

Holy Cross Catholic Church

Second Sunday of Advent

December 7, 2025

Parish Staff

Pastor

*Father Michael Hendershott,
S.T.L.*

Pastoral Care of the Sick

*Deacon Steve May
(865) 221-1076*

Parish Secretary

*Rebekah Snyder
(865) 429-5587*

office@holycrosscatholicchurchtn.org

Resource Manager

*Michael Landree
resources@holycrosscatholicchurchtn.org*

Office Hours

Monday-Friday

9:00am-2:00pm

Gift Shop Hours

Monday-Friday

9:00am-2:00pm

Weekends

After all Masses



Mass Schedule

Tuesday-Friday

12:00pm

Saturday

5:00pm English
7:00pm Español

Sunday

8:00am English
10:30am English

Confession

Saturday

3:00-4:00pm
6:30-6:55pm

First Saturday

8:30-9:30am

Exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament

First Friday 9:00am until
9:00am Saturday



A Note from the Pastor

Dear Parishioners and Friends of Holy Cross,

Blessed Second Sunday of Advent. I hope your preparations for the coming of Christ at Christmas are off to a graced beginning. Our model and patron for joyful preparation to receive Our Lord at Christmas is Our Blessed Mother Mary. She most perfectly shows us how to prepare for and receive her Divine Son. She conceived Him by faith in her heart before she conceived Him bodily in her womb. During the season of Advent preparations we celebrate the preparation of the very place that God prepared immaculately to contain His Divine Son. Mary was made the new Ark of the Covenant to contain not the foreshadowing but the reality of the Divine Presence. In the womb of her mother Anne, Our Lady was conceived immaculately, that is, free from all stain of sin, whether original or personal. She became a new creation, like unto a new earth first formed in Genesis. As the flesh of the first Adam was taken from the dust of an unfallen earth, a world without sin, the flesh of the New Adam, Jesus Christ, was taken from an unfallen being, the Immaculate Conception, Mary who was conceived without sin and remained sinless for the whole of her life.

Although the Church has celebrated this solemnity of the Immaculate Conception from antiquity, Blessed Pope Pius IX officially proclaimed this dogma on December 8, 1854.

Accordingly, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, for the honor of the Holy and undivided Trinity, for the glory and adornment of the Virgin Mother of God, for the exaltation of the Catholic Faith, and for the furtherance of the Catholic religion, by the authority of Jesus Christ our Lord, of the Blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, and by our own: "We declare, pronounce, and define that the doctrine which holds that the most Blessed Virgin Mary, in the first instance of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege granted by Almighty God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the human race, was preserved free from all stain of original sin, is a doctrine revealed by God and therefore to be believed firmly and constantly by all the faithful."

There is a beautiful story that artfully harmonizes with the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, a story familiar to many of us because we have this image in our sanctuary: Our Lady of Guadalupe. In 1531 while St. Juan Diego was walking the 3-5 hour journey to Holy Mass to celebrate the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, Our Lady appeared to him and asked for a shrine to be built in her honor so she could show her maternal love to the world. She said,

"It is well, littlest and dearest of my sons, but now listen to me. Do not let anything afflict you and be not afraid of illness or pain. Am I not here who am your Mother? Are you not under my shadow and protection? Are you not in the crossing of my arms? Is there anything else you need? Do not fear for your uncle for he is not going to die. Be assured...he is already well."

Let us be grateful for the motherly intercession of the Immaculate Conception who herself was conceived without original sin and never committed any personal sin. She was therefore perfectly prepared to receive the Christ Child. May our Advent preparation likewise be a purification of our soul from sin so we can worthily receive Jesus this Christmas.

Mass Intentions & Readings

Saturday of the First Week of Advent

Isaiah 30:19-21, 23-26, Matthew 9:35-10:1, 5a, 6-8

Second Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 11:1-10, Romans 15:4-9, Matthew 3:1-12

Immaculate Conception

Genesis 3:9-15, 20, Ephesians 1:3-6, 11-12, Luke 1:26-38

Tuesday of the Second Week of Advent

Isaiah 40:1-11, Matthew 18:12-14

Wednesday of the Second Week of Advent

Isaiah 40:25-31, Matthew 11:28-30

Thursday of the Second Week of Advent

Isaiah 41:13-20, Matthew 11:11-15

Our Lady of Guadalupe

Zechariah 2:14-17, Luke 1:26-38

Saint Lucy

Sirach 48:1-4, 9-11, Matthew 17:9a, 10-13

Third Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 35:1-6a, 10, James 5:7-10, Matthew 11:2-11

Saturday, December 6

Sunday, December 7

Monday, December 8

Tuesday, December 9

Wednesday, December 10

Thursday, December 11

Friday, December 12

Saturday, December 13

Sunday, December 14

10am Michael Newman+

5pm Rev. Ron Stone+

7pm For the People of Holy Cross Parish

8am Diego & Samuel T.

10:30am DellaSantina Family

5pm Jane Brackins

7pm Rev. Ron Stone+

12pm Dennis+

12pm Dave Myers

12pm Rebekah Snyder

~6:30pm The Vera Family

5pm For the People of Holy Cross Parish

7pm Evette Duarte+

8am Jim & Sue Cunningham+

10:30am DellaSantina Family

Pray for the Living & the Dead

Oremos por los Vivos y los Muertos

Recalling that praying for the living and the dead is one of the seven spiritual works of mercy, let

us pray for one another, especially for those in need of our prayers.

Recordando que orar por los vivos y los muertos es una de las siete obras espirituales de misericordia, oremos unos por otros, especialmente por aquellos que necesitan nuestras oraciones.

If you would like to submit the name of a loved one to be prayed for, please contact the parish office. Names will be included for one month, unless noted otherwise.

Si desea enviar el nombre de un ser querido para que se ore por él, póngase en contacto con la oficina parroquial. Los nombres se incluirán durante un mes, a menos que se indique lo contrario.

Upcoming Events

Our Lady of Guadalupe ***Fiesta de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe***

All parishioners of all language groups are invited to celebrate the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe on December 12, 2025! The festivities will begin with a procession at 5pm, followed by a play re-enacting the beautiful story of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

Holy Mass will follow, beginning around 6:30pm. All are welcome to join for a reception after Mass. We will enjoy delicious food and continue the festivities at Sun Outdoors:

1004 Parkway, Sevierville, TN 37862.

Our Lady of Guadalupe Novena ***Fiesta de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe Novena***

Miércoles 3: Rosario por la infancia 8pm.

Jueves 4: Juan XXIII 7pm.

Viernes 5: (Hora Santa después del rosario) 7pm.

Sábado 6: (después de la misa) 8pm.

Domingo 7: Rosario en inglés. 7pm.

Lunes 8: Comunidad Guatemalteca. (después de la misa) 8pm.

Martes 9: Comunidad Hondureña (después del Servicio de Penitencia) 8pm.

Miércoles 10: Rosario por los jóvenes. 8pm.

Jueves 11: Comunidad mexicana. 7pm.

Viernes 12 de diciembre:

5am: mañanitas a virgen

6:30am: desayuno comunitario

5pm: Procesión por las calles con la Virgen

5:45: Escenificación de las apariciones guadalupanas alrededor de las 6:30pm. Santa misa (Bilingüe)

8pm. Recepción en el salón:

Sun Outdoors Pigeon Forge
1004 Parkway, Sevierville, TN 37862

Advent Penance Service ***Servicio de Penitencia de Adviento***

Holy Cross will be hosting an Advent penance service on December 9, 2025 from 7pm-8:30pm.

Tendremos un servicio de penitencia de Adviento el 9 de Diciembre de 2025 de 7pm a 8:30pm

Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception ***Solemnidad de la Inmaculada Concepción***

The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception is a Holy Day of Obligation, and it falls on Monday, December 8.

5pm English Mass

7pm Spanish Mass

La Solemnidad de la Inmaculada Concepción es un día de precepto, que se celebra el lunes 8 de diciembre.

Christmas Eve

December 24, 2025:

8am English Mass

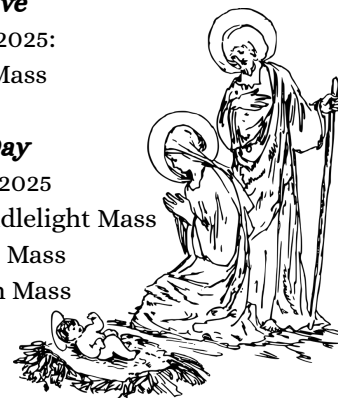
Christmas Day

December 25, 2025

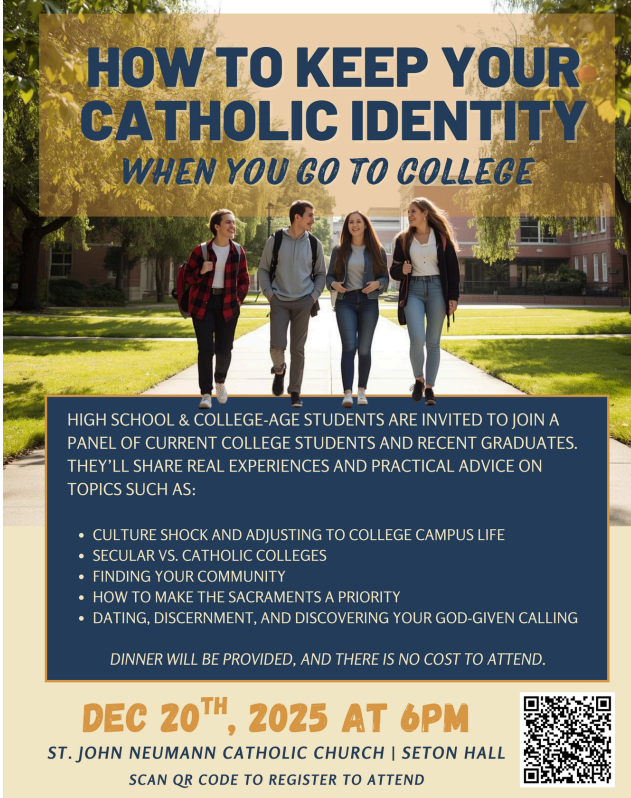
Midnight Bilingual Candlelight Mass

8:00am English Mass

10:30am English Mass



Upcoming Youth Events



HOW TO KEEP YOUR CATHOLIC IDENTITY
WHEN YOU GO TO COLLEGE

HIGH SCHOOL & COLLEGE-AGE STUDENTS ARE INVITED TO JOIN A PANEL OF CURRENT COLLEGE STUDENTS AND RECENT GRADUATES. THEY'LL SHARE REAL EXPERIENCES AND PRACTICAL ADVICE ON TOPICS SUCH AS:


- CULTURE SHOCK AND ADJUSTING TO COLLEGE CAMPUS LIFE
- SECULAR VS. CATHOLIC COLLEGES
- FINDING YOUR COMMUNITY
- HOW TO MAKE THE SACRAMENTS A PRIORITY
- DATING, DISCERNMENT, AND DISCOVERING YOUR GOD-GIVEN CALLING

DINNER WILL BE PROVIDED, AND THERE IS NO COST TO ATTEND.

DEC 20TH, 2025 AT 6PM

ST. JOHN NEUMANN CATHOLIC CHURCH | SETON HALL

SCAN QR CODE TO REGISTER TO ATTEND



Weekly Events

Bible Study

Join our Pastor in a contemplative study of the Word of God in Sacred Scripture on Thursdays at 9:30am in the Family Life Room. Father Hendershott provides scriptural commentary as we read through Genesis and meditate on the Providence of God through salvation history.

High School Youth Group Escuela Secundaria Para Grupo Juvenil

Grades 9-12 meeting on Tuesdays from 6-8pm in the Family Life Room. All high school and soon to be high school students are welcomed to attend. There will always be food provided and fun activities to do. For more information, contact Nick Sisto at: nlsisto@wlaw.net

El grupo de jóvenes de secundaria, de los grados 9 -12 se reúnen los martes de 6pm a 8:00pm Siempre va a ver comida y diversión. Alentamos a todos nuestros estudiantes de escuela secundaria y futuros estudiantes de escuela secundaria que asisten. Para obtener más información, comuníquese con Nick Sisto.

Announcements

Faith Formation & OCIA **(Order of Christian Initiation of Adults)**

There will be no Faith Formation or OCIA on December 24 or December 31 due to Christmas break.

Mass Music Update **Actualización sobre la música en la misa**

We will be returning to the Latin Gloria that Father Ron Stone introduced to the parish. During Advent & Lent, we will be learning the Kyrie, Sanctus, & Agnus Dei that go along with this Mass setting. The scores and mp3 recordings for the Kyrie & Gloria are available on our website. If you would like these texted to you, please text "Mass Parts" to (865) 771-4929.

Retomaremos el Gloria en latín que el Padre Ron Stone introdujo en la parroquia. Durante el Adviento y la Cuaresma, aprenderemos el Kyrie, el Sanctus y el Agnus Dei que acompañan a esta misa. Las partituras y las grabaciones en mp3 del Kyrie y el Gloria están disponibles en nuestra página web. Si desea recibirlas por mensaje de texto, envíe un mensaje con la palabra "Partes de la Misa" al (865)771-4929.

Bible Study

There will be no Bible Study on Thursday, December 25, 2025 or Thursday, January 1, 2025.

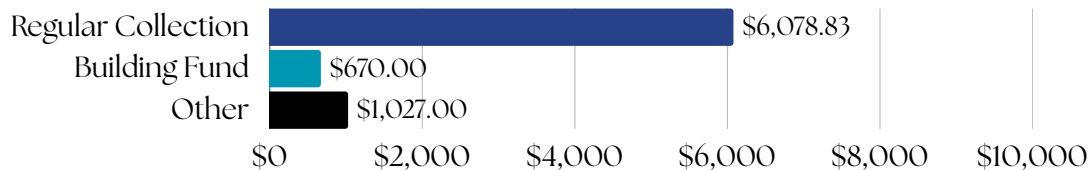
Email Scam Alert **Alerta de estafa por correo electrónico**

The Parish Office has become aware of email scams being sent to people impersonating our Pastor and Staff. Please check the sender's email address to make sure it is actually from our Parish's domain name:
@holycrosscatholicchurchtn.org

*Tenga cuidado con los correos electrónicos fraudulentos. La oficina parroquial ha detectado correos electrónicos fraudulentos enviados a personas que se hacen pasar por nuestro párroco y personal. Por favor, verifique la dirección de correo electrónico del remitente para asegurarse de que provenga de nuestro dominio:
@holycrosscatholicchurchtn.org*

Stewardship

November 29/30



Since on average 3 out of 5 Mass attendees are visitors, we invite our guests to consider a sort of "timeshare" stewardship with our parish. Our website has a donation link, and donations can be set to match *the time you share with us*.

As our monthly expenses are \$25,000, please consider Holy Cross in your donations and in your will.

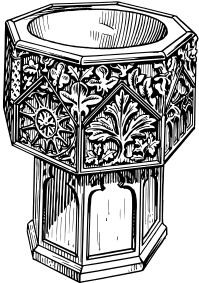
You are being enriched in every way for all generosity, which through us produces thanksgiving to God, for the administration of this public service is not only supplying the needs of the holy ones but is also overflowing in many acts of thanksgiving to God...

Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

2 Corinthians 11-12, 15

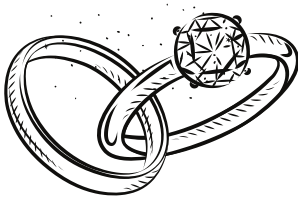
Sacramental Preparation

Baptism



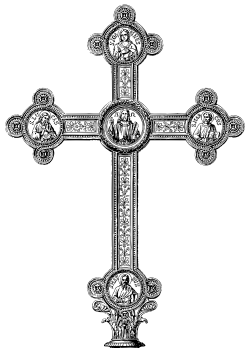
Congratulations on your newborn! In order to prepare for baptism, parents and god parents need to attend baptismal preparation classes before the proposed baptism date.

Si necesita información para bautizos en español, por favor comuníquese con el señor Alejandro Mondragón, El está encargado de la preparación para los bautizos. Su numero de teléfono es: (865) 227-9380.



Matrimony

Congratulations on your engagement! Please contact the parish office to make arrangements for your marriage at least four months before your desired wedding date.



Catholic Faith Formation Classes

We have Faith Formation classes on Wednesday nights 6:30-7:30pm. Our religious education teachers prepare children in grades K-12 to receive their sacraments. For more information, please contact our Director of Religious Education, Gianfranco, at gdellasantina@yahoo.com.

Are you interested in becoming Catholic?



Holy Mother Church welcomes you! For more information, please contact our OCIA (Order of Christian Initiation for Adults) teacher, Tylor Starkey, at t.starkey88@gmail.com.

Our Lady of Guadalupe

The Image of Our Lady of Guadalupe presents the Catholic Faith in a way that was immediately understood and accepted by the native Mexican Indians. It is impossible to describe fully the rich symbolism contained on the Tilma of Juan Diego because every detail of color and of form carries a theological message.

Our Lady's **hair**, parted in the middle and hanging loosely, indicates she is a virgin maiden.

Scientific analysis has shown **reflections** of people in the Virgin's **eyes**, just as any human eye would reflect. There are 13 total figures (including Juan Diego and Bishop Zumárraga) that form two scenes in both eyes.

One can **see a cross** in the center of the meditation that she carries on the upper part of her dress. This manifests her consecration to her Son Jesus, whose cross reminds us of both His total sacrifice for love and the moment when he gives us Mary as our Mother.

The symbol of the Cross was seen on the sails of the Spaniards' ships.

The Virgin's identity as a woman of heaven and earth is affirmed by her **garments' colors and decorations**. Her reddish tunic is the color symbolic of earth, while the star-speckled green-blue mantle symbolizes the heavens. The mantle's color indicates her royalty, since only the Aztec emperors could wear cloaks of that color. The Virgin, Queen of heaven and earth, points us toward the truth that God is love, and mankind is the recipient of His love.

The **8-petaled flowers** symbolize the day of new creation. The "blossom" is in the form of a hill, and the stem is presented as a river. The "hill-water" represented the concept of civilization. The "hill" represents the highest point of encounter between God and man. **Viewed upside down**, the flower/stem takes the form of a heart—source of life, which belongs to and has its origin in God.

Our Lady's appearance is mestiza, both **Aztec and Spanish**, showing the two cultures coming together at this point in history.

The stars on her mantle signify **she comes from heaven**—the Queen of Heaven. The **constellations** are in the **exact position as appeared** before dawn on the morning of December 12, 1531.

Her **hands are joined in prayer** and, therefore, she is not God but clearly there is one greater than she, and she points her finger to the cross on her brooch.

The image of Our Lady of Guadalupe depicts a **dark ribbon above her womb**, indicating that she is a woman anticipating the birth of God's only Son. The Spanish expression is *encinta*, "adorned with ribbon."

In the **center of her tunic, overlying her womb**, is a four-petal jasmine flower which is the sign of the Divine and the center of the cosmic order to the Aztec. The Virgin's Baby, Jesus, is Divine and the true center of the universe.

The **4-petaled flowers** with leaves on her tunic symbolize to the Aztecs that the fifth-age, the Age of Peace, has begun.

The Virgin of Guadalupe is shown **among the clouds**, representing her divine origin.

Our Lady **stands in front of the sun**. The sun symbolized the greatest Aztec god—Huitzilopochtli. She announces the God who is greater than their sun god.



SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

Our Lady stands on the moon. The crescent moon symbolized the Aztec god Quetzalcóatl, the feathered serpent moon god. She has clearly crushed and defeated him. The Virgin's shoe, which appears over the moon, has no color, but is simply the raw tilma. This is inexplicable.

An angel with eagle's wings supports the Mother of God. The eagle was the "bird of the sun." Here the angel is the messenger of the Virgin. The angel wears both a tunic of the same color and a brooch like hers. The angel holds her mantle in one hand and the robe with the other, signifying the Son she bears is from both heaven and earth.

Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe

La imagen de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe presenta la Fe Católica en una manera que fue entendida y captada inmediatamente por los indios mexicanos nativos. Es imposible describir completamente el rico simbolismo contenido en la tilma de Juan Diego porque cada detalle de color y de forma conlleva un mensaje teológico.

El **cabello** de Nuestra Señora, dividido en el medio y colgando libremente, indica que ella es una virgen doncella.

Análisis científicos han enseñado que en los **ojos** de la Virgen se reflejan personas, igual que cualquier ojo humano podría reflejarlas. Hay un total de 13 figuras (incluyendo a Juan Diego y al Obispo Zumárraga) que forman dos escenas en ambos ojos.

Se puede **ver una cruz** en el centro del medallón que ella lleva en la parte superior de su vestido. Esto manifiesta su consagración a su Hijo Jesús, cuya cruz nos recuerda Su sacrificio total por amor y a la vez el momento en que nos da a María como nuestra Madre.

El símbolo de la Cruz era visto en las velas de las naves españolas.

La identidad de la Virgen como mujer del cielo y de la tierra está afirmada por los **colores y las decoraciones de sus prendas**. Su túnica roja es del color simbólico de la tierra, mientras que su manto de color verde azulado salpicado de estrellas simboliza los cielos. El color del manto indica su realeza, ya que sólo los emperadores aztecas podían usar capas de ese color. La Virgen, Reina del Cielo y la Tierra, nos dirige hacia la verdad que Dios es amor y la humanidad es la destinataria de Su amor.

Las **flores de ocho pétalos** simbolizan el día de la nueva creación. La "flor" tiene la forma de una colina y el tallo se presenta como un río. El "agua colina" representa el concepto de civilización. La "colina" representa el punto más alto del encuentro entre Dios y el hombre. Vista boca abajo, la flor/ el tallo toma la forma de un corazón—fuente de vida—que pertenece a y tiene su origen en Dios.

La apariencia de Nuestra Señora es mestiza, a la vez **azteca y española**, mostrando la unión de las dos culturas en este punto de la historia.

Las estrellas de su manto significan que **ella viene del cielo**—la Reina del Cielo. Las constelaciones están en **la posición exacta en que aparecieron al amanecer del 12 de diciembre de 1531**.

Sus **manos están unidas en oración** y por lo tanto, ella no es Dios, claramente hay uno más grande que ella y con su dedo ella señala la cruz en su broche.

La imagen de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe **muestra una cinta oscura sobre su vientre**, indicando que ella es una mujer esperando el nacimiento del Hijo único de Dios. La expresión española es *encinta*, "adornada con la cinta."

En el **centro de su túnica, sobre su vientre**, hay una flor de jazmín de cuatro pétalos que es el signo de lo divino y el centro del orden cósmico para los aztecas. El Bebé de la Virgen, Jesús, es Divino y el verdadero centro del universo.

Las flores de **cuatro pétalos** con hojas de su túnica simbolizaban para los aztecas que la quinta era, La Era de la Paz, había comenzado.

La Virgen de Guadalupe se encuentra **entre las nubes**, representando su origen divino.

Nuestra Señora está parada **frente al sol**. El sol simboliza el dios azteca más grande, Huitzilopochtli. Ella anuncia al Dios que es más grande que el dios sol.



SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

Nuestra Señora está parada en la luna. La luna creciente simboliza el dios azteca Quetzalcóatl, el dios serpiente emplumado de la luna. Ella claramente lo ha aplastado y derrotado. El **zapato de la Virgen**, que aparece sobre la luna, no tiene color pero es sencillamente la tilma pura. Esto es inexplicable.

Un **ángel con alas de águila** sostiene a la Madre de Dios. El águila era "el pájaro del sol." Aquí el ángel es el mensajero de la Virgen. El ángel lleva una túnica del mismo color y un broche como el de ella. El ángel sostiene su manto en una mano y la túnica en la otra, significando que **el Hijo que ella lleva es del cielo y de la tierra**.

Mother of America

The well authenticated story of the five apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary is briefly related here:

1st Apparition: At dawn on December 9, 1531, Juan Diego, an Aztec convert, was going to Tlatelolco to attend catechism class and Holy Mass. As he was passing Tepeyac Hill, he saw birds on the summit and heard the strains of celestial music. Filled with wonder, he stopped. Then he heard a feminine voice asking him to ascend. When he reached the top he saw the Blessed Virgin Mary standing in the midst of a glorious light, in heavenly splendor. The beauty of her youthful countenance and her look of loving kindness filled Juan Diego with unspeakable happiness as he listened to the words which she spoke to him in his native language. She told him she was the perfect and ever Virgin Mary, Mother of the true God, and made known to him her desire that a shrine be built there where she could demonstrate her love, her compassion and her protection. "For I am your merciful Mother," she said, "to you and to all mankind who love me and trust in me and invoke my help. Therefore, go to the dwelling of the Bishop in Mexico City and say that the Virgin Mary sent you to make known to him her great desire."

2nd Apparition: The Bishop was reluctant to believe Juan Diego's story. Juan returned to Tepeyac Hill where he found the Blessed Virgin waiting for him, and told her of his failure. She bade him return to the Bishop the next day and repeat her wishes.

3rd Apparition: The Bishop then requested that the Lady give him a sign. Juan reported that evening and she promised to grant his petition on the following morning. But Juan was prevented from coming because of a sudden and severe illness of his uncle, Juan Bernardino.

4th Apparition: Two days later, on December 12, as he was going to the Church at Tlatelolco in order to bring a priest to his dying uncle, Juan Diego was stopped by the Lady, who had come down from Tepeyac Hill to meet him in the road. She listened quietly to Juan's excuse for not having kept his appointment with her the day before. When he had finished speaking she said, "It is well, littlest and dearest of my sons, but now listen to me. Do not let anything afflict you and be not afraid of illness or pain. Am I not here who am your Mother? Are you not under my shadow and protection? Are you not in the crossing of my arms? Is there anything else you need? Do not fear for your uncle for he is not going to die. Be assured... he is already well."

Having heard these words, Juan Diego rejoiced and asked for the sign he was to take to the Bishop. He was told to climb to the top of the hill where she had spoken to him on three previous occasions. She said he would find many flowers blooming there which he was to cut and bring to her. Juan Diego did as he was told though he knew no flowers had ever bloomed before on the story summit. He discovered a marvelous garden of dew-fresh blossoms which he cut as she had asked. Placing them in his rough cloak, or tilma, he brought the flowers to the Lady who rearranged them and told him to take them to the Bishop; that this was the sign to persuade him to carry out her wishes.

When Juan Diego, radiantly happy, stood before Bishop Fray Juan de Zumárraga and told him of the fourth encounter with the Lady, he opened his tilma to show the Bishop the sign; the flowers cascaded to the floor—but to the astonishment of the Bishop and Juan Diego, there appeared upon the coarse fabric of Juan Diego's mantle a marvelously wrought, exquisitely colored portrait of the Blessed Virgin, just as Juan Diego had previously described her.

5th Apparition: Earlier that same day, December 12, she had also appeared to Juan's uncle, Juan Bernardino, and restored him to health as she had told Juan Diego. Juan Diego had at that time fifty-seven years old; his uncle was sixty-eight. Both had been among the first of the natives to be baptized into the true faith several years before.



The Name of Guadalupe
Juan Bernardino told his nephew the Blessed Virgin had ordered him to relate to the Bishop in what miraculous manner she had cured him. So he also told Juan Bernardino her image was to be known as "Santa María de Guadalupe" and thus she has been venerated by this title for nearly five centuries.



The Mantle of Juan Diego
The mantle or tilma on which the Sacred Image of the Blessed Virgin is imprinted is handwoven from the fibers of the Maque cactus, a fabric which has a life span of little more than thirty years. It is six-and-a-half feet long by forty-two inches wide and has a seam running down the middle.

WORDS OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE TO JUAN DIEGO

"Know for certain, least of my sons, that I am the perfect and ever Virgin Mary, Mother of the True God through Whom everything lives, the Lord of all things near and far, the Master of heaven and earth. It is my earnest wish that a temple be built here to my honor. Here I will demonstrate, I will exhibit, I will give all my love, my compassion, my help and my protection to the people. I am your merciful Mother, the merciful Mother of all of you who live united in this land, and of all mankind, of all those who love me, of those who cry to me, of those who seek me, of those who have confidence in me. Here I will hear their weeping, their sorrow, and will remedy and alleviate all their multiple sufferings, necessities and misfortunes."

Madre de América

La historia auténtica de las cinco apariciones de la Santísima Virgen María se relata brevemente aquí.

1a Aparición: En la madrugada del día 9 de diciembre de 1531 Juan Diego, un converso azteca, iba a Tlatelolco para asistir a clase de catecismo y a la Santa Misa. Cuando pasaba por la Colina del Tepeyac, vio aves en la cumbre y escuchó los acordes de música celestial. Lleno de asombro, se detuvo. Entonces oyó una voz femenina pidiéndole que ascendiera. Cuando alcanzó la cumbre volvió a la Santísima Virgen María parada en medio de una luz gloriosa, en esplendor maravilloso. La belleza de su rostro juvenil y su mirada de amorosa bondad llenaron a Juan Diego de felicidad indecible, mientras escuchaba las palabras que ella le habló en su lengua nativa. Ella le dijo que era la perfecta y siempre virgen María, Madre del verdadero Dios y le hizo conocer su deseo de construir un santuario en el que ella pudiera demostrar su amor, su compasión y su protección. "Porque yo soy tu Madre misericordiosa" ella dijo, "tuya y de toda la humanidad que me ama y confía en mí e invocan mi ayuda. Entonces, ve a la residencia del Obispo en la Ciudad de México y dile que la Virgen María te mandó para hacer conocer su gran deseo."

2a Aparición: El Obispo no creyó la historia de Juan Diego. Juan regresó a la Colina del Tepeyac donde se encontró a la Santísima Virgen esperándole y le contó su fracaso. Ella le dijo que regresara a ver al Obispo al día siguiente y le repetiera sus deseos.

3a Aparición: El Obispo entonces pidió que la Señora le diera una señal. Juan le dijo que regresara y ella le prometió conceder su petición a la mañana siguiente. Pero Juan no pudo ir debido a una enfermedad repentina y grave de su tío, Juan Bernardino.

4a Aparición: Dos días después, el 12 de diciembre, mientras iba a la iglesia en Tlatelolco para llevarle un sacerdote a su tío moribundo, Juan Diego fue detenido por la Señora, quien había bajado de la Colina del Tepeyac para encontrarlo en el camino. Ella calladamente escuchó la excusa de Juan por no haber llegado a su cita con ella el día anterior. Cuando él terminó de hablar ella le dijo "Está bien mi más pequeño y querido de mis hijos, pero ahora escúchame. No dejes que nada te aflija y no tengas miedo de enfermedades o dolores. ¿No estoy aquí yo que soy tu Madre? ¿No estás tu bajo mi sombra y protección? ¿No estás en el cruce de mis brazos? ¿Hay algo más que necesites? No tengas miedo por tu tío porque él no se va a morir. Confía... él ya está bien."

A escuchar sus palabras, Juan Diego se regocijó y pidió la señal que iba a llevarle al Obispo. Le indicó que escalara hasta arriba de la colina donde ella le había hablado en las tres ocasiones previas. Ella le dijo que allí iba a encontrar muchas flores las cuales él tenía que recoger y llevarlas a ella. Juan Diego hizo lo que ella le dijo aunque él sabía que ninguna flor había crecido nunca en la cumbre de piedra. Pero él descubrió un jardín maravilloso lleno de flores frescas con rózio, las cuales recogió como ella le había pedido. Colocándolas en su capa áspera, o tilma, él llevó las flores a la Señora quien las reordenó y le dijo que se las llevara al Obispo, que ésta era su señal para persuadirlo de llevar a cabo sus deseos.

Cuando Juan Diego, radiantemente feliz, se encontró ante el Obispo Fray Juan de Zumárraga y le contó el cuarto encuentro con la Señora, abrió su tilma para enseñarle la señal y las flores se cayeron en cascada al suelo, pero ante el asombro del Obispo y de Juan Diego, apareció en el dorso del manto de Juan Diego un retrato de la Santísima Virgen maravillosamente labrado, exquisitamente coloreado, igual como Juan Diego la había descrito.

5a Aparición: Más temprano el mismo día 12 de diciembre, ella también se le había aparecido al tío de Juan, Juan Bernardino y le devolvió la salud como le había dicho a Juan Diego. Juan Diego en ese tiempo tenía cincuenta y siete años; su tío tenía sesenta y ocho. Ambos habían estado entre los primeros nativos que fueron bautizados en la fe verdadera varios años antes.



El Nombre de Guadalupe
Juan Bernardino le dijo a su sobrino que la Santísima Virgen le había ordenado que relata al Obispo la manera milagrosa en que ella le había curado. Ella también le dijo a Juan Bernardino que su imagen debía hacerse conocer como "Santa María de Guadalupe" y así ella ha sido venerada con este título durante casi cinco siglos.

El Manto de Juan Diego

El manto o tilma en el cual la imagen sagrada de la Santísima Virgen está impresa fue tejido a mano con las fibras del cactus de maguey, una tela que tiene una vida útil de poco más de treinta años. Mide seis pies y medio de largo por cuarenta y dos pulgadas de ancho y tiene una costura en el medio.



La Imagen Sagrada

Directamente en esta tela áspera de tipo apirillero está la exquisitamente delicada figura de Nuestra Señora, de cuatro pies y ocho pulgadas de altura. Este auténtico retrato de la Virgen María ha permanecido fresco y encantador durante casi cinco siglos y puede ser visto hoy en la Basílica de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe en la Ciudad de México, donde ocupa el lugar de honor encima y detrás del altar mayor.

El Código

La imagen sagrada es un código o pictografía; cada detalle es simbólico. Ella es más brillante que el sol; su pie descansa sobre la luna; las estrellas que están en su manto tienen la misma configuración relativa a la de las estrellas del cielo en el amanecer del 12 de diciembre de 1531; las constelaciones septentrionales a su derecha, las constelaciones meridionales a su izquierda. Aún más, la filigrana de oro sobre su vestido de color rosa coincide con la topografía de las tierras mexicanas que una vez fueron gobernadas por los aztecas.

PALABRAS DE NUESTRA SEÑORA DE GUADALUPE A JUAN DIEGO

"Confía, mi pequeño hijo, que yo soy la perfecta y siempre Virgen María, Madre del Verdadero Dios por quien todo vive, el Señor de todas las cosas cercanas y lejanas, el Señor del cielo y de la tierra. Es mi mayor deseo que un templo sea construido aquí en mi honor. Aquí demostraré, exhibiré, daré todo mi amor, mi compasión, mi ayuda y mi protección a la gente. Yo soy tu madre misericordiosa, la madre misericordiosa de todos los que viven Unidos en esta tierra y de toda la humanidad, de todos los que me aman, de aquellos que me claman, de aquellos que me buscan, de aquellos que me tienen confianza. Aquí escucharé sus llantos y sus dolores, remediaré y aliviaré todos sus sufrimientos, necesidades y desgracias."