

FEAST: OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE



The Amazing Truth of Our Lady of Guadalupe

By Dan Lynch

Our Lady of Guadalupe came to offer faith, hope and consolation to the oppressed natives of Mexico and to reconcile them with their Spanish rulers. She put an end to the bloody human sacrifice of the Aztecs and converted ten million natives in the next 10 years.

After the conquest, the Spanish rule of the natives was so severe that a bloody revolt was imminent. Bishop Zummaraga prayed for Our Lady to intervene to prevent an uprising, to reconcile the Spanish and the natives and to bring peace. He asked that he would receive roses native to his homeland of Castile Spain as a sign that his prayer would be answered.

On December 9, 1531, Our Lady appeared to Blessed Juan Diego who was a recently converted Aztec. She asked him to go to the Bishop and request him to build a church for her on the barren hill of Tepeyac which is now part of Mexico City. Our Lady wanted to show her merciful love to all of her children. The prudent Bishop asked Juan to ask the Lady for a sign. Juan did so and Our Lady promised to give him one.

On December 12, Our Lady again appeared to Juan on Tepeyac Hill and told him to pick the Castilian roses which miraculously appeared there and bring them to the Bishop as a sign for him to believe her request. Juan gathered the roses into his tilma and brought them to the Bishop.

He opened the tilma to show them and, to everyone's astonishment, the Image of Our Lady appeared on it. The Bishop then built the church as Our Lady had requested and ten million natives were converted and baptized to the one, true faith within the next 10 years. Human sacrifice ended in Mexico forever. Our Lady of Guadalupe, which means Crusher of the serpent's head, brought the light of the true faith, crushed the false gods of Mexico, and established an era of peace.

The Image as Pictograph

The Image of Our Lady is actually an Aztec Pictograph, read and understood quickly by the Aztec Indians.

1. THE LADY STOOD IN FRONT OF THE SUN - She was greater than their dreaded sun-god "Huitzilopochtli".
2. HER FOOT RESTED ON THE CRESCENT MOON - She had clearly vanquished their foremost deity, the feather serpent "Quetzalcoatl".
3. THE STARS STREWN ACROSS THE MANTLE - She was greater than the stars of heaven which they worshipped. She was a virgin and the Queen of the heavens for Virgo rests over her womb and the northern crown upon her head. She appeared on December 12, 1531, for the stars that she wore are the constellation of stars that appeared in the sky that day!
4. THE BLUE-GREEN HUE OF HER MANTLE - She was a Queen for she wears the color of royalty.
5. THE BLACK CROSS ON THE BROOCH AT HER NECK - Her God was that of the Spanish Missionaries, Jesus Christ her son.
6. THE BLACK BELT - She was with child for she wore the Aztec Maternity Belt.
7. THE FOUR-PETAL FLOWER OVER THE WOMB - She was the "Mother of God." The flower was a special symbol of life, movement and deity - the center of the universe.
8. HER HANDS ARE JOINED IN PRAYER - She was not God but clearly there was one greater than her and she pointed her finger to the cross on her brooch.

The Image and Science

The image to this date, cannot be explained by science.

1. The image shows no sign of deterioration after 450 years! The tilma or cloak of Juan Diego on which the image of Our Lady has been imprinted, is a coarse fabric made from the threads of the maguey cactus. This fiber disintegrates within 20-60 years!
2. There is no under-sketch, no sizing and no protective over-varnish on the image.
3. Microscopic examination revealed that there were no brush strokes.
4. The image seems to increase in size and change colors due to an unknown property of the surface and substance of which it is made.
5. According to Kodak of Mexico, the image is smooth and feels like a modern-day photograph. (300 years before the invention of photography.)
6. The image has consistently defied exact reproduction, whether by brush or camera.
7. Several images can be seen reflected in the eyes of the Virgin. It is believed to be the images of Juan Diego, Bishop Juan de Zummaraga, Juan Gonzales, the interpreter and others.
8. The distortion and place of the images are identical to what is produced in the normal eye which is impossible to obtain on a flat surface.
9. The stars on Our Lady's Mantle coincide with the constellation in the sky on December 12, 1531. All who have scientifically examined the image of Our Lady over the centuries confess that its properties are absolutely unique and so inexplicable in human terms that the image can only be supernatural!

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December 10, 2017

2nd Sunday of Advent

MASSES & SERVICES

Saturday: 5pm

(Anticipated Mass)

Sunday: 9am, 11am & 5pm

Monday – Wednesday 8am

Thursday Mass/Novena:

8am & 7pm

Friday, Saturday, Holidays:

9am

(Fridays in July & August:

8am)

Reconciliation

Saturday: 4-4:45pm

Adoration

Saturday 9:30-10am

Library Hours

Sunday: 10-10:45am, 4:30-5pm

OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Friday: 9am-4pm

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Where Are You In Your Spiritual Journey?

Dear Friends & Parishioners,

We talked last week about Advent being a time of looking ahead and looking back. Today I'd like to share some thoughts about using this time of the year to not just look ahead or look back but to look at where you are in your spiritual journey.

Advent is not just counting down the days to the coming of Christ. It is a time to reflect on our inward journey to contemplate where we stand in our relationship with God our Father. The Redemptorists have an app for that! You can download this free app developed by the Redemptorists of Australia and New Zealand called Bread 4 Today. It has brief daily reflections even the busiest of us can make time for. The reflection for Dec 7 is perfect for parents facing the pressures of shopping, entertaining and holiday planning. It's aptly called: *Praying Through Exhaustion*.

"Oh Lord, I am so tired. It seems like the lists of to-do's get longer each day, the frenzy in my home each night gets wilder. It seems like the holidays have barely started and already I am behind... Teach me (Jesus) to make choices about my time, to remember what is important this season and to say "No" whenever my Yes would take me away from your peace. Fill me with patience, love and a sense of humour."

There are also several Advent retreats not far from our neighborhood which you can attend to get away from it all... even if it's just for half a day. May our Blessed Mother help us to be selective in the use of the gift of our time this Advent.



Yours in Christ,
Fr. Babu Mathew, C.Ss.R.



Show us your steadfast love O Lord, and grant us your salvation. - Psalm 85

NEWS & NOTICES

Sunday Offering Envelopes: Your 2018 Sunday Offering Envelopes will be available for pick-up next weekend Dec 16 & 17 in the church foyer. If you do not see a box of envelopes with your name, please contact the parish office.

PEC Meeting: Tuesday Dec 12 in the Madonna Room at 7pm. Parishioners are welcome to attend.

Andrew Hong Memorial Fund: Thank you for all of your offers of support for the Hong family at this difficult time following the passing of husband and father, Andrew Hong. If you would like to help Cecilia Cho and her children, Taehyunh, Tara and Tristan, please see below for a link to a Go Fund Me page. In addition, you may drop off any financial gifts to the parish or school office. Please make any cheques payable to Cecilia Cho. <https://www.gofundme.com/andrew-hong-memorial-fund>

Seniors Christmas Concert & Tea: This is an annual event put on by OLPH School. Seniors of the parish and grandparents of schoolchildren are invited to attend the noon performance to be held 12-2pm on Wednesday Dec 20. Tickets are available early Dec. at the school office. Seating is limited.

Advent Retreat: Love Incarnate - Understanding Christian Charity All are welcome to this Advent retreat led by Sister John Mary Sullivan and Fr. Jude Iloghalu on Saturday, Dec. 9, 9:30 - 11:30 a.m., at Holy Rosary Hall, followed by confession and Mass. Admission is by donation. Sponsored by the Catholic Women's League.

Youth Ministry Bake Sale: The youth group is having a bake sale after the 5pm mass this Sunday December 10. All proceeds will go to make care packages for the under-privileged. Please come and show us your support at our bake sale! Thank you.

Madonna House Advent Retreat: "Pray always, I will be your rest" While we are waiting for the coming of our Lord, let's reflect together how to pray always, and rest in his arm. Come join Madonna House for a talk and time of silent reflection, followed by fellowship and sharing. We will have potluck lunch afterwards so bring a dish to share. Sat, December 16 St. John the Apostle Parish Hall (5457 Trafalgar St, Vancouver) 9:30am to 1:30pm For more information contact Madonna House: madonnao2@shaw.ca or call 604-267-1757.

ONE Conference 2018: The annual ONE Conference brings 1,000 parish and ministry leaders from across Catholic Vancouver together to connect, learn, and inspire each other. Mercy and Beyond: Sharing our Joy is the theme of the 2018 ONE Conference, and we will hear from two remarkable keynote speakers who have inspired thousands of people to receive God's mercy and share his joy with others. Sign up to get notified when registration opens at onecatholic.ca. The ONE Conference will be on Saturday, Feb. 10, 2018, at the Chandos Pattison Auditorium at Pacific Academy, Surrey. rcav.org/event/one-2018/

Project Advance: As of end November, donations were at \$79,762. We only have 4 weeks left to the end of the year to hit our target of \$102,000. Please make a prayerful consideration towards giving to this year's Appeal. Thank you!

Development & Peace Membership Drive: This year is the 50th anniversary of the formation of Development & Peace. To celebrate our jubilee, we are offering free membership!

Be at the heart of change, become a member to:

- Learn about injustice and what you can do about it.
- Take concrete actions in solidarity with the poorest and most vulnerable people of the Global South.
- Join a dynamic cross-Canada movement for global peace and justice.
- Speak out! When we act together, change is possible.

Sign up online at www.devp.org or email Deirdre Webster for more info, dmswebster@gmail.com.

Ministering to Seafarers at the Port of Vancouver: The Apostleship of the Sea (Stella Maris) needs volunteers to visit ships. Seafarers Mission Centres are in downtown Vancouver and Roberts Bank (South Delta). For more information on volunteering, please contact Deacon Dileep Athaide, Catholic Chaplaincy Coordinator for the Port of Vancouver at 604-817-6370 or at dathaide@rcav.org.

Stewardship Reflection

"Prepare the way of the Lord..." - MARK 1:3

We are all called to live a holy life. We are all called to invite others to live holy lives. Living a stewardship lifestyle, being grateful and generous with our gifts, does just that – it puts us on the path to holiness and it invites others to be holy, too.

Stewardship Office, Archdiocese of St. Louis

CALENDAR

DECEMBER

Santa's Workshop

Join us for a celebration which includes an element of service to the community after today's 11am Mass as we package gift donations for underprivileged families of Lord Strathcona Community School.

Redemptorist Advent App

If you are seeking a daily prayer resource, rooted in Redemptorist Spirituality, try the free app, Bread 4 Today, from the Redemptorists of Australia and New Zealand.



Christmas & New Year

4th Sunday of Advent Masses

Sat, Dec 23 – 5pm

Sun, Dec 24 – 9am, 11am

Christmas Masses

Sun, Dec 24 - 5pm (Children's Mass), 7pm (Youth-led Mass)
12am Midnight Mass with carols from 11:45pm

Mon, Dec 25 – 9am, 11am & 5pm

New Year's Weekend Masses

(Feast of the Holy Family)

Sat, Dec 30 – 5pm

Sun, Dec 31st – 9am, 11am & 5pm

New Year's Day Masses

(Feast of Mary Holy Mother of God: Day of Obligation)

Mon, Jan 1st – 9am & 11am



Concert and Light-up Marks the Start of Advent

Last Saturday's Advent Prayer Service was an evening of beautiful music and meditations by the choirs and children of Our Lady's Parish. The text of the meditations by Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen and Henri Nouwen were read by children of the parish.

The inspiring messages were presented with an eclectic mix of musical works from 13th century chant, Vivaldi, Handel, Mozart and Caccini to more contemporary selections of Taizé, gospel and works by Joseph M Martin and Pat Messicle. Music Director Catherine Walsh has been working with the choir for weeks to make it an evening to remember. Solos were sung by Theresa Barao, OLPH Youth Coordinator and John D'Arcy on violin.

Fortunately, a few dry moments allowed the parish to step outside for the blessing of the nativity scene and officially turn on the lights of the grotto and garden. The evening was capped with hot chocolate and whipped cream and cakes prepared by dedicated volunteers. A big thank you to all who helped make the start of Advent so special!



ADVENT: A TIME TO REACH OUT



Last week's visit to Bangladesh by Pope Francis reminds us of how important it is for us to stand together with Rohingya refugees, who are living in terrible conditions with little food or water, lacking sanitation facilities, and without knowing if they will ever be able to return home. Our mobilization is more necessary than ever! Development and Peace acted at the onset of the crisis by releasing \$50,000 to provide food for 25,000 refugees in various camps in the Cox's Bazar District.

In November, Development and Peace - Caritas Canada launched an emergency appeal to help Rohingya communities who have been forced to flee Myanmar and seek refuge in Bangladesh and is calling upon the generosity of all Canadians for support. The urgency with which refugees had to flee in the face of abuses by the army and the breadth of their displacement has exacerbated the vulnerability of thousands of children, women, and men who now have little to no access to basic necessities and services.

Since August 25th, when violence erupted between the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army and the Myanmar Army in northern Rakhine State, more than 600,000 people from the Muslim Rohingya minority have fled their country to take refuge in neighbouring Bangladesh, where they are living in conditions of extreme insalubrity and insecurity. Development and Peace supported the emergency by providing assistance to the exhausted refugees who left their country with no more than the clothes on their back and allocated \$50,000 to its partner Caritas Bangladesh as soon as the crisis arose.

"The Rohingya population had to flee the atrocities as quickly as possible, leaving behind burnt villages, as well as their cattle and possessions. Humanitarian aid is essential in such an emergency context so that refugees may somehow survive," explains Stéphane Vinhas, Emergency Relief Program Officer for Development and Peace, currently in Bangladesh "The Rohingya community is not only stateless, but one of the most persecuted minorities in the world. The United Nations describes the situation as 'ethnic cleansing' and it would seem important to support this population, which has been facing discrimination for a number of years." Development and Peace is mobilizing its entire network and appealing to the generosity of the Canadian public to help the Rohingya refugees. The funds raised will be used to respond to health and water needs, as well as to provide shelter, food, and other essential items for Rohingya refugees in the district of Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh.

To donate, go to www.devp.org or call 1 888 234-8533.

www.devp.org