

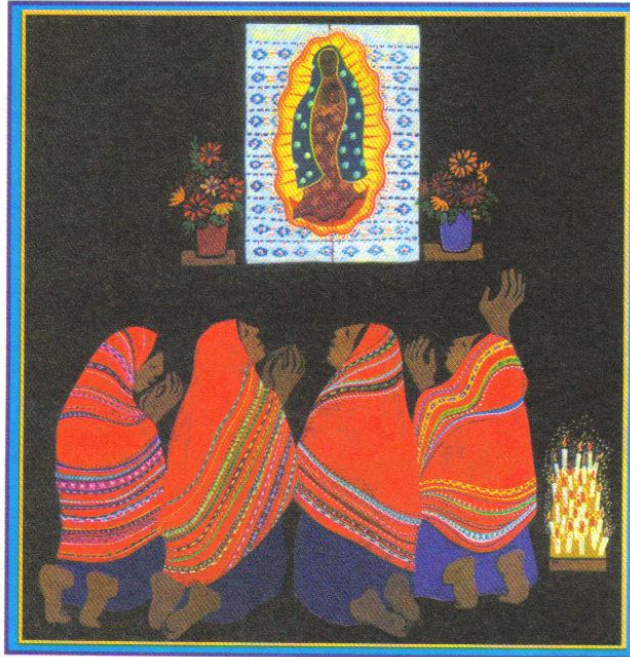
## JUAN DIEGO and OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

**E**arly in the morning of December 9, 1531, just outside Mexico City, a poor man named Juan Diego climbed a hill called Tepeyac on his way to Mass. On this hill Juan's ancestors, the Aztecs, had worshiped Tonatzin, the mother god.

Juan heard a woman calling to him in his own language. He turned and saw a beautiful lady, dressed in the clothes of an Aztec princess with a turquoise cloak full of stars. She had dark skin and dark eyes, like Juan's people.

The beautiful woman told Juan she was Mary, the Mother of God. She asked Juan to tell the bishop of Mexico to build a church in her honor on the hill.

Juan could hardly believe his eyes and ears, but he went right to the bishop. The bishop didn't believe Juan had really seen the Mother of God. When Juan went back and told this to the woman with the cloak full of stars, she asked him to try again. The bishop still wouldn't believe Juan. But this time he told Juan to ask the woman to give a sign that she



was really the Mother of God.

Juan gave the woman the message. She told him to return the next day, and she would give the bishop the sign he wanted.

**B**ut Juan didn't return the next day. His old uncle became ill, and he spent the whole day and night by his bedside. It was December 12 before Juan could go to the hill of Tepeyac again. When he met the woman, she understood why he had missed a day. She told him to go up the hill, gather the

roses blooming there, and take them to the bishop. *Roses in December?* thought Juan. But when he climbed the hill, he found so many roses he had to use his cloak to carry them.

When Juan came to the bishop's office for the third time, the bishop asked what was in the cloak. "It is the sign from the Mother of God," Juan said. He opened his cloak, and the roses spilled out.

The bishop got down on his knees before Juan. But it

was not the roses he was looking at. When Juan looked down, he saw that on his cloak was a portrait of the woman who had spoken to him.

Pope John Paul II named Juan Diego a saint in 2002. His feast day is December 9.

**O**n the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, people go to church early in the morning to sing the *mañanitas*, the common birthday song among many Spanish-speaking peoples. There are many verses. This is the refrain:

*Despierta, Madre, despierta.  
Mira que ya amaneció.  
Mira este ramo de flores  
que para ti traigo yo.*

**Wake up, Mother, wake up.  
See that it is already dawn.  
Look at this bouquet of flowers  
which I am bringing to you.**

### DOCTRINE

#### Jesus Is God and Human

Christmas reminds us that it was out of love for us that God sent Jesus to live among us. Jesus is the Son of God, who was born, grew, preached, worked with his hands, made friends and enemies, suffered, and died—all out of love for us.

To see Jesus as the baby in our Christmas cribs reminds us of his willingness to live the moments of life that each human being lives. Jesus is truly human and truly divine. Jesus shows us that the secret of who God is and the secret of who we are is love.