the Virgin of Guadalupe directly from Juan Diego's ayate (poncho) without the protective glass."

"The opportunity arose thanks to changing the frame in addition to other repairs that the image needed for its conservation after the attack it suffered on Nov. 14, 1921, when a dynamite bomb was exploded beneath the icon," the Archdiocese explained. The Archdiocese also noted the great impact that photographing the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe had for Manuel Ramos.

"His devotion increased and he began to get more involved in photographing Church events, such as the Centenary of the Apparition of the Virgin."

"It should be noted that the photographs taken from the cloth became the official images of the Virgin of Guadalupe, images that were widely circulated among devotees during the 1920s and 1930s," the archdiocese said. ■



First Photograph of Our Lady of Guadalupe



In Memoriam...



### Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI

April 16, 1927 – December 31, 2022