

Pastor's Column

“Our Lady of Guadalupe— The Patroness of the Americas”

This Monday, December 12, we celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe with a special Mass. Mass begins at 7:00pm on the upper level of the Parish Center with a reception afterward on the Plaza.

I share with you some thoughts from an article, “A View from the North” by Barbara Beckwith:



“Mexicans and other Latin Americans want to share their mother with Anglos in the United States. They are very proud that the Pope recently declared Our Lady of Guadalupe to be the Patroness of America—North, as well as Central and South America, and the Caribbean.

The story of the Lady's appearance at Tepeyac in 1531 is not a familiar story to most Anglo-Americans. But her image is in every Latin-American house and every house of Latin-American immigrants in the United States—as common as family photos. She is the symbol of hope, of God's presence in their struggles, of God's hand in their lives. The fact that she is 'mestizo'—of mixed race—affirms them as a melting-pot people...

It is important for North Americans to have Our Lady of Guadalupe as our Patroness, Comboni Father Arturo Velasquez of Mexico believes. “The North Americans also share with us several situations of injustice, poverty, discrimination, and the central message of Our Lady of Guadalupe goes exactly against injustice, against poverty, in favor of men and women in our world.”

Mexicans want to share their mother with us because she is so accessible to them. She hears their ordinary petitions, the small things of daily life. The Lady of Tepeyac cared about Juan Diego and his uncle, as well as the generations to come...

The Pope's proclamation has three purposes:

1. It emphasizes that all America is one, that our unity and common problems are more important than our differences.
2. It makes us realize that Mary stands with the people. This is the Mary of the Magnificat, the lowly handmaid who allows God to do great things through her. Her hand scatters the proud, puts down the mighty from their thrones and exalts the lowly. She turns the world upside down from one of our making to one with God's order instead.
3. If we have the same mother, we need to treat all Americans— North, South, Central, Caribbean—as equal brothers and sisters. And as the United States becomes more and more Hispanic, this has important implications...

We would do well to accept Our Lady of Guadalupe as our mother, the mother who sends us roses in December.”

For the complete account of Our Lady of Guadalupe and for some special perspectives on this Feast, go to: www.americancatholic.org/messenger/dec1999/feature2.asp.

I encourage as many of our parishioners as possible to attend this special Mass in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe on Monday, December 12, at 7:00pm.

Let us as one people give glory and honor to Mary who is the Patroness of the Americas, who brings us together, and who leads all of us to Jesus.

F. Mike