

SHRINE OF OLG, VOTIVE MASS OF ST JUAN DIEGO – 30.VII.2009
VOTIVE MASS OF SAINT JUAN DIEGO
SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE
LA CROSSE
JULY 30, 2009

First Reading: *Sir* 3:17-24

Responsorial Psalm: *Ps* 33:2-3, 4-5, 11-12, 13-14, 18-19, 20-21

Second Reading: *1 Cor* 1:26-31

Alleluia Verse: *Mt* 11:25

Gospel: *Mt* 11:25-30

HOMILY

Praised be Jesus Christ, now and for ever. Amen.

1. During these days of celebration of God's great gift of the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe and, especially, today, as we induct new members of the Saint Juan Diego of the Shrine, we direct our attention to Saint Juan Diego, the faithful messenger of Our Lady. Listening to the readings from the Holy Scriptures, we are helped to see how powerfully the grace of God was at work in the life of Saint Juan Diego. At the same time, we are inspired to imitate Saint Juan Diego, so that God's grace can work ever more powerfully in us.

2. God's grace first led Saint Juan Diego to be humble, to know that his whole life was God's gift and was destined for the service of God. Saint Juan Diego was "childlike", to use the word of Our Lord Jesus; he knew that he depended completely upon God in everything and, therefore, gave himself to God with the loving trust of a child before his father. In that way, God was able to reveal to Saint Juan Diego the hidden mysteries of His great love of us. Saint Juan Diego knew deeply the meaning of the words of the *Book of Sirach*:

Humble yourself the more, the greater you are,
and you will find favor with God.

The greater you are,
the more you must humble yourself in all things,
and you will find grace before God.

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For great is the power of God;

by the humble he is glorified (Reading I).

3. Surely, in the eyes of the world of his time, Saint Juan Diego was not an important person. After he had made his first visit to the Bishop to carry out Our Lady's wishes, and the Bishop had politely asked him to return on another day, Saint Juan Diego reminded Our Lady that he was not the kind of man to be sent as her messenger to the Bishop. He reminded her that he was "a man of the field" and someone who needed "to be led."¹ It was his humility that made him ready to do the great work which Our Lady asked of him. In response to his protest that he was not great enough to do her work, Our Lady assured him that she had need of his personal service in her work and that he must return to the Bishop, once more.² Saint Juan Diego's humility permitted him to be obedient. He did well all that Our Lady asked of him, even though he considered himself to be unworthy.

4. Humbly trusting in the help of God's grace, coming to him through Our Lady of Guadalupe, Saint Juan Diego was able to accept the burden and suffering of his mission, and to remain obedient in doing all that Our Lady asked of him. With Our Lady, he placed his heart completely into the glorious, pierced Heart of Jesus. There he found rest and strength. There he discovered the truth of Our Lord's words: "For my yoke is easy, and my burden light" (Gospel). Saint Juan Diego teaches us not to boast about what we do, but, rather, to boast about what God does in and through us, if only we are humble before Him and obedient to His Word. Saint Juan Diego, who enjoyed the remarkable friendship of the Mother of God and was her chosen messenger, followed faithfully the exhortation of Saint Paul: "Whoever boasts, should boast in the Lord" (Reading II).

¹"Porque en verdad yo soy un hombre de campo, soy mecapal, soy parihuela, soy cola, soy ala; yo mismo necesito ser conducido, llevado a cuestras, no es lugar de mi andar ni de mí detenerme allá a donde me envías." *Nican Mopohua*, no. 55.

²*Nican Mopohua*, nos. 59-60.

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5. Boys and girls to be inducted into the Saint Juan Diego Guild, imitate the humility and obedience of Saint Juan Diego. By your daily prayers and by your words and actions in doing whatever God asks of you, show yourselves to be humble and obedient. Let the little practices of prayer and charity, which you promise to fulfill as a member of the Saint Juan Diego Guild, be the first steps in practicing the heroic humility and obedience of Saint Juan Diego. In your home, with your friends, in your schools, and in all of the other places in which you find yourself, let Christ shine forth on your face, as Saint Juan Diego did. Each day, speak to Our Lady of Guadalupe in prayer, asking her to intercede for you, so that you, like Saint Juan Diego, may be her faithful and generous messenger of God's mercy and love.

6. With Our Lady of Guadalupe, let us now place our hearts into the glorious, pierced Heart of Jesus. Uniting our hearts to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in His Eucharistic Sacrifice, may we find the rest and strength we need to be humble and obedient in doing all that God asks of us. May Our Lady of Guadalupe keep us always under her loving gaze and hold us securely in the crossing of her arms, so that we may be true sons and daughters of God the Father.

*Heart of Jesus, formed by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary, have mercy on us!
Our Lady of Guadalupe, pray for us!
Saint Juan Diego, pray for us!*