

MASS FOR THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEDICATION OF THE CHURCH
SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE
LA CROSSE
JULY 31, 2012

First Reading: *1 Kgs* 8:22-23, 27-30 [701, 1]

Responsorial Psalm: *Ps* 84:3, 4, 5 and 10, 11 [703, 3]

Second Reading: *1 Pt* 2:4-9 [704, 2]

Alleluia Verse: *Ezek* 37:27 [705, 4]

Gospel: *Jn* 4:19-24 [706, 4]

HOMILY

Praised be Jesus Christ, now and for ever.

The encounter of Our Lord with the Samaritan woman at the Well of Jacob uncovers for us the source of the joy which is ours in celebrating the fourth anniversary of the dedication of this church. Through His encounter with the Samaritan woman, Our Lord opened her eyes to the truth about her own sinfulness and, at the same time, to the truth about the “whole ocean” of divine mercy¹ cleansing her of sin, so that she might truly worship God “in Spirit and truth.”² Through the encounter with Christ, the Samaritan woman received the grace to repent of her sin and the grace to open her heart to the Heart of God, incarnate in Our Lord Jesus Christ, full of mercy and love for her.

Through our encounter with Christ at every celebration of the Holy Mass, we receive the same grace beyond our capacity to describe. The encounter with Christ in this church whose beauty draws our attention to the incomparably greater beauty of that encounter is the cause of our joy today. This church is truly God’s dwelling with us in His only-begotten Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Drawn here by Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mother of God, we encounter her Divine Son Who heals us of sin and pours forth into our hearts, from His glorious pierced Heart, divine mercy and love in immeasurable and unceasing abundance.

In this church, the solemn prayer of King Solomon on the day of the dedication of the first

¹ Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska, *Diary: Divine Mercy in My Soul*, 3rd rev. ed., Stockbridge, Massachusetts: Marian Press, 2008, p. 291, no. 718.

² *Jn* 4:24.

temple of the Lord is fully answered. Indeed here, in this place, God dwells on earth.³ Indeed here God listens to us with all His heart from His heavenly dwelling and grants us the pardon of our sins.⁴

Worship “in Spirit and truth” is God’s gift to us in Our Lord Jesus Christ Who has won for us the sevenfold gift of the Holy Spirit enlightening our minds to know the truth and inflaming our hearts to give ourselves in pure and selfless love of God and our neighbor. Christ, forever seated in glory at the right hand of the Father, is also with us always in the Church, especially in the Holy Mass at which He makes present for us anew the outpouring of His life on the Cross for our eternal salvation. At every celebration of the Holy Mass, in the Great Doxology at the conclusion of the Eucharistic Prayer, we acclaim the saving mystery of our encounter with Christ in the Eucharistic Sacrifice which is worship of God “in Spirit and truth”: “Through him, and with him, and in him, O God almighty Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, for ever and ever.”⁵

Every prayer and devotion offered in this church has its source in the encounter with Christ in the Eucharistic Sacrifice by which He opens anew His Heart to us and we offer our hearts totally to Him. Once He has made His sacrifice present anew on the altar which is the axis of this church, Our Eucharistic Lord remains with us in the tabernacle to heal and nourish us at any moment of need or trouble and at the hour of death, and to receive our visits of adoration, thanksgiving, petition and expiation. Here, in the words of Saint Peter, we come to Christ the Great High Priest, “a living stone,”⁶ who builds us, “living stones”⁷ in Him, into “a spiritual house,”⁸ so that we may offer the “spiritual sacrifices”⁹ by which we give glory to God and give pure and selfless love to our neighbor.

Gathered for the Eucharistic Sacrifice in this House of God and of His holy Church, let us thank God for the manifold blessings which He has poured forth into the hearts of Christ’s faithful in this church from the day of its dedication on July 31, 2008. Through the intercession of Our Lady of Guadalupe and following her maternal instruction, let us recognize and glorify the great mystery of God’s mercy in our lives which she never fails to manifest in this church which is her chapel. It

³ Cf. *1 Kgs* 8:27.

⁴ Cf. *1 Kgs* 8:30.

⁵ *The Roman Missal*, no. 98.

⁶ *1 Pt* 2:4.

⁷ *1 Pt* 2:5.

⁸ *1 Pt* 2:5.

⁹ *1 Pt* 2:5.

is the same mystery which the Samaritan woman encountered in the person of Christ at the Well of Jacob. Let us recognize and give praise to God that here the eternal desire of the Mother of God, expressed so clearly to her messenger, Saint Juan Diego, has been unfailingly fulfilled since the day when this church was solemnly dedicated as the House of God and of His Church.

As we rejoice and thank God today for the dedication of this church, let us listen again to the words of Our Lady to Saint Juan Diego:

I want very much to have a little house built here for me, in which I will show Him, I will exalt Him and make Him manifest. I will give Him to the people in all my personal love, in my compassion, in my help, in my protection: because I am truly your merciful Mother, yours and all the people who live united in this land and of all the other people of different ancestries, my lovers, who love me, those who seek me, those who trust in me. Here I will hear their weeping, their complaints and heal all their sorrows, hardships and sufferings.¹⁰

Listening again to her maternal instruction, let us entrust ourselves into the all-loving arms of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Let us, one in heart with her Immaculate Heart, give our hearts completely to her Divine Son, Our Lord.

Celebrating the Anniversary of the Dedication of this church, it is my special joy, today, in virtue of the delegation of the Most Reverend Bishop of La Crosse, to install as the Rector of the Shrine Church Father Jacinto Maria Chapin of the Friars of the Immaculate. Let us pray for Father Jacinto that God will bless very much and render most spiritually fruitful his service as Rector. In installing Father Jacinto as Rector, I hasten to express the heartfelt gratitude of us all to Father Peter Damian Maria Fehlner, who has served as Rector of the Shrine Church from the day of its dedication. Father Peter Damian has been a true spiritual father to those who have come here on pilgrimage and has labored tirelessly to keep the Shrine faithful to its divine mission. I thank his superiors for permitting Father Peter Damian to remain at the Shrine to assist Father Jacinto in his

¹⁰ “Mucho quiero, mucho deseo que aquí me levanten mi casita sagrada. En donde lo mostraré, lo ensalzaré al ponerlo de manifiesto: Lo daré a las gentes en todo mi amor personal, en mi mirada compasiva, en mi auxilio, en mi salvación: Porque yo en verdad soy vuestra madre compasiva, tuya y de todos los hombres que en esta tierra estáis en uno, y de las demás variadas estirpes de hombres, mis amadores, los que a mí clamen, los que me busquen, confíen en mi, porque ahí les escucharé su llanto, su tristeza, para remediar, para curar todas sus diferentes penas, sus miserias, sus dolores.” Beato Juan Diego, *Nican Mopohua (Aquí se cuenta)*, tr. P. Mario Rojas Sánchez, México, D.F.: Design & Digital Print S.A. de C.V., 2001, pp. 3-4, nos. 26-32. English translation: “Nican Mopohua: Original Account of Guadalupe,” *A Handbook on Guadalupe*, New Bedford, Massachusetts: Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate, 1997, 2001, p. 194.

new duties, to continue his spiritual ministrations on behalf of so many faithful, and to continue to write and speak so profoundly and powerfully about Our Lady.

During the Holy Mass today we also have two special ceremonies intimately connected with the spiritual mission of the Shrine. First of all, there will be the induction of the new members of the Saint Juan Diego Guild. Through the Saint Juan Diego Guild, children and young people of all ages strive, with the help of their parents, to imitate Saint Juan Diego as messengers of Our Lady of Guadalupe, messengers of divine love and mercy, in their homes and in all of their activities. Through their daily practice of certain prayers and sacrifices of love, which all have their source in the Eucharistic Mystery, they, in imitation of Saint Juan Diego, obediently respond to Our Lady who always directs us to her Divine Son with the words: "Do whatever he tells you."¹¹

Secondly, after the Prayer after Communion, William Lehn and David Schuh will be knighted as Our Lady's Knights of the Altar. Over many months, under the careful direction of Brother Joseph of the Friars of the Immaculate, they have been perfecting their service at the altar of Christ's Sacrifice. As they have grown in the necessary skills to be a competent Mass server, they have also striven to grow in the Christian virtues which should mark the life of any young man who would be Our Lady's Knight of the Altar. We congratulate them, and we pray for them, so that they may be always faithful to the honor of the service into which they are knighted today. It pleases me to note that the program of Our Lady's Knights of the Altar, developed here by Brother Joseph, is now being implemented in various parishes and has its own website to facilitate a wide knowledge and implementation of the program. May God continue to bless Brother Joseph and Our Lady's Knights of the Altar.

As we celebrate the anniversary of the dedication of this church which is the heart of the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe, let us all devote ourselves anew to the fulfillment of the high mission of the Shrine. Let each of us, according to our vocation and the special gifts which God has given to us, give ourselves to Our Lady at her shrine, so that it may always be a place in which pilgrims encounter Christ, come to know Him more fully and to love Him more ardently, especially in the Sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist.

I ask, in a special way, that you pray and make sacrifices so that soon the Shrine may be able to build the Father John A. Hardon, S.J., Marian Catechetical Center and Retreat House, a center for catechetical formation, a retreat house, and the Archive and Guild of the Cause of the Servant of God Father Hardon. The Servant of God was deeply conscious of the great need of a

¹¹ *Jn* 2:5.

more faithful and thorough teaching of the faith in our time which is marked by so much ignorance of God, of His presence with us in the Church, and of His divine law. For that reason, he fervently hoped that the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe here could be a center of sound spiritual and doctrinal formation for catechists. Central to the mission of teaching and living the faith is regular retreats with Our Lord, in order to be refreshed by Him for the mission. Many express the desire to spend some days at the Shrine on retreat. Let us pray and work so that we may soon have the means to provide a worthy place for catechetical formation and for spiritual retreats.

Queridos hermanos y hermanas, el encuentro del Señor con la mujer samaritana nos descubre la fuente de nuestra alegría al celebrar el cuarto aniversario de la dedicación de ésta Basílica. Nuestro Señor abrió sus ojos a la verdad acerca de su propia pecaminosidad y, al mismo tiempo, al “profundo océano”¹² de la Divina Misericordia que la purifica de todo pecado, para que así ella pudiera orar al Señor “en Espíritu y verdad”¹³. A través de nuestro encuentro con Cristo en cada celebración de la Santa Misa, nosotros recibimos la misma gracia. El encuentro con Cristo en ésta Basílica el día de hoy es la causa de nuestra alegría. En el encuentro propiciado aquí por Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, Madre de Dios, encontramos a Su Divino Hijo que nos alivia del pecado y derrama en nuestros corazones, de Su glorioso Corazón traspasado, Su divina misericordia en desmedida e incesante abundancia.

Celebrando el aniversario de la dedicación de ésta Basílica, es para mi un motivo de especial alegría instalar como rector de la misma al Padre Jacinto Chapin de los Frailes de la Inmaculada. Oremos por el Padre Jacinto para que Dios le bendiga mucho en su servicio como rector. También me permito agradecer de todo corazón, con un especial gratitud al Padre Peter Damian Felhner, que ha servido como rector de éste santo lugar desde el día de su dedicación.

Durante la celebración de la Santa Misa tendremos dos ceremonias especiales. En la primera, será la iniciación de los nuevos miembros de la Cofradía de San Juan Diego. A través de la Cofradía de San Juan Diego, los niños y jóvenes de todas las edades se esforzarán, con la ayuda de sus papás, en imitar a San Juan Diego como mensajeros de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, como mensajeros del amor divino y de la misericordia, en sus casas y en todas sus actividades.

En segundo lugar, dos jóvenes serán investidos como Caballeros del Altar de Nuestra Señora. Bajo la cuidadosa dirección del Hermano Joseph de los Frailes de la Inmaculada, ellos han

¹² Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska, *Diary: Divine Mercy in My Soul*, 3rd rev. ed., Stockbridge, Massachusetts: Marian Press, 2008, p. 291, no. 718.

¹³ *Jn* 4:24.

estado perfeccionándose para servir ante el Santo Altar del Sacrificio de Cristo. Oremos, para que ellos puedan siempre tener el honor en el cual van a ser investidos el día de hoy.

Elevemos nuestros corazones hacia el Sagrado Corazón de Jesús, abierto para nosotros en el sacrificio Eucarístico. Encontrémonos con Él tal como viene hacia nosotros en nuestro medio ambiente, teniendo presente Su Sacrificio en el Calvario. Ofrezcámosle nuestros corazones. Que como la mujer Samaritana, nosotros podamos descubrir de nuevo en ésta Basílica que Él perdona nuestros pecados y derrama su Divina Misericordia y amor en nuestros corazones.

Let us now lift up our hearts to the Heart of Jesus, open for us in the Eucharistic Sacrifice. Let us meet Him as He comes into our midst making new the Sacrifice of Calvary, and let us give Him our hearts. Like the Samaritan woman, may we discover ever anew in this church the forgiveness of our sins and the outpouring of divine mercy and love into our hearts.

Heart of Jesus, patient and rich in mercy, have mercy on us!

Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mother of America and Star of the New Evangelization, pray for us!

Saint Juan Diego, pray for us!

Raymond Leo Cardinal BURKE