

*That the Gospel of Jesus Christ  
be joyfully proclaimed and  
received anew on the  
American Continent*

## **NOVENA TO OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE**

**December 3-11 prior to  
the Feast Day December 12**



**Mother & Evangelizer of all America  
and Star of the First and  
New Evangelization  
~ Ecclesia in America, 1999~  
Pope St. John Paul II**

### **NOVENA TO OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE**

On a hill, just outside what is now Mexico City, in the year 1531, the Virgin Mary appeared to an Aztec Native man named Juan Diego, asking him to see to it that a church be built there in her honour. When Juan approached his bishop with Our Lady's request, he was not believed and dismissed. The Virgin appeared to him again and directed him to a barren, stony place where she said he would find roses growing. He wrapped the roses in his cloak (tilma) and brought them to the bishop. When Juan Diego unwrapped the roses before the bishop and other witnesses, the image of the Virgin was found imprinted on the cloak. This time he was believed and a basilica was built on the place of apparition. The cloak, unfaded by time and authenticated by art experts as not being any work they can explain, is exhibited over the main altar of the new Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe — the shrine that commemorates the miracle.

#### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

The following Novena was composed\* by the late Helen Behrens. (\*Some minor adaptations done.) She was an American who, until her death, spent many years operating an English Information Center near the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City. She was tireless in her efforts to promote devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe, particularly as "Queen and Mother of All America."

#### **METHODOLOGY for the Novena**

Each day, read the daily Novena reflection then pray 4 Hail Marys recalling the 4 times Our Lady appeared to Juan Diego or, if time permits, pray the Holy Rosary. End with the daily prayers: the *Memorare to Our Lady of Guadalupe* and the *Closing Prayer* (reverse side).

#### **FIRST DAY DECEMBER 3**

The words of Our Lady of Guadalupe spoken to the Aztec Juan Diego, on Tepeyac hill, December 9, 1531:

"My dear son, whom I love tenderly, know that I am the Virgin Mary, Mother of the True God; the Giver and maintainer of life the (continued....)

Creator of all things; Lord of Heaven and Earth, who is in all places. I wish that a temple to be erected here where I can manifest the compassion I have for all who solicit my help." These your words, my heavenly Mother, fill my heart with love and gratitude, with renewed faith and hope because they were directed to me also. Therefore, I turn to you, confident of obtaining through your intercession, the graces which will enable me to live in accordance with the teachings of your Divine Son, Jesus, whom I desire to love with all my heart. You shared in all that my Saviour suffered for me, therefore I also belong to you, and you are my loving Mother. Do not abandon me in this vale of tears; take pity, I beg you, on my poverty and necessities; have compassion on my anxieties and cares; assist and comfort me in all my infirmities and miseries. Amen.

(Accompanying daily prayers.)

#### **SECOND DAY DECEMBER 4**

These are the merciful words spoken on the fourth and last visit to Juan Diego: "Do not let anything afflict you, and do not be afraid of any illness or accident or pain. Am I not here who am your Mother? Are you not under my shadow and protection? Do you need anything else?" These words were also directed to me and they fill my heart with gladness and hope. Turn then, most gracious Mother, your eyes of mercy towards me. Perfect me in your love, making it possible for me to put all my troubles and worries at your feet, knowing that you will remember that you are my Mother, that I am under your shadow and protection; and that you will obtain for me the consolation of which I am so much in need. Amen.

(Accompanying daily prayers.)

#### **THIRD DAY DECEMBER 5**

When you visited Juan Diego's dying uncle, Juan Bernardino, curing him and telling him your name, "She who crushes the serpent," you filled the Natives' hearts with joy. (continued...)

Because victory has been won, they no longer needed to offer human sacrifices to pagan idols.

Hail! Holy Queen, merciful Mother. Hail! Our life, our sweetness and our hope! Permit me to join in the songs of praise that, to this day, the faithful send up to your throne; many coming long distances to offer you gifts and prayers. Pray for us Holy Mother of God, exterminate the SERPENT OF EVIL from our lives (and our country) that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ, your Divine Son. Amen.

(Accompanying daily prayers.)

#### **FOURTH DAY DECEMBER 6**

When the Natives saw your admirable image left on Juan Diego's tilma, they recognized it to be a picture-writing containing a celestial message which was directed to them. Your regal figure in the form of a human being taught them that your dwelling place, at one time, must have been on earth. Yet the rays of the sun, the clouds which surround your body, the stars on your garment, the crescent moon under your feet, and the angel who transports you through space all denote that your present abode is in Heaven. This called their attention to the immortality of the human soul. O Holy Mary, as your image on the garment of Juan Diego taught the Natives, so let it teach me never to forget the immortality of my soul: that Heaven is my goal and my inheritance. Amid the temptations and difficulties of this life, let me think always of heaven: home of peace, of glory, and eternal bliss. Amen.

(Accompanying daily prayers.)

#### **FIFTH DAY DECEMBER 7**

For centuries, the Natives of Mexico had worshipped the sun, sacrificing countless human beings in its honour. But when they beheld your beautiful Image blotting out the sun so that only its rays are visible, they understood the lesson this was intended to convey. Having interpreted the signs your Image contains, the Natives abandoned their false gods and embraced the loving doctrine of your Divine Son. (continued...)

Never have they ceased to give thanks for the great mercy that Almighty God showered upon them when He sent you to be their Queen, their Mother, and their teacher.

O Holy Mary, through the mystery of the Incarnation of your beloved Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, wherein our salvation was begun, obtain for us light to understand the greatness of the benefit He bestowed upon us in becoming our Brother, and in giving you, His own venerated Mother, to be our Mother also. Amen.

(Accompanying daily prayers.)

#### **SIXTH DAY DECEMBER 8**

##### **Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception**

The fires that burned on the altars of the false gods were extinguished forever after the Natives contemplated your Image and saw you clothed with the sun and covered with stars. This showed them that the sun and stars had been created by the Indivisible God to serve humankind and, therefore, could not be gods to whom adoration and sacrifice were due.

Most Holy Mary who, through your Image stamped by God on the Native's garment, has brought millions of pagans into the light of the true Faith, I beg you to obtain for me the grace of understanding the message your Image contains. Shed upon me the light of your countenance; direct and sanctify all my undertakings. Amen.

(Accompanying daily prayers.)

#### **SEVENTH DAY DECEMBER 9**

##### **Feast of St. Juan Diego**

The cross, emblem of our redemption, stamped upon the golden brooch fastened to the neck of your garment, served to tell the Natives that the religion of their conquerors was the one they were to embrace. The cross on the banner of Hernan Cortez and on the brooch was the same. When the Natives saw the cross on your Image, they flocked around the Spanish missionaries, eager to know its meaning. They were told about the Saviour who came from Heaven to redeem the human race through His death on the cross, and that you are the Virgin Mother

Holy Virgin Mary of Guadalupe, my Queen and Mother, almost 500 years have passed since you spoke to Juan Diego, and so far, only a few of your children in other lands have become aware of the purpose of your Image on the altar of your shrine. Inspire us, then, to see in this your miraculous picture, the instrument for the conversion of all to the Catholic Apostolic Faith, you who are the adorable Queen and Mother of all the Apostles and of all missionaries. Amen.

#### **EIGHTH DAY DECEMBER 10**

After Juan Diego cut the roses that had bloomed suddenly on the barren hill of Tepeyac, he brought them to you at the foot of the mount where you were waiting. With your own hands you arranged them in his tilma. Then, tying the tilma around his neck, you told Juan to take the flowers to Bishop Zumarraga. You said that this sign would convince the bishop to start building your temple. The last words which Juan heard from your adorable lips were, "You are my ambassador worthy of confidence; go in peace."

The sacred picture on the coarse cloth of the tilma could not have been painted by human hands. Seeing it convinced the bishop, as it ought to convince every person who looks upon it, that Juan Diego's message was truly yours.

Humbly I beg you, my Queen and Mother: let me be your ambassador like Juan Diego, that I too may share the doctrine contained in your Image with all my friends whether they be believers or unbelievers. Amen.

(Accompanying daily prayers.)

#### **NINTH DAY DECEMBER 11**

O Holy Virgin, enthroned on the spot which you yourself chose in the very heart of an idolatrous nation, you marvelously accomplished its conversion. After seeing your Image on the tilma of their countryman, Juan Diego, the Natives stripped their temples of all idols and built beautiful churches on whose towers gleaming crosses shone in the sun. The huge drum which had announced innumerable times human sacrifice in honour of pagan gods was heard no more. (continued...)

As Juan Diego spent the remaining seventeen years of his life giving your message to the Natives, so permit me, my loving Mother, to help in making known your celestial message among my countrymen. Animate, bless, and assist all who join in this Novena, that they confidently share the beauty of the Catholic Faith among family and friends. Let them have as their banner your admirable Image together with the cross of Christ, the emblem of our redemption. In particular, I beg your special aid in procuring the sincere conversion of (mention name). Amen.

(Accompanying daily prayers.)

#### **DECEMBER 12 FEAST DAY REFLECTION**

##### **LET'S CELEBRATE MARY, STAR OF EVANGELIZATION**

The apparitions of Our Lady to Juan Diego and the miraculous Image left on his tilma brought 9 million Natives to the Catholic Faith, replacing in the Americas the numbers lost in Europe to the Protestant Reformation. For almost 500 years, the sacred tilma (cloak) of St. Juan Diego has been venerated at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City. The Image, once kept in the open, is now protected behind bullet-proof glass and is turned around every evening to face a secured, vaulted chamber. Over 10 million visitors a year come to see the Virgin of Guadalupe. Because of the large scale conversions that ensued and because evangelization spread from Mexico City across the American Continent, Our Lady of Guadalupe has been named by the popes over the years as Empress, Queen, Patroness and Mother of all America and Star of the New Evangelization. On December 12th, she is celebrated, venerated and invoked by Catholics from the northern shores of Alaska and the Arctic all the way to southern tip of Chile.

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\*some minor adaptations have been made to the original text by H. Behrens in order to better reflect 21st C terminology.

#### **MEMORARE**

##### **TO OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE**

Remember, O most gracious Virgin of Guadalupe, that in your heavenly apparitions on Tepeyac Hill, you promised to show your compassion and pity towards all who, loving and trusting you, seek your help and call upon you in their necessities and afflictions. You promised to hear our supplications, to dry our tears, and to give us consolation and relief. Never has it been known that anyone who fled to your protection, implored your help, or sought your intercession, either for the common welfare or in personal anxieties, was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence, we run to you, O Mary, ever-Virgin Mother of the true God! Though grieving under the weight of sin, we come to prostrate ourselves before your presence. We fully trust that, standing beneath your shadow and protection, nothing will trouble or afflict us, nor do we need to fear illness, or misfortune, or any other sorrow. You wanted to remain with us through your admirable Image, you who are our Mother, our health, and our life. Placing ourselves beneath your maternal gaze, and having recourse to you in all our necessities, we need do nothing more. O Holy Mother of God, despise not our petitions, but in your mercy hear and answer us. Amen.

##### **CLOSING PRAYER**

Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mother of the Americas, look with compassion on your children. We need your help to keep the faith, to preserve the family, to work together for justice with forbearance and forgiveness, and to live and grow in charity. With our whole heart we consecrate ourselves to your Immaculate Heart. Direct our abilities and our efforts to the furthering of God's Kingdom on earth. May we do our part to make ourselves and the Americas more worthy of the love you have for us. Looking on your Image, may we grow in the likeness of your Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

