

About the Miraculous Image

- The tilma itself was a cape worn by the Indians of the time, made of ayate, a coarse fibre from agave or the maguey plant. The cape measures 5.5 x 4.6 feet, and is made in two parts sewn together by a vertical seam made with thread of the same material. The natural life of the fibre is roughly 20 years to 30 years at most, yet the tilma and the image remain intact after 480 years, in spite of moisture, handling, and smoke from candles!

- In 1929, Alfonso Marcue, who was the official photographer of the old Basilica of Guadalupe in Mexico City, found that in both eyes of Our Lady, and in the precise location as reflected by a live human eye, could be seen many figures.

- On the 27th of March 1956, came Dr. Javier Torroella Bueno, a prestigious ophthalmologist. In what is the first report on the eyes of the image issued by a physician, he certifies what seems to be the presence of the triple reflection (Samson-Purkinje effect) characteristic of all live human eyes and states that the resulting images are located exactly where they are supposed to be according to such effect, and also that the distortion of the images agree with the curvature of the cornea.



After the Apparitions

- The appearance of Our Lady of Guadalupe to the Aztec Indian Juan Diego generated, over the next seven years, from 1531 to 1538, eight million conversions of Mexican natives to Catholicism!

- An early missionary, the Franciscan Father Toribio de Benavente, recorded in 1541, that "I have to affirm that at the convent of Quecholac, another priest and myself baptized 14,200 souls in five days. We even placed the Oil of Catechumens and Holy Chrism on all of them."

- In 1648 Father Miguel Sanchez identified Our Lady of Guadalupe with the Woman of the Apocalypse: "A great sign appeared in the sky, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon at her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars." (Rev. 12:1).

- On October 12, 1945, Pope Pius XII, decreed Our Lady of Guadalupe to be "Patroness of all the Americas."



Our Lady
of
Guadalupe



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Apparition of Our Lady in Tepeyac

On a hill named Tepeyac, Our Lady appeared to a Mexican Indian named Juan Diego.

On the 9th of December 1531 First apparition

Juan Diego was on his way to Church in Tlatelolco to attend Mass and Catechism classes. As he passed a hill named Tepeyac he saw a beautiful girl "with tan complexion and bathed in the golden beams of the sun".

The young woman said:

"Dear little son, I love you. I want you to know who I am.

I am the Virgin Mary, Mother of the one true God, of Him who gives life. He is Lord and Creator of Heaven and of earth.

I desire that there be built a temple at this place where I want to manifest Him, make Him known, give Him to all people through my love, my compassion, my help, and my protection. I truly am your merciful Mother, your Mother and the Mother of all who dwell in this land, and of all mankind, of all those who love me, of those who cry to me, and of those who seek and place their trust in me.

Here I shall listen to their weeping and their sorrows. I shall take them all to my heart, and I shall cure their many sufferings, afflictions, and sorrows. So run now to Tenochtitlan and tell the Lord Bishop all that you have seen and heard."

On the 9th of December 1531 in the afternoon Second apparition

Juan Diego went to the palace of the Franciscan Bishop Juan de Zumárraga. The Bishop said that he would consider the request of the Lady and politely invited Juan Diego to come visit again. Dismayed, Juan returned to the hill and found Mary waiting for him. He asked her to send someone more suitable to deliver her message "for I am a nobody."

The Blessed Virgin Mary repeated her request to visit the Bishop and to build a church.

"Woman clothed with the sun,
with the moon under her feet" (Rev. 12:1)



The Lord said to the serpent:
"She will crush your head" (Gen. 3:15)

On the 10th of December 1531 Third apparition

Juan Diego called again on the Bishop for the second time. The Bishop was surprised to see him and told him to ask for a sign from the Lady.

Juan Diego reported this to the Virgin, and she told him to return the following morning for the sign.

On the 12th of December 1531 Fourth apparition

Juan Diego woke up early to bring a priest from the Church of Santiago at Tlatelolco, so that his uncle might receive the last blessing. Juan had to pass Tepeyac hill to get to the priest. Instead of the usual route by the west side of the hill, he went around the east side to avoid the Lady.

The Virgin said: "My little son. Do not be distressed and afraid. Am I not here who am your Mother? Are you not under my shadow and protection? Am I not the fountain of your joy? Are you not in the fold of my mantle, in the cradle of my arms? Your uncle will not die at this time. (...) Go up to the top of the hill; cut the flowers that are growing there and bring them to me."

Juan went to the palace of the Bishop. Juan called for the third time on the Bishop and explained all that had passed. Then Juan put up both hands and untied the corners of the crude cloth behind his neck. The looped-up fold of the tilma fell; the flowers he thought were the precious sign tumbled out on the floor falling from his white cloth, where he had the flowers; and when they scattered on the floor, all the different varieties of roses de Castilla, suddenly there appeared the drawing of the precious Image of the ever-virgin Holy Mary, Mother of God, in the manner as she is today kept in the temple at Tepeyacac, which is named Guadalupe.

When the bishop saw the image, he fell to his knees. He untied from Juan Diego's neck the cloth on which appeared the Image of the Lady from heaven. Then he took it to be placed in his chapel. Bishop told Juan: "Show us where the Lady from Heaven wished her temple to be erected."