

Our Lady of Guadalupe- December 12

On December 9, 1531, a native Mexican named Juan Diego rose before dawn to walk fifteen miles to daily Mass in what is now Mexico City. Juan lived a simple life as a weaver, farmer, and laborer. That morning, as Juan passed Tepeyac Hill, he heard music and saw a glowing cloud encircled by a rainbow. A woman's voice called him to the top of the hill. There he saw a beautiful young woman dressed like an Aztec princess. She said she was the Virgin Mary and asked Juan to tell the bishop to build a church on that site.

The bishop was kind but skeptical. He asked Juan to bring proof of the Lady's identity. Before Juan could go back to the Lady, he found out his uncle was dying. Hurrying to get a priest, Juan missed his meeting with the Lady. The Lady, however, met him on his path and told him that his uncle had been cured.

She then told Juan to climb to the top of the hill where they first met. Juan was shocked to find flowers growing in the frozen soil. He gathered them in his cloak and took them at once to the bishop.

Juan told the bishop what had happened and opened his cloak. The flowers that fell to the ground were Castilian roses (which were not grown in Mexico). But the bishop's eyes were on the glowing image of the Lady imprinted inside Juan's cloak.

Soon after, a church was built on the site where our Lady appeared, and thousands converted to Christianity. Our Lady of Guadalupe was declared the patroness of the Americas.

In the Catholic church, we celebrate the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe on December 12 (this Tuesday!). It is a very important feast day in Mexico. The Sister Parish group (that works with our sister parish in Mexico) has asked us to bring up roses during the presentation of the gifts as a way of honoring Mary on this special feast. Each student will get one rose and put it into the vase in front of the altar before going back to your seat.

