



From the late Bishop Jerome J. Hastrich, one of the founders of the Queen of the Americas Guild (reprinted from 1989 Queen of the Americas Guild newsletter)

Ten years ago, at one of the most beautiful spots in the east – Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Emmitsburg, Maryland – the Queen of the Americas Guild was founded.



Little was known about one of the best authenticated apparitions of Our Lady and one that occurred in this hemisphere.

For too long, people have thought Our Lady of Guadalupe was concerned only about Mexico, failing to realize that, when she appeared, there were no boundaries between various countries on this continent. They also failed to realize that she is, as Pope Pius XII called her, the Empress of all the Americas.

The objective of the Guild is to spread devotion to her and knowledge of her throughout the country.

Another goal is to promote pilgrimages to the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City. One of the greatest concerns of the Guild is the lack of a fitting place to stay near the Basilica. Americans who go to Mexico City find they must travel 10 miles to find a hotel. It is hoped that some day the Guild will be able to build a hospice where the cost of rooms will be minimal, encouraging even poor people of the United States to make pilgrimages to Our Lady.

Friends of Our Lady of Guadalupe are urged to pray for the Guild's aspirations that the knowledge and love of Our Lady may be spread throughout the United States and that those who love her will have a place to stay when they come to Mexico City.

-Bishop Jerome J. Hastrich



QUEEN



OF THE AMERICAS GUILD®



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2004 Pilgrimage to Guadalupe

The Path to Our Lady of Guadalupe

By Rebecca Nichols, National Coordinator, Queen of the Americas Guild

Twenty-five pilgrims gathered last October for five days of inspiration, exploration and fellowship. The Queen of the Americas Guild held its annual pilgrimage to the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe October 14 through 18, 2004. As National Coordinator of the Guild, I was pleased to attend for the third consecutive year.

The group of pilgrims first gathered on Thursday evening for a get-acquainted dinner at the hotel. Upcoming tour events were reviewed, and travelers looked forward to the next day's visit to the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe.



Pilgrims are welcomed into the Basilica by Bishop Madera.



Guild members present the gifts during Mass at the Basilica)

Friday morning began with an inspirational and informative talk by Bishop Joseph J. Madera, Guild Moderator and retired Auxiliary of the U.S. Archdiocese for the Military Services, U.S.A. Bishop Madera shared his family history and close involvement with Our Lady of Guadalupe, and explained in detail the complex meaning of each portion of her self-portrait. His comprehensive knowledge of Our Lady's appearances to St. Juan Diego was very evident, and pilgrims left with a renewed appreciation for Our Lady's miracle.

Like many Mexican pilgrims to the shrine, our group processed up the avenue leading to the Basilica while carrying a large floral offering to Our Lady. Bishop Madera welcomed us into the Basilica, and led us up the center aisle where we were seated at the main altar. We enjoyed a lovely mass celebrated in both English and Spanish.

Throughout the Mass, many Mexican pilgrims crawled on their knees up the aisle to the altar, some in tears, as their offering to Our Lady. Many of these pilgrims had made their way on their knees across the large plaza outside, and some even further. This was to be the first of many touching sights illustrating how deeply the Mexican people love Our Lady.

After celebrating Mass in the presence of Our Lady's image, Guild pilgrims were led on a comprehensive tour of the Basilica area, which began with a short walk up the first steps of Tepeyac Hill to view the property owned by the Guild. This property, adjoining the Baptistery office building, sits at the base of the hill.

In accordance with the wishes of Guild founder Bishop Jerome Hastrich, the Guild is planning to build a retreat center there, which will not only offer amazing views of Tepeyac Hill, but will be a safe place for pilgrims to gather, stay, and be close to Our Lady.

The Basilica area tour continued with a visit to the Guadalupe Museum, which houses hundreds of

beautiful paintings and sculptures, most of which depict Our Lady in her many different apparitions. Visits to the Old Basilica, Church of the Well, and Church of the Indians completed the guided tour.

Pilgrims were then left with free time to re-visit favorite places or to make the journey up Tepeyac Hill to visit the Chapel of the Roses. The chapel is built on the spot where Our Lady first appeared to St. Juan Diego.

After a full day spent with Our Lady, pilgrims returned to the hotel for dinner and discussions regarding the day's events. All agreed that the day had been truly special, and they were most thankful for the gift of Bishop Madera's time and talents.

The next day began with a drive to the city of Puebla, located approximately 75 miles southeast of Mexico City. Here we had the privilege of attending Mass at the enormous Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, celebrated by Bishop Madera on the gold-covered "Altar of the Kings". After Mass, we were allowed to tour the sacristy. Even more amazingly, we were allowed to visit a tiny hidden octagonal shaped chapel, with walls virtually covered in gold leaf and beautiful paintings. The existence of this chapel, kept under lock and key, had not been previously known by any members of our group, including our well-versed tour guide. Again, the honor of having Bishop Madera with our group allowed us this very special privilege.



The stunning gold covered chapel within the Puebla Cathedral.

The tour of Puebla continued with a delicious lunch, followed by visits to San Francisco church and Santo Domingo church with its stunning Rosary Chapel. Completed in 1690, this chapel is entirely covered in gold leaf, tiles, and fine woodcarvings. It is one of the finest examples of Mexican Baroque style. Back in Mexico City, pilgrims enjoyed dinner at the hotel and entertainment by a talented Mariachi band. The lively group sang traditional Mexican folk songs, and left us with a wonderful taste of Mexican culture.



2004 Pilgrims were entertained by a talented Mariachi group.

The Path to Our Lady of Guadalupe would not be complete without a trip to Tlaxpetlac, site of the fifth apparition of Our Lady. On Sunday morning, we made the short trip there, and had mass at the simple shrine built to commemorate Our Lady's appearance to Juan Bernadino, St. Juan Diego's uncle. We shared the moving mass with local worshipers as Bishop Madera again delivered his homily in both English and Spanish. Afterwards, pilgrims were able to gather some of the healing water from the shrine's well.



Queen of the Americas Guild members at the Shrine of the Fifth Apparition.

The Grace of Guadalupe

By Fr. Christopher Rengers, O.F.M., Cap.

A few questions keep coming my way:

1. How long have you been interested in Guadalupe?
2. How many times have you been there?
3. Why do you favor Guadalupe over other appearances of Mary?

For an answer to the third question, you may consult a chapter in the book, *"Mary of the Americas."* The chapter title is in the form of a question, "The Greatest of Appearances."

How Long Have You Been Interested in Guadalupe?

During our annual Capuchin retreat about 1955 or 1956, I took out a book for reading and meditation during free time. It was *"The Grace of Guadalupe"* by Frances Parkinson Keyes. It was a book that had caused the author much fatigue and struggle. She was not well, and there were obstacles to her research. She almost gave up the

attempt, but she continued, and the book became a great grace for her.

It is not in print now, but it and several other good books on Guadalupe deserve to be republished. For instance, the books by Brother Herbert Leies, S.M., Sister Mary Amatora, O.S.F., and the document collection of Coley Taylor and Donald Demarest.



Fr. Christopher Rengers

The book by Keyes was a great grace for me, and the beginning of many more. Our Lady of Guadalupe has been a continuing, consuming interest that has been a big part of my life. This grace has helped to shape my activities, and brought me into contact with many good people. It has stirred me (with a few pushes by St. Joseph) to write prayers, articles, a novena, a book and a pageant. It has brought a personal attachment to

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2004 Pilgrimage to Guadalupe... *(continued from page 5)*

After a quick lunch at the hotel, the group returned to the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe for a final visit with Our Lady. Pilgrims enjoyed free time to re-visit their favorite places and spend a final moment with Our Lady.

It was a beautiful, warm afternoon, and the plaza was crowded with Mexican families on their normal Sunday visit. It was the perfect opportunity to observe the strong faith in Our Lady. Two examples come to mind immediately. As I sat in the old Basilica (admittedly to escape the hot sun for a few moments), I watched a family approach the rack of offering candles. A boy, probably about 16, took an unlit candle, and very gently and thoroughly rubbed it over both his mother's and brother's entire bodies. I was puzzled at first, but soon realized that his offering was to be for the good health of his mother and brother. The sight was very heartwarming, made even more so because of the realization that it was unlikely to be witnessed in the U.S. In Mexico, the love for Our Lady is so strong, it transcends any self-consciousness the boy may have felt.

Afterwards, in the plaza in front of the new Basilica, as our group gathered for our return, I watched the people pass by the open doors of the Basilica. The building is designed specifically for a clear view of Our Lady's image

from any angle, including from outside. I observed a young father carrying a baby, not more than a few weeks old. As they passed by the open door, the father took the baby's arm and waved it at Our Lady, as if in greeting and introduction. I was immediately reminded of Bishop Madera's talk with us on Friday morning. He told us that one of the first things that the Mexican people do is to take their babies to meet Our Lady, their mother, shortly after birth. I believe I had just witnessed one such introduction, and added it to the list of little miracles that Our Lady brought to us during our pilgrimage.

Sunday evening was reserved for an optional trip to the Palace of Fine Arts and a performance of Mexico's Ballet Folklórico, a comprehensive presentation of traditional Mexican song and dance. Completed in 1934, the Palace houses not only the theatre with its Tiffany stained glass curtain, but historic works of art, including many Diego Rivera murals.

At this point, our journey was complete. We had walked the footsteps of St. Juan Diego along the Path to Our Lady of Guadalupe. We left with a new understanding of Our Lady's miracle. Along the way, we learned that she shows us new miracles every day.

The Grace of Guadalupe...

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St. Juan Diego, the faithful, humble and charitable messenger chosen by Our Lady herself.

This gift of grace has helped to unite me with others in the St. Joseph Medal Apostolate, the Workers of St. Joseph and the Queen of the Americas Guild. Over the years, with meetings and pilgrimages, the gift has multiplied friends and co-workers, who find a happy bond of sharing, devotion, and hope for spreading love of Our Blessed Mother.

Now all good things come to me together with her, and innumerable riches through her hands (Wisd. 7, 11). The Church applies these words spoken of wisdom to the Blessed Virgin. She is, indeed, as the litany names here, the "Cause of our Joy."

How Many Times Have You Been There?

My first visit to Guadalupe was in 1967. The exact number of times since then I do not know, but every time has been a privilege.

The second visit was in 1979 or 1980 when Tony Guida of Falls Church, Virginia, began leading pilgrimages. Tony and his wife, Carmel, had come to the first meeting of the Queen of the Americas Guild in July, 1979. That is where he received the inspiration to conduct pilgrimages. He took me along as chaplain for several of his groups.

After Tony took sick and eventually died, I continued. The wrinkles had been ironed out, and a retreat-style pilgrimage developed, which the Workers of St. Joseph use today.

Since 1980, I have gone to Guadalupe once or twice a year until the last visit in April-May, 2003. 1993 was an exception because I was laid up with a hip injury in Mexico during Advent and Christmas of 1992.

But before returning to Washington, D.C. with my Capuchin confreres, Brother Alfred and Fr. Moises who came to accompany me, I did visit the Basilica in early February, 1993. It was a visit for the year, but did not involve a round trip from the USA.

The First Visit

All the trips have been by plane, except the first one in 1967. That was by automobile, and was the jubilee trip for

my silver anniversary of priesthood. My nephew, Regis, and I drove in a car supplied by my brother, Gerard. They brought the car from Pittsburgh to St. Louis where the adventures began. Regis was celebrating graduation from high school.

We took a week going down, visiting and taking pictures in the area of Dallas where President Kennedy had been shot, and other places, spending an overnight at various cities, including San Antonio in the U.S. and Saltillo in Mexico. These cities are on the central route to Mexico City.

Our return drive was over the Pan American Highway, through tropics and mountains, quite scenic and leading to Brownsville, Texas.

A tropical storm on the way back made visibility very poor and brought rocks and boulders rolling onto the highway. We stopped at the first place possible, spent the night, and left early in the morning with the rain still pelting.

But visibility was better than in the darkness, and the mountains were behind us. Sharing the driving, we went straight through to St. Louis to conclude 17 very blessed days. We had lingered at Guadalupe, not allowing enough time for the return trip. It's a good place to linger.

The Grace of People

My first visit to Our Lady of Guadalupe had brought its own share of unexpected graces. Mass the first day was in the parish church next to the cathedral. (I thought we were in the cathedral, and asked to offer Mass there). Later we went to the archdiocesan office and asked to speak to an English-speaking priest. The attendant knew enough English to understand, and went to an adjoining room. He soon returned, beckoning us to follow.

Surprise

A moment later, we were ushered into a spacious office and greeted by His Eminence, Miguel Dario Miranda, Archbishop of Mexico City, the largest diocese in the Catholic Church.

Perhaps we were a welcome distraction in a busy day, but the long waiting line outside continued to wait, and the Cardinal spent a good half hour with us. He explained that he learned English as a young priest during the persecution of the Church under President Calles. He went into exile, and spent much time in the New York City Public

Library, studying sociological issues, especially Communism. He predicted that Communism would fail, because it is contrary to the way God designed human nature.

Cardinal Miranda was contemporary to another young priest, the Jesuit Miguel Pro, who was executed in November, 1927, and is now a Blessed. Our pilgrim groups included a visit and Mass at Holy Family Church, where Blessed Miguel's remains are entombed. They were first in a small chapel to the rear of the church, but are now up front to the right of the sanctuary as you face the altar. (The church has also been re-painted, and the signs on the confessionals, *hombres* on one side and *mujeres* on the other, are no longer there.)

The Cardinal was also interested in learning why we had come to Mexico, and inquired about my work. He asked Regis about his hopes and his family. Before we left, he phoned the Guadalupe Basilica and arranged for my offering Mass there.

One of my Masses was a High Mass at the main altar of the Old Basilica, still in Latin in those days. The choice of having a High Mass was the suggestion of Regis who said it would give more honor to the Blessed Mother. Many Mexican pilgrims were present.

A Happy Meeting

The second person to be an agent of grace was Helen Behrens. She had lived in Mexico many years without going to the Basilica of Guadalupe. Then, at a time of personal sickness and trouble, she heard on the radio a festal celebration from Our Lady's Basilica and was moved to go there right away.

If memory serves me well, the celebration was for the fiftieth anniversary of the first papal crowning, which had been granted by Pope Leo XIII in 1895. The date was October 12, 1945. Pope Pius XII addressed the people gathered at the Basilica by radio. In his prayer to Our Lady, he predicted, "We are certain that while you are recognized as Queen and as Mother, the Americans and Mexico will have been saved."

For Mrs. Behrens, the occasion marked a turning point in her life. For the next two decades, she devoted full time to making Our Lady and her message known. She wrote a book, *"America's Treasure,"* started an English-information center, and for some years published a magazine.

She also made a 16 mm. documentary movie about Guadalupe. It is now on a video and is valuable as an

historical piece, showing an Ordination Mass and processions to the Old Basilica of 1709.

Mrs. Behrens went with us in our car to show us the way to Tulpetlac and Cuauhtitlan. At these sites, so intimate to the story of Our Lady of Guadalupe, she explained their history. Juan Diego was born in Cuauhtitlan, and later moved to Tulpetlac. He had come from Tulpetlac where he lived with his uncle, Juan Bernardino, when Our Lady met him at Tepeyac Hill.

The same shrines are at Cuauhtitlan and Tulpetlac today as in 1967, but have been much improved. Most of the improvement has been since the beatification and canonization of St. Juan Diego.

The grace of knowing about these two places originated with Helen Behrens. Many pilgrims of both the Workers of St. Joseph and the Queen of the Americas Guild have visited them. They are still not on the program of most pilgrims and, in fact, are just at present becoming more widely known in Mexico.

Dr. Wahlig, Jerry and Marjorie Fairbanks

It was also Helen Behrens who told us on that first visit about Dr. Charles Wahlig of New York City and Jerry and Marjorie Fairbanks of Los Angeles. She said they were actively working as Guadalupe apostles.

On returning to the United States, I got in touch with them. (Mrs. Behrens, who, despite her heart trouble, had climbed Tepeyac Hill with us, died in 1968. Requiescat! Thank God she shared her valuable information in time!)

Dr. Wahlig was an optometrist and his wife was an oculist. They had, independently of other observers, discovered images of Juan Diego in the eyes of Our Lady of Guadalupe on the tilma.

Dr. Wahlig eventually came to many of the annual meetings of the Queen of the Americas Guild. His bubbling enthusiasm and ready chuckle added much to our Guild programs.

His conversation and explanations helped round out our picture of the events of 1531. He wrote the first Life of Juan Diego in English.

On a visit to St. Louis, he was interviewed by the St. Louis Post-Dispatch. The resulting report received generous space in this large city daily.

He also helped spread the Guadalupe message in other papers and radio interviews. It was his custom to budget annually, setting aside time and funds for his Guadalupe

activities. These included an annual visit to Our Lady's Basilica.

Jerry and Marjorie Fairbanks were planning a major movie about Our Lady of Guadalupe. It was to be filmed by the Jerry Fairbanks Movie Productions. The script was ready and Cantinflas, a famous Mexican actor, was scheduled to play Juan Diego. But the time was not favorable to securing funds for a movie with a religious theme. The movie was never made, but the script should be around in some archive. We can hope that a new effort will be made for a major first-run movie. If done in the right way, it could be a great blessing.

When the Queen of the Americas Guild had its Los Angeles meeting, my Religious Superiors allowed me to stay on after the meeting, receiving hospitality at a Capuchin parish and friary. This afforded an opportunity to meet Mr. and Mrs. Fairbanks. Marjorie arranged a meal, inviting a group of friends to spend an evening honoring Our Lady of Guadalupe. Marjorie later wrote two of the prayers that are distributed now by the Workers of St. Joseph. She also wrote a Litany of Juan Diego.

More than a decade had passed since I'd read the Grace of Guadalupe book by Keyes and the time of my first visit in 1967 to celebrate the silver anniversary of priesthood. More than another decade passed before the Founding of the Queen of the Americas Guild in 1979 in Emmitsburg, Maryland. That event was the beginning of another series of graces.

The Grace of the Guild

The roots of the Queen of the Americas Guild go back a few years before the actual founding. For more details, consult chapters 12 and 13 in *"Mary of the Americas,"* entitled "Spokespersons for U.S. National Center" and "Queen of the Americas Guild."

John Haffert

The idea for a national apostolate of Our Lady of Guadalupe came from John Haffert, Lay Leader of the Blue Army of Our Lady of Fatima. Monsignor Harold Colgan of Plainfield, New Jersey, had started the Blue Army in his parish to keep a promise made to the Blessed Virgin. He had been seriously ill, and promised the Blessed Virgin to do something special for her if he recovered.

He did, and on a Sunday some time later, he announced

to his parishioners at St. Mary's, Plainfield, New Jersey, "We will start a Blue Army here to ask Our Lady's help in combating the errors of the Red Army of Communism."

When John Haffert – young, energetic, and lecturing on the Brown Scapular of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel – came along and joined forces with him, the Blue Army quickly developed far beyond the parish into a world apostolate. The National Blue Army Center at Washington, New Jersey, and the International Domus Pacis at Fatima attest to the purity of Msgr. Colgan's ideals and the drive and skill of John Haffert.

Site Chosen for the National Center

John's first effort for starting a Guadalupe Apostolate was launched at a meeting in St. Charles Borromeo Capuchin Friary and Parish, St. Louis, Missouri. Bishop Sidney Metzger came from El Paso to preside.

Also present was the pastor of the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Carlisle, Kentucky, and Jerry Trimble of Dubuque, Iowa, who later devoted full time to a prayer apostolate.

Fr. James Meehan, S.J., was chosen chairman of the group. He wrote a piece about Our Lady of Guadalupe that was re-printed in many Jesuit mission magazines. This one article was most likely the best circulated of any in English about Our Lady of Guadalupe.

The group decided to write a letter to all the Ordinaries (bishops heading a diocese) of the United States and ask their choice of a location for a national Guadalupe Center.

After this consultation, the choice was made of Immaculate Conception Parish in Allentown, Pennsylvania. The northeast part of the country was chosen, rather than the southwest where the devotion was already strong, so that the center could help where it was needed more. The center was opened in 1974 and is flourishing. (The address is 501 Ridge Avenue, 18102. Parish Phone – 610-433-4404).

Mount Saint Marys, Emmitsburg, Maryland

The next step in the developing plan was to start a guild. John Haffert asked me to find a location for a meeting, and to invite as many as possible to come and discuss the forming of a guild.

About this time, Monsignor Hugh Phillips, Director of Shrines at Mount St. Mary's Seminary and College, Emmitsburg, Maryland, was putting up an outdoor mosaic image of Our Lady of Guadalupe. He asked for leaflets or pictures or pamphlets, something to give to people who visited. He also welcomed the request for having the proposed Guadalupe assembly at the college.

Monsignor Phillips was agreeably surprised to see that our meeting attracted about 100 participants from around the U.S. Bishop Jerome Hastrich, Ordinary of Gallup, New Mexico, was there as Episcopal leader and was assisted by Bishop Thomas Drury of Corpus Christi, Texas.

Besides lay people, some of whom are still prominently active as Guadalupanos, there were several priests and religious taking part. Sisters from the nearby Shrine of Elizabeth Seton sang for some of the masses.

Among the priests was Dominican Fr. Jacob Joerger who later spent some years as chaplain in the new Basilica.

Among the religious was Maryknoll Bro. Goretti Zilli who has since produced a movie on St. Maria Goretti, and is now encouraging a movie on Allesandro Serenelli who had stabbed her, but after many years repented and led a holy life, helping in a Capuchin Monastery.

Professor Jody Brant Smith, a non-Catholic Guadalupe author, came from Florida to attend this original Guild assembly. He had cooperated with Dr. Philip Callahan in his studies on the eye images of the tilma. His book *The Image of Guadalupe, Myth or Miracle?* focuses on the scientific side of things.

At the Emmitsburg meetings were two men who had brought along Fr. Jacob Joerger, O.P.; Frank Smoczynski and Steve Banaszak, presently president and vice president of the Guild.

Handy with the camera and genial in collecting quickly a group with faces in the right places, Frank has provided a valuable picture history of the Guild and its activities.

Frank and Steve also brought along the Cordi-Marian Sisters Mother Marie Ramirez and Sister Theresa Alonso who continued giving enthusiastic and prayerful help as Board members.

The meeting generated an enthusiasm which continued to show itself in active work. Enthusiasm and love do tend to explode in personal work, planning and organizing.

Among new enthusiastic workers for Our Lady was Mrs. Alice Wu. She secured the backing of Bishop Thomas Lyons, Auxiliary of the Washington Archdiocese,

and went around knocking on many a rectory door to beg permission to arrange special Guadalupe nights at the parish. She also had thousands of holy cards printed with the Guadalupe image and a prayer.

Saint Joseph, Guild Patron

St. Joseph was chosen as the Patron of the Guild, to guide us in love and service of Our Blessed Mother.

There was a good bit of discussion on the choice of a name for the new organization. The choice was finally made of *Queen of the Americas Guild*.

Bishop Hastrich sent a telegram to the Holy Father, informing him of the new group, organized to foster awareness of Our Lady of Guadalupe in the United States and everywhere among English-speaking people.

The address for the Guild for the first few years was Capuchin College, Washington, D.C. Later, to accommodate the growing activities of the Guild, Guild President Frank Smoczynski opened office space for the Guild in St. Charles, Illinois. The address and officers are listed under the Rockford Diocese in *The Official Catholic Directory*; the office is located at 345 Kautz Rd., P.O. Box 851, St. Charles, IL 60174.

"What can you do for Our Lady of Guadalupe besides pray?" Bishop Hastrich challenged us on various occasions. This was a kind of blunt criticism of those who customarily excuse themselves from effort by promising a prayer. But whatever we have done besides pray, the advice of St. Francis to the friars is good: "Brothers, let us begin, for until now we have done nothing."

Four centuries after the poverello, three days after Christmas, 1622, his namesake, St. Francis de Sales, was dying. When he was tearfully asked to pray that his life would be lengthened, he replied, "No, I will not do it, for I know that I am an absolutely useless person."

We also may recall the words of Jesus to his apostles: "When you have done everything that was commanded you, say, 'We are unprofitable servants; we have done what it was our duty to do.'" (Luke 17, 10)

In short, whatever any of us has done, it has been a grace. And whatever we have done is an ounce on the scale against the pounds – or should we say tons – of God's grace.

Deo gratias!

Guild President Frank Smoczynski looks back on his memories of the founding of the Queen of the Americas Guild and its early days, and shares them here.

I had been working on the promotion of awareness of Our Lady of Guadalupe with a number of people who held the same enthusiasm. I had been in the hospital and was seriously ill when Fr. Jacob Joerger, a Dominican priest and fellow Guadalupe devotee, brought me a letter from Fr. Christopher Rengers that called for all interested Guadalupanos to attend a meeting in Emmitsburg, Maryland. I had lost a great deal of weight and was praying for my return to health. Going to a meeting hundreds of miles away was the last thing on my mind.

It turned out I was experiencing an allergic reaction from the fish I had eaten on a recent fishing trip. As I eventually recovered, I said prayers of thanksgiving to God and Our Lady.

A couple of days later, Father Joerger called and asked if I was going to the meeting. I said I was pretty weak, and I didn't think I'd be able to make it, but I'd see where I was in a few days.

Eventually, I talked myself into going, although my wife, Beverly, was adamantly against the idea. She said, "After spending 18 days in the hospital, now you're going to jump in the car and drive all the way to Washington, D.C.?" She was really upset at me, and at Father Joerger for asking me to go.

When I arrived, I found a good number of people who, like myself, were highly interested in Guadalupe. In accordance with Father Christopher's letter of invitation, the premise of the assembly was to see whether we could put together an organization that would help us to accomplish more as a group than we could as individuals.

I thought it was a great idea. The meeting began with an introduction of the meeting's organizers, followed by

general discussions. The meeting was then opened to the floor and everyone was asked to speak about what had brought them there and how they felt about organizing a group. This allowed us to establish who had a very high level of interest along with some experience. When it was my turn to speak, I mentioned that I'd had some previous experience with Guadalupe issues and events in the Chicago area. I'd been part of an organization that had raised funds to be sent down to the Basilica in Mexico City, and I was on the board of directors at Marytown, and helping to put together the Handbook on Guadalupe. I wasn't running for anything, but they were interested in how I got there. After that, we had a brainstorming session on how we would form the group, and leaders began to emerge.

We agreed to meet in a year to determine whether we were going to form such an organization. When we met that next year, we decided upon a name for our organization, the

purposes, and what the formal organizational structure would be. We did not yet vote or nominate any members of the board of directors.

After the second meeting, the founders continued to talk with people and asked for volunteers to organize the first conference. I volunteered to organize the meeting and it was held at Techny Towers in Libertyville, Illinois, which is run by the Society of the Divine Word, an order of Missionary Priests, and at Marytown in Mundelein, Illinois, an order of Franciscans. Many people attended. At this time, after I had interviews with the founding members, Bishop Hastrich and others made the decision to ask me to serve as president of the Guild. I was quite hesitant to make the commitment at this point, as I had a business to run, along with many family commitments and I said I would have to give it some thought.

Bishop Hastrich asked me to visit him in his Diocese of Gallup, New Mexico as soon as possible. We spent two

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Looking Back

Looking Back... (continued from page 12)

First Meeting at Emmitsburg, Maryland

solid days talking and praying. He was a wonderful, holy person. He even cooked my breakfast – certainly the first time I had ever had breakfast cooked by a bishop. In addition to his hospitality and counsel, the bishop got up very early in the morning to drive me the long distance from Gallup to Albuquerque to get my plane.

A short while after my return from Gallup, I went to Florida to visit with John Haffert to share his experiences with running a Marian organization and discuss the possibility of my acceptance of the presidency of the Guild. At this point in time, John was trying to phase himself out of the organizations he was already involved with, and wasn't looking to add more to his plate. However, he felt strongly that I should do this for Our Lady, and offered to help as much as he could in the beginning. We discussed the fact that I would need to move the organization's headquarters to St. Charles, so that in addition to the Guild, I could continue to run my business and take care of my family.

After visiting with these two vital founders of the Guild, I went home to pray and discuss the situation with my wife.

Not very enthusiastically, she accepted my plan to serve as president of the Guild, and offered her support.

After I accepted the position, John Haffert organized a benefit dinner in Gaithersburg, MD to formally introduce the Guild and myself as president. Many noted Marian authorities and Guadalupanos of the time attended including Archbishop James Hickey, Bishop Jerome Hastrich, Bishop Francis Green, John and Patricia Haffert, Don and Betty Demarest, Phil and Winnie Callahan, Harry and Ann Seggerman, Tony Guida, Ed Sullivan, Rev. Christopher Rengers, Rev. Sean O'Malley, and Thomas A. Nelson.

A few days after that dinner, I spoke at the National Shrine in Washington D.C. to introduce the organization to the people of the United States. I was thrilled to be speaking from the altar of the Shrine.

It has been a challenge, but also an inspiration to serve as president of the Guild. In 25 years, I've never been sorry I took on the challenge Bishop Hastrich and the Guild gave me.



Gallup 1986



Ruth Sloan, board member



1989 Emmitsburg



John Milewski and Steve Banaszak



Third meeting - Techy, Illinois
Photo of visit to Marytown



Fr. Joerger and Frank Smoczynski in safety vault used for cleaning and maintenance of Our Lady's image. The image pivots into the secured room.



Sr. Theresa and Steve Banaszak, board members



Bishop Hastrich and Father Mulloy



Susan Maloney and board member Alan Napleton

Founders and Co-founders of the Queen of the Americas Guild

Bishop Jerome Hastrich
John Haffert
Fr. Christopher Rengers
Fr. Jacob Joerger

Frank Smoczynski
Steve Banaszak
Manuel Perez

Early Supporters of the Guild

Msgr. George Hastrich
Jerry Trimble
Fr. James Meehan
Bishop Thomas Drury
Msgr. Hugh Phillips
Br. Goretti Zilli

Professor Jody Brant Smith
Mother Marie Ramirez
Sr. Theresa Alonso
Alice Wu
Archbishop James Hickey
Bishop Francis Green
Don and Betty Demarest

Phil and Winnie Callahan
Harry and Ann Seggerman
Tony Guida
Ed Sullivan
Rev. Sean O'Malley
Thomas A. Nelson

From our Friends...

The Guild was pleased to receive these notes from Guild members who attended the 2004 conference in Mexico City:

Our pilgrimage to Mexico was short but very fulfilling. We will look forward to joining you again in the future. Thank you for the time and preparations to make our trip really much to remember. Thanks for the pictures, too, and regards to Frank and family. May Our Lady continue to lead us on our way!

***Octavius and Mercy Daus
White Plains, New York***

Thanks for the wonderful and memorable pilgrimage to Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine and other beautiful churches. It was much more than I expected. It was well planned and organized. My heart and mind are still full.

God Bless You
Alice Thompson
Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, Dewey, Oklahoma

I just wanted to write and thank all of you for making our pilgrimage to Our Lady of Guadalupe so wonderful, and SPECIAL.

Diana Filiaggi

I'm sorry it has taken me so long to write after our pilgrimage to Mexico. Still trying to settle into our new home. I wanted so much to thank you for the marvelously well-organized and inspiring trip. It really was perfect. Bishop Madera is such a charismatic person, we just loved him. Raoul was the perfect guide, so knowledgeable, personable and patient. We didn't stop talking about the trip for weeks. I don't know if we will be able to return for another pilgrimage, but I strongly feel if Our Lady wants us back, there will be a way.

***Nydia Rodriguez
Howell, New Jersey***

The following article is reprinted from the 1989 Queen of the Americas Guild newsletter:

Susan Maloney Accepts Appointment at the Basilica

Through the years, Susan Maloney has always been drawn to Our Lady of Guadalupe. "Mexican children were my playmates and classmates," she reflects, "and when I visited their homes, Our Lady was always there. When I lived in Kansas City, I was always drawn to the Mexican barrio for any fiesta. Again, Our Lady was there. Since childhood, I have had a great love of Mexico and all things Mexican and Indian."

On June 19th, Susan will take another step in a life-long journey which is taking her to serve as an English-speaking representative at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe.



Susan Maloney at work at the Basilica.

It would seem that all of Susan's life has been preparation for this, her most cherished assignment. Here are some of her steps along this path:

- Working with civic organizations while the first woman from Kansas to enter the Woman's Army Auxiliary Corps
- Joining the first group of Papal Volunteers for Latin America; heading the Kansas Delegation
- Working in community development in Mexico for three years as a literacy specialist
- Helping the Peace Corps set up a literacy program
- Serving on the staff of Koininia Foundation, dedicated to the precept that missionaries, governmental figures and others serving people of other cultures should have grass roots training in the other culture.
- Acting as director of a lay community for social outreach programs for the poor

"I always dreamt of going to Mexico and to the Basilica," Susan declares. "This finally became a reality in 1961. As I entered the Basilica, I had the feeling of being home. Suddenly, I realized I was at the foot of the main altar."

For many years, Susan has made a novena to Our Lady of Guadalupe which ends, "I give you my life, my home, my family, everything I have."

Susan has led numerous pilgrimages to Guadalupe. "Since my last visit of May, 1987, I have felt that Our Lady wishes me to do more for her. I have been praying and trying to follow what she presents."

It was during the Feast of the Assumption in 1987 that Our Lady made known her acceptance of Susan's prayer. Without warning, Bishop Hastrich asked if Susan would move to Mexico and the Basilica. Without hesitation, she replied, "Yes."

Susan Maloney has now locked her front door and given her possessions to her brother and to others.

"As I attended mass on Her Feast Day," she says, "I knew my dream had become a reality. This was to be my home. It was an overwhelming moment and the most humble one as I once again said my prayer to her, 'I give you my life.'"

"Every day has been filled with adventure," she smiles, "and most of all, with love and support from many in the name of Our Lady."

**Susan served at the Basilica until the time of her death in October, 1993. For her unique contribution and service, the Abbot honored her with a space in the crypt in the Basilica so that she might eternally be there for Our Lady, thus fulfilling her greatest wish.*

The Dream of Bishop Hastrich —

A Retreat Center in Mexico City

By Frank Smoczynski

Bishop Jerome Hastrich was the Bishop of Gallup, New Mexico, the largest and poorest Archdiocese in the United States. The Bishop had, as Bishops before him had, few conversions among the Indian tribes in the Southwest. His Diocese included many reservations. Inasmuch as Juan Diego was Native American, the Bishop had a great love for Our Lady.

Our Lady of Guadalupe was no stranger to this area. She was brought to Santa Fe from Mexico in the late 1600's by the Spanish. Bishop Hastrich would often take a train to Mexico City from Gallup, bringing along a few Native Americans to visit the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Over the years, he began to have success with some conversions, touched by Our Lady. But to bring more to see Our Lady was difficult. Expenses were stopping this from happening. Remember, poor tribes, train tickets, food, hotels, and Mexican travel expenses kept visits by Native Americans almost impossible.

His idea was to cut costs for lodging in Mexico. The train depot in Mexico City is a short walking distance to the Shrine. With low cost lodging for pilgrims, that would certainly cut costs and allow more Native Americans to visit. This was a simple, good idea. The retreat house would be a place for all U.S. pilgrims, bishops and priests, very close to the Shrine. Location, location, location!

The subject was brought to the attention of the founders group board of directors of the Guild and there were some issues among them regarding the idea. However, they all did agree that it should be built in Mexico City, close to the Shrine. A motion was passed to explore the possibility of the same. Being President, this was time consuming, travel-wise. Visiting potential properties in Mexico looks good from a friend of a friend in Mexico. What exactly we were looking for never really was agreed upon. The distance from the Shrine, neighborhood, etc. The Shrine is in a bad neighborhood with few hotels; a minus 5 stars situation with street crime and no walking after late hours. So, we as a board thought we might reconsider going to the place of the fifth miracle, the home of Juan Diego's uncle in Tlupetlac, where Our Lady appeared to Juan Bernardino to cure him on his death bed. There is a spring of water there that is supposed to have curative powers which they now use as holy water. This location is about 35 miles from the Shrine and traffic is gridlock most of the time. I visited 3 or 4 times to evaluate property and transportation to the Shrine. My recommendation was to keep it in mind, but not

(continued on page 18)

The Dream... *(continued from page 17)*

to buy at that time. It was not the best location at that time, but could get better with a 50 year redevelopment plan to make it a better place.

Back to the drawing board. We received a tip on a sale of property on Allende Street. I flew down in a hurry; I had been looking for three years and got to know many people – hotel people, cab drivers, Shrine people. They all wanted us there. The driver took me to this building on Allende. It was one of those ‘you know it as soon as you see it’ deals; this looks like the right place. It was abutted on the right side by the baptistery of the Shrine, and on the left, by a boarded up building. Our building was an ongoing business; a leather goods store that had been there for many years. I had been in that store many years ago, in 1960 or 1961. I remembered it well as my wife bought a purse there. It was a 2 1/2 story building.

The story gets better. The owner didn’t remember us from 1960, but had heard about our project and wanted to sell to someone that wanted it for religious purposes, not a McDonald’s or something like that. So we got along. I am always suspicious about real estate deals, especially in Mexico. But he turned out to be honest and concerned and took me for a tour of the first floor showroom, store counters, second floor living space, and the third story which was half covered with the back open looking over a patio. I walked to the stairs and looked out the open back. When I got to the top, what do I see? Directly below me the garden where Our Lady walked and talked to Juan Diego; this was Holy ground, all grass and flowers with a large statue of Padre Sera, founder of the California missions, and the stairway to the top of Tepeyac where Our Lady appeared to Juan Diego. The New Basilica was to the right, the old basilica in the center of my panorama. This was a miracle. I disliked nothing about this place. I tried to contain myself to the seller. I told him that I liked it and would get back to him soon, like in 5 minutes. External calm, internal joy! The next day, I put a hold on the building and told the seller I had to bring this purchase to the Board of Directors for their approval. As we proceeded,

they all felt that it was the right place for us to be if the Basilica religious people would give us the go ahead. The only concern of the board members was that the property was too small to build an adequate facility, and that we should look into purchasing the abandoned building next door.

Abbott Schulenburg Prado, who was in charge at the Shrine at that time, gave us the go-ahead. It was agreed upon by all board members, the Shrine, the Bishop; so we bought the property and it became known as Casa I. We had the closing on Casa I in the Sacristy of the Shrine. What could be better? Fr. Christopher Rengers had a group of 25 people visiting the Shrine at the time, and they joined us after the papers were signed.

After the closing, we walked the three block distance to Casa I, saying the rosary with lighted candles. These were very moving moments. In a few years, it would be built, I hoped. It was one happy day – the seller was happy, the buyers were happy,



Guild lawyer Francisco Laguardia (center) finalizes the purchase of Casa I.



Candlelight procession to the Casa I Building

and the Shrine was happy. Everyone was there, about 60 people, singing hymns and praying. Bishop Hastrich was there, a representative from the Shrine, and myself.

Someone told me we had a St. Joseph Medal on the property. We legally owned Casa I and we would continue to look for additional property and plan for the retreat center. That was to be a different story.



Bishop Hastrich, assisted by Fr. Christopher Rengers, blesses the Casa I building.

Retreat Center Update

After 17 years of work on the part of many guild people to build a retreat center in Mexico City in close proximity to the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe, so far it has not happened. It is not for not trying. We have had help from many professional law firms, both here in the U.S. and in Mexico, Bishops, Cardinals, many priests, friends in Mexico and many Guild members.

Hope springs eternal. This is God's work we are doing and it will get done in some exceptional manner to fulfill the dream of Bishop Hastrich. Even as I write this copy, we are engaged in sending e-mails to our law firm in Mexico. We are at a point in this process that something will happen soon, in 2005, that will work for us.

Keep up your prayers and continue to support the Queen of the America's Guild.

– Frank E. Smoczynski, President

Working for the Family

Balloons floated in the sky, and movie tickets were half price when families in Mexico celebrated Family Day for the first time on Sunday, March 6.

This was a direct result of the World Congress of Families III celebrated in March 2004 in Mexico City. Exceeding expectations, 3,000 came from 58 countries to participate.

Jesus Hernandez, the President of the Mexico City Chapter of the World Congress of Families (WCFIII), affirmed in his inaugural speech, "The common denominator uniting different nations, different religions and different peoples is one belief, and that belief is our faith in the family. All people from all nations, from all religions, and from all occupations share a common inheritance... the family.

"If we strive for the well-being of the family, we are striving for the well-being of each individual member of the society.

"This, in turn, leads to the respect and fulfillment of each person and to harmony and peace within society. Peace is the fruit of the dignity of each person as inscribed in human nature, and is the universal aspiration of all nations.

"If we were to look at society with its immense beauty and vulnerability, at its limitations and its possibilities from this perspective, from a *family* perspective... and propel the family to a worldwide level as the promoter of peace for the development of nations... then may family policy in the world be the axis for all social policies, and may the fruits of the WCFIII in striving for peace among nations by promoting the family be to touch the hearts of all mankind."

The Mexico City Congress was the third congress organized by the World Congress of Families. At the first World Congress of Families in 1997 in Prague, the Czech Republic, a declaration affirming the central, vital, and essential role of the natural family was adopted.

In 1999, the second World Congress of Families adopted a Declaration of Principles about the family, now called *The Geneva Declaration*. It called on people

of faith and all men and women of good will to work together to strengthen the natural family as the fundamental social unit of society.

The Mexico City Congress, WCFIII, affirmed in its declaration that the natural family is established by the Creator and is fundamental to the good of the society.

The Mexico City Congress in 2004 was the first in a series of important events commemorating the 10th anniversary of the International Year of the Family, proclaimed by the United Nations in 1994. It was inspired by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 16(3) that declares that "the family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the state."

As co-organizers of the WCFIII, and as representatives of "Family & Society" and "Family Network," two important pro-family organizations in Mexico, Marie-Claire Hernandez and her husband were invited to the final event of the year celebrated in Doha, Qatar, November 29 and 30. The Doha International Conference for the Family collected family-related efforts of governments, academicians, faith-based organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and members of civil society during the year, including the Mexico City Congress, and drafted The Doha Declaration.

The highlight of the year's efforts around the world in favor of the family was undoubtedly on December 6, 2004, when United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan told the General Assembly, "The 10th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family should incite the international community to do more to address the challenges faced by families" as it considered preparations for and observance of that event and adopted a related resolution.

The resolution introduced by Qatar and entitled "Celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family" encouraged governments to make every possible effort to realize the objectives of the 10th Anniversary and to integrate a *family perspective* in their planning processes.

Advocates Promote Juan Diego as Patron of Lay Apostles

...by Marie-Claire Hernandez

Our most touching and rewarding experience of 2004 took place in Rome en route to Doha, Qatar for the World Congress of Families. As Mexicans and Catholics, we have always placed personal and lay projects in the hands of Our Lady of Guadalupe, with help, of course, from a very dear Mexican saint, St. Juan Diego, the humble Indian Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared to.

For many years, Fr. Christopher Rengers, O.F.M., Cap, a good friend of ours and of the Queen of the Americas Guild, had prayed that St. Juan Diego be appointed "Patron Saint of Lay Apostles." In a letter to Cardinal Norberto Rivera Carrera of Mexico, Fr. Christopher wrote,



Jesus and Marie-Claire Hernandez present the St. Juan Diego petition to His Holiness, Pope John Paul II

"Two groups in the United States have for some time been hoping and working for the choice of Juan Diego as Patron of Lay Apostles. I have the happiness of being associated with these groups, The Workers of St. Joseph and The Queen of the Americas Guild.

"I have also found in conversation that many people are immediately enthusiastic about having Juan Diego made Patron of Lay Apostles. He is a unique example of how the Lay Apostle should work, receiving God's Grace and cooperating with the bishop."

In his answer to Fr. Christopher, His Eminence, Cardinal Norberto Rivera Carrera, spoke of his approval of the petition presented to him by Fr. Christopher

and by others over the years requesting that Juan Diego be appointed Patron Saint of the Apostles. His Eminence expressed that such a title would greatly illuminate the figure of St. Juan Diego, while serving to motivate the faithful to live their vocation by imitating St. Juan Diego in their response to grace and in full communion with their bishops.

It was our privilege to personally present this petition to the Holy Father, John Paul II, during the General Audience of 24 November, 2004.

Fr. Christopher has since received a letter of confirmation of receipt of the petition from the Vatican.

May Our Lady of Guadalupe and St. Juan Diego always be close to the members and projects of the Guild.

The Legacy of Pope John Paul II

By Rev. Msgr. George M. Hastrich

Since the most recent publication of this newsletter, the Church and the World have experienced the passing of Pope John Paul II and the election of his successor in the Petrine ministry, Pope Benedict XVI. No Catholic publications can ignore the significance of such historical events.

My first intention was to devote this article to the Five Luminous Mysteries of the Rosary, one of the many contributions of Pope John Paul II to the prayer life of the Church, but the patrimony of the pope contains much, much more.

The 26 years of his Pontificate gave us many spiritual gifts. Of special meaning to the readers of this newsletter is the obvious devotion to our Blessed Virgin Mary – already in the Papal coat-of-arms and the famous words: “Totus Tuus,” as he dedicated his papacy to her.

Nor can we forget that he made three pastoral visits to Mexico (and the U.S.A.) to the shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

Without going into detail on the many encyclicals, apostolic letters and exhortations, weekly Angelus and audience talks, books written, World Youth Days, and The Year of the Eucharist, we need only to recall the events that punctuated his Pontificate: the implementation of the documents of the Second Vatican Council, the leading into the Third Millennium, the Jubilee Year with its three year preparation in honor of the Holy Trinity, his influence in bringing about the downfall of Communism in Poland, the record number of Beatifications and Canonizations – one could go on and on.

But in his own estimation, Pope John Paul II said the greatest achievement of his papacy was the publication of The Catechism of the Catholic Church. This is and will be the definitive teaching guide for years to come for those who want an unambiguous explanation of the teaching of the Catholic Church.

There is no better way to thank our Holy Father for his twenty-six years as pope than by the following:

- He was a guidepost to the transcendent,
- He was a nurturer of souls,
- A witness to the contemplative,
- A joyful witness to the Gospel,
- To see the sacred,
- To hear the sacred.
- To live the sacred,
- To abandon ourselves to Divine Providence –
- To “be not afraid.”

There are many ways to show our gratitude for Pope John Paul II, but perhaps the one way he will continue to “shepherd us” is for us to read and study what he regarded as his greatest legacy: The Catechism of the Catholic Church.

In closing, allow me to share these words of a young Sister after seeing and hearing the Holy Father in Spain in 2002. These words were read by a speaker at the gathering of the Institute on Religious Life at Mundelein, Illinois on Saturday, April 2, the very day of Pope John Paul’s death:

“Thank you, Holy Father, for your dedicated life without reservations and as a faithful witness to the Gospel, for strengthening our faith, for quickening our hope, and for opening our hearts to the ardent love of the One Who knows how to lose His life so that others may gain it. Thank you for your life which has marked many of us.”



Rev. Hastrich



con amor
Joaquín Pantoja M. S.

MEXICO CITY - JANUARY 26-27, 1979



In Loving Memory



CHICAGO, ILLINOIS - OCTOBER 4-5, 1979



Pope John Paul II's Love of Our Lady of Guadalupe

Each of Pope John Paul II's five visits to Mexico illuminated his devotion to the Virgin Mary, and several were defining moments in the lives of many of the people of the Americas.

In January, 1979, the Pope's first pastoral visit outside of Italy included visits to the Dominican Republic, Mexico, and the Bahamas. While praying in the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City, the Holy Father experienced an epiphany. He realized that his mission was to become a "pilgrim pope," bringing God's word to people around the world.

Like she did to Juan Diego, Our Lady told Pope John Paul II to evangelize and Share the Miracle. He made it his mission to do just that. In his 26 years as Pope, John Paul II made 104 pastoral trips to 129 countries.

During his second visit to Mexico City in 1990, the Holy Father beatified Juan Diego. In his homily during the beatification Mass, he said, "Similar to ancient biblical personages who were collective representations of all the people, we could say that Juan Diego represents all the indigenous people who accepted the Gospel of Jesus, thanks to the maternal aid of Mary, who is always inseparable from the manifestation of her Son and the

spread of the Church, as was her presence among the Apostles on the day of Pentecost."

There were additional visits to Mexico in 1993, and then in January, 1999, for the closing of the Special Assembly for America of the Synod of Bishops. It was at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe that Pope John Paul II signed the Apostolic Exhortation, *Ecclesia in America*.

But for all of Mexico, the most extraordinary visit from the Holy Father was in late July, 2002. On July 31, the canonization Mass for St. Juan Diego was held at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

Amidst the celebration that included native Aztec dancers and maracas, Pope John Paul II declared the first native American saint.

During the homily, he noted, "At this decisive moment in Mexico's history, having already crossed the threshold of the new millennium, I entrust to the powerful intercession of Saint Juan Diego the joys and hopes, the fears and anxieties of the beloved Mexicans whom I carry in my heart."

Pope John Paul II made clear his special love for Our Lady of Guadalupe and the Mexican people. He will be greatly missed by the Queen of the Americas Guild.

Guild Shines at Marketing Show

For the Queen of the Americas Guild, the timing of the Catholic Marketing Network Tradeshow could not have been better. The show was held at Pheasant Run Resort in St. Charles, Illinois, February 9 through 11.

Guild National Coordinator Rebecca Nichols says, "Since the show was practically in the Guild's backyard, it was a great opportunity to meet some of the local Catholic retailers and increase the Guild's presence in the nearby community.

"We had just completed the first printing of our new Learning Rosary, so we were able to showcase this beautiful piece, and take orders for future delivery.

"The show was a great success, and we look forward to working with some of the new organizations whose representatives we met through the show."



Guild Vice President Steve Banaszak (left) joins Guild President Frank Smoczynski at the recent Catholic Marketing Network Tradeshow.

Papal Proclamations on the Rosary

Nearly every Pope since Pius V has promoted Rosary devotion among the faithful. Here are some of their teachings:

Pope Pius IX – “In the whole of the Vatican there is no greater treasure than the Rosary...Let the Rosary, this simple, beautiful method of prayer, enriched with many indulgences, be habitually recited of an evening in every household. These are my last words to you: the memorial I leave behind me.”

Pope Leo XIII – “The Rosary is an excellent means to inculcate the principal truths of the Catholic faith.”

Pope Pius XI – “Among the various supplications with which we successfully appeal to the Virgin Mother of God, the holy Rosary without doubt occupies a special and distinct place... Those wander from the path of truth who consider this devotion merely an annoying formula repeated with monotonous sing-song, and reject it as being good only for children and silly women! In this regard, it is to be noted that both piety and love, though pronouncing the same words over and over again, do not always repeat the same thing, but always express something new issuing from the intimate sentiments of devotion. And besides,

this mode of prayer has the perfume of evangelic simplicity and requires humility of spirit; and, if we disdain humility, as the Divine Redeemer teaches, it will be impossible for us to enter the heavenly kingdom.”

Pope Pius XII – “Always turn with ever increasing confidence to the Virgin Mother of God, to whom Christians have always and principally resorted in adversity, inasmuch as she was constituted the source of salvation for the whole human race.”

Pope John XXIII – “The Rosary, as is known to all, is in fact a very excellent means of prayer and meditation in the form of a mystical crown in which the prayers ‘Our Father’, ‘Hail Mary,’ and ‘Glory be to the Father’ are intertwined with meditation on the greatest mysteries of our Faith, and which presents to the mind, like many pictures, the drama of the Incarnation of our Lord and the Redemption.”

Pope Paul VI - “This simple and profound prayer teaches us to make Christ the principle and end, not only of Marian devotion, but of our entire spiritual life.”

Pope John Paul II – “To recite the Rosary is nothing other than to contemplate with Mary the face of Christ... Although the repeated ‘Hail Mary’ is addressed directly to Mary, it is to Jesus that the act of love is ultimately directed, with her and through her.”

Excerpts from Pope John Paul II's Apostolic Letter

“The Rosary of the Virgin Mary”

“Today I willingly entrust to the power of this prayer the cause of peace in the world and the cause of the family.”

“To recite the Rosary is nothing other than to contemplate with Mary the face of Christ.”

“Although the repeated ‘Hail Mary’ is addressed directly to Mary, it is to Jesus that the act of love is ultimately directed, with her and through her.”

“The Rosary is by its nature a prayer for peace, since it consists in the contemplation of Christ, the Prince of Peace, the one who is ‘our Peace.’” (Eph.2:14)

“The revival of the Rosary in Christian families will be an effective aid to countering the devastation effects (the breakdown of the family) typical of our age.”

“Contemplating the scenes of the Rosary in union with Mary is a means of learning from her to ‘read’ Christ, to discover His secrets and to understand His message.”

“Blessed Rosary of Mary, sweet chain linking us to God.”

“May this appeal of mine not go unheard.”

The Queen of the Americas Guild, a Practical Formula of Response to Our Lady's Motherly Invitation

By Steve Banaszak

Little did I know how richly rewarded my family and I would be by my response to a phone call about a quarter century ago. It was during this phone call that Frank Smoczynski asked me to join him on a trip to Emmitsburg, Maryland, where he and Bishop Hastrich, along with many others, were investigating the possibility of founding The Queen of the Americas Guild.



Steve Banaszak

I didn't fully understand then, but I have a better understanding now of the messages, promises, miracles and results of Mary's words to St. Juan Diego on December 9, 1531.

... "I am your merciful Mother, the **MERCIFUL MOTHER**, of all of you who live united in this land, and of **ALL MANKIND**, of those who love me, of those who cry to me, of those who seek me, of those who have confidence in me." ... "I will make you worthy... I will make you happy."

If we in the laity respond with the simple things we can do, such as prayer, conference attendance and pilgrimages when possible, with faith and confidence, we can follow in the footsteps of St. Juan Diego. In return for our response, Our Holy Queen and Mother, in union with her Son Jesus, will assist us and our families... "who are living in this terrifying wilderness" as Jesus has recently called today's world.

When we become discouraged or overwhelmed by the responsibilities, the crosses, and anxieties of our lives, as St. Juan Diego was with the pending death of his uncle, Juan Bernardino, she gives each one of us the same complete promise and encouragement she gave to St. Juan Diego on December 12, 1531:

"Hear and let it penetrate your heart, my dear little son. Let nothing discourage you, nothing depress you. Let nothing alter your heart or your countenance. Also do not fear any illness or trouble, anxiety or pain. Am I not here who am your Mother? Are you not under my shadow and protection? Am I not your fountain of life? Are you not in the fold of my mantle, in the crossing of my arms? Do not be troubled or take thought of your uncle's illness, for he will not die now of this. He is well already. Is there anything else that you need?"

Please memorize Mary's words, her timeless promise to each one of us. Teach them to your children, your grandchildren. It is easy. Mary will help you. Keep a copy in your wallet or purse. Say them daily, particularly when there is some crisis or anxiety in your life, your family, your neighbor's life, your country. Reach out and take our

mother's hand and repeat her promise. Then "let go", give your problems to our tender and powerful mother. This is her Son Jesus' desire, His and His Father's plan to change the world.

From the Guild's inception it has continually tried to offer the laity a simple formula to follow, drawn out of the events and messages of 1531. The following are excerpts from an October 30, 1981 letter of the Guild, approved by our founding Bishop, Jerome J. Hastrich:

"On September 5, 1981 Bishop Hastrich as Founder – Moderator of the Guild approved a practical formula of response to our Lady's motherly invitation. It recalls the fact that Mary appeared to Juan Diego four times, that each time he had walked many miles to be at the place she met him. The formula is called the Four Steps of Tepeyac. It aims to help any person, including those not baptized, to walk in the steps of Juan Diego.

The formula can be remembered by the mnemonic word, IRAC. The Four Steps are Image, Roses, Angel and Cristo Rey.

- Step I asks that you honor Mary's Guadalupe image and give away a copy once a month, preferably on the 9th, 10th, or 12th, the dates of the visions.
- Step II asks that you merely carry a rosary to recall Juan Diego carrying the roses.
- Step III invites you to recall the most important moment in human history, the moment in which God became man and Mary His mother by praying the Angelus daily.
- Step IV invites you to acknowledge that Christ is your King by visiting Him often, even daily in a church or chapel. For Catholics this means a visit to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

How can you become a member? You can become a member by practicing Steps I and II and one or both of the other two. There are no dues nor does your name have to be inscribed anywhere. The complete census of the Guild will have to be taken up by the angels..."

The Queen of the Americas Guild would appreciate you placing yourself, a family member, a friend or neighbor on our mailing list. And, of course, any donation, and/or the payment of the suggested, but not required, \$30 annual dues is appreciated.

Come join the Queen of the Americas Guild; walk in the footstep of St. Juan Diego. Share in the ongoing miracle and its promises. Become a part of the Guild and its work. You will NEVER regret it. You will look back, as I have, over the past 25 years, and realize how your life, your family's lives have been blessed and changed. How Mary has NEVER failed you, and how your life has grown with her peace, her presence, her love.

Begin the journey - come to the conference, come on a pilgrimage, place your name on the mailing list. It will begin a life changing journey.

Fine Linen and Rough Cactus. Do They Give Us Photos of Jesus & Mary?

By Rus Wester

Email: write4ewe@verizon.net

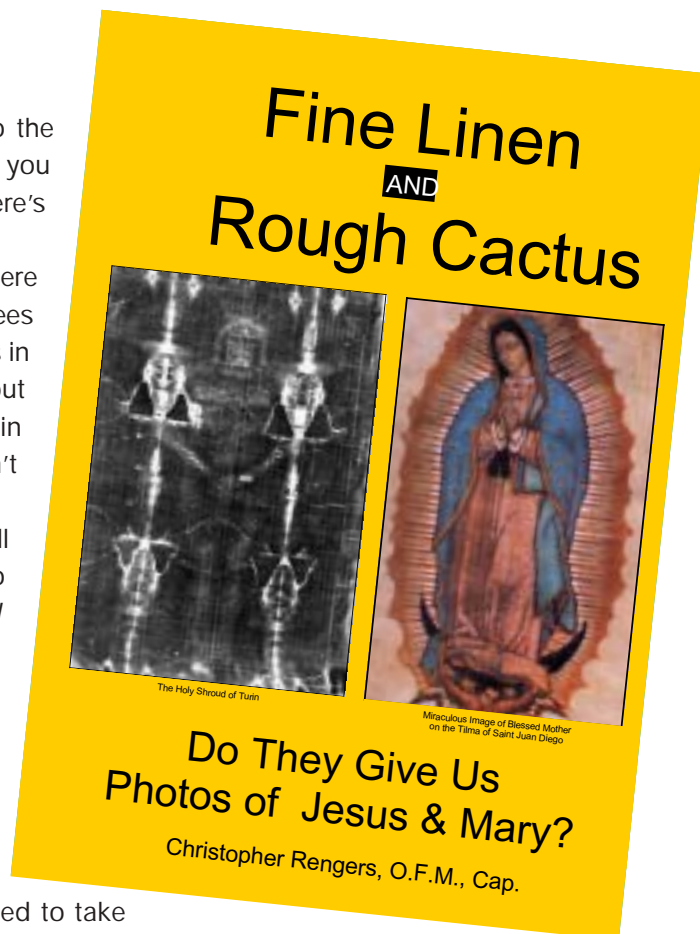
301-330-0047

When you enter the name "Our Lady of Guadalupe" into the more popular search engines of the internet's worldwide web, you instantly receive access to over 760,000 websites where there's some type of reference to this favorite Guild subject.

There are literally thousands of places on the internet where you can explore, learn and engage in dialogue with other devotees about the occurrences of the 16th century Guadalupan events in Mexico. Yet in spite of such an explosion of information about the miraculous appearances of Our Lady to Saint Juan Diego in 1531, one can still hear in a suburban Maryland parish "I don't think I know much about Guadalupe... tell me more."

The subject of Guadalupe would seem to have been well covered by now. Not so. There is still so much to explore, so many more souls walking around who *want to know* and *need to know* about the extraordinary events that led to the greatest number of "conversions to the Catholic Faith" (or *any* faith for that matter) in all of recorded history.

There is still much to do in bringing the Guadalupan story to the people of the world, to our own continent. Just as Saint Juan Diego learned that it was *he*, not anyone else, who was chosen to cooperate with Our Lord's Mother in fulfilling heaven's mission, we too are being perpetually called to take the Guadalupe message to the world. A new offering from Father Christopher Rengers, O.F.M., Cap., can help us in that effort.



(continued on page 31)

Rev. Jacob Joerger, O.P., Co-Founder of the Guild



Father Joerger, a Dominican priest, was originally from New Mexico, and it is here where his deep devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe and association with Bishop Hastrich began. Because he was fluent in Spanish, Father Joerger came to Chicago to help immigrants from Mexico and the southwest adjust to life in America. While administering to newcomers in the U.S., he became dedicated to building a shrine to Our Lady of Guadalupe at St. Pius Church in Chicago where he served.

Father Joerger was deeply involved in the formation of the Queen of the Americas Guild, and immersed himself in the religious aspects of the new organization. He was dedicated to sharing the miracle of Our Lady, and was expert at bridging the religious and secular challenges of running the Guild.

For several years, Father Joerger lived and worked at the Basilica as the English speaking coordinator. It was with Father Joerger's help during his time at the Basilica that Guild President Frank Smoczynski was able to obtain high quality photographs of St. Juan Diego's tilma.

Sadly, Fr. Joerger passed away last year. Guild President Frank Smoczynski says of Father Joerger, "To me, and to the Guild, he was a friend, a companion, and a guide. He was one of the best supporters the Guild ever had."

Fine Linen... (continued from page 30)

Father Rengers' new book, *Fine Linen and Rough Cactus: Do They Give Us Photos of Jesus and Mary?* (LaScala Publishing, 2005) explores two sacred images. The Shroud of Turin, the linen burial cloth long-venerated as being that of our Lord, and the Tilma of Guadalupe, the miraculous image found on the maguey-cactus cloak of Saint Juan Diego. Father Christopher's exploration of these divine images brings new revelations and evidence supporting the recognition of these sacred likenesses as being actual photographs of our Savior and His Mother.

Long before mankind had a yearning to capture and preserve the marvelous elements of God's creation, natural phenomena provided methods for a number of images to be grabbed in their moment-of-time and held for future generations. We've all seen the animals, insects and plant life preserved in pieces of amber, or embedded in rock and lava where we could know precisely how that being or created object looked millions of years ago. Whereas these are exciting discoveries, they wouldn't be considered *supernatural* or miraculous.

We don't use the word *photography* to describe these means of capture, but in fact, what we see in the museum setting, in the encyclopedia; under the microscope is indeed a photograph: an *exact and precise* picture of the life-form, just as it existed centuries before.

Recounting past and recent medical and scientific research that has dotted the timeline of both images (the Shroud of Turin and the Tilma of Guadalupe), Father

Christopher provides convincing evidence that shows the reader these images *are* expressions of photography. This is accomplished while maintaining the gentle dignity and significance of the messages attached to the two images which have been handed down to us through time.

Each of us has a story where Our Lady or her Son made their presence known in our lives. Some are blessed to have a story about their first pilgrimage to a Marian Shrine, perhaps even to Guadalupe in Mexico City. Father Christopher's exploration of the images of the Shroud of Turin and the Tilma of St. Juan Diego revive those personal encounters we carry in our memories and hearts. He provides a different way of taking the Guadalupan pilgrimage and for renewing the presence felt when one is embraced by the 474-year old image of Our Lady.

Father Christopher's *Fine Linen and Rough Cactus* takes us to the places in time, to the events, to the very people who were and are the instruments of God's Holy Plan. In a remarkable way we are allowed to know Our Lord and His Mother in a very visual encounter, to observe and to truly *see them* as they were and as they are.

Fine Linen and Rough Cactus: Do They Give Us Photos of Jesus and Mary by Father Christopher Rengers, O.F.M., Cap. is currently in production with an anticipated Fall of 2005 release from LaScala Publishing. For more information contact Rus Wester: P.O. Box 87403, Montgomery Village, Maryland 20886 or by Email: write4ewe@verizon.net

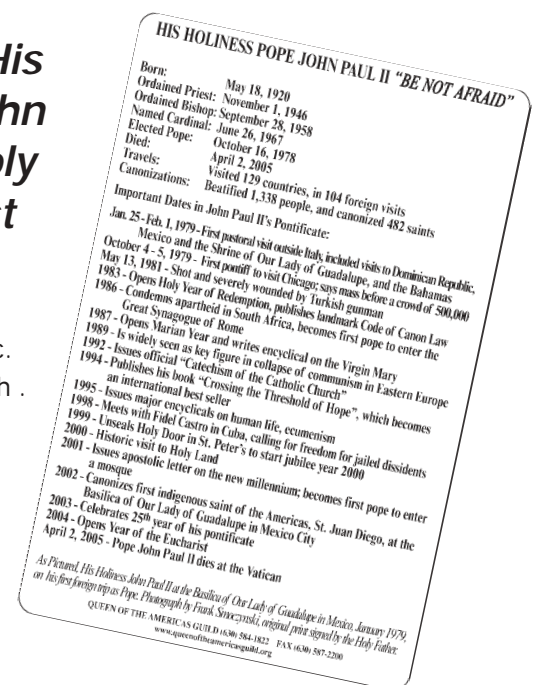


Now Available – His Holiness Pope John Paul II Tribute Holy Card – “The First Blessing”

3" x 4.5" Laminated plastic.
Currently available in English.

Coming soon –
Spanish and Polish.

Please call the Guild at
630-584-1822
for more details
or to place your order.



May God Bless the Queen of the Americas Guild

By The Most Reverend Raymond L. Burke, Archbishop of Saint Louis

Our late and most beloved Pope John Paul II repeatedly called us to the new evangelization, that is, to live our Catholic faith with the clarity and courage of the first disciples of our Lord Jesus and the first missionaries to our nation, in a society which, although it bears the title of Christian, is profoundly pagan. He reminded us that the state of society today is not so different from the society which the first disciples and first missionaries encountered, namely a society which does not know Christ and His saving presence in the Church.

In his exhortation to the new evangelization, addressed to the nations of America, Pope John Paul II reminded us of the extraordinary help which is ours in carrying out the new evangelization: the example and the intercession of the Mother of God, under her title of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mother of America and Star of the New Evangelization. Our Blessed Mother is indeed the Star leading us to Christ Who alone is our salvation.

When a delegation from the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City visited Pope Benedict XIV in the 18th century, presenting him with a copy of the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe from the tilma of Saint Juan Diego and recounting for him the story of her apparitions, the Holy Father fell to his knees, exclaiming in the words of the Psalmist: "*Non fecit taliter omni nationi* (God has not done thus for every nation)" (Ps 147:20).

God has indeed favored the continent of America in an extraordinary way through the apparitions and the message of the Mother of God to Saint Juan Diego and his uncle Juan Bernardino, and, through Saint Juan Diego and his tilma, to Bishop Juan de Zumárraga and his servants, and to countless pilgrims down the centuries since her apparitions.

Sadly, many of the faithful of America know very little of Our Lady of Guadalupe. For that reason, with the inspiration and help of many faithful, I undertook, while I was Bishop of La Crosse (February 22, 1995 to January 26, 2004), the building of a shrine to the honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe as means for Our Lady to touch the hearts of many pilgrims, especially of North America. Thank God, even though I have been transferred to Saint Louis, I am able, also with much support from the faithful of Saint Louis, to continue the work of the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe at La Crosse.

The Queen of the Americas Guild has been laboring now for 25 years to make known the apparitions and message of Our Lady of Guadalupe, especially by supporting the publication of information and prayer cards, and by helping pilgrims to visit Our Lady at her Shrine in Mexico City.

It has been my honor to be associated with the Queen of the Americas Guild over the past few years. On the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Guild, I salute, in a special way, Mr. Frank E. Smoczynski, the President, and all who work with him.

At the same time, I recall to memory, with deepest gratitude, the Most Reverend Jerome Hastrich who labored so tirelessly in the founding of the Guild and its development. May God grant to him the reward of "the good and faithful servant."

I ask all of the readers of this annual newsletter to join me in giving support to the work of the Queen of the Americas Guild. Through your support, the Mother of God will speak to the hearts of many. She who is the Star of the New Evangelization will lead many to Christ, so that they, with Christ, may transform their lives and our world.

May God bless the Queen of the Americas Guild! May God bless you!

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



The Most Reverent Raymond L. Burke, D.D., J.C.D. would like to extend an invitation to join him at the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in La Crosse, Wisconsin, August 4 – 5, 2005. As founder of the shrine, Archbishop Burke will share the story behind the development of the shrine, as well as his extensive knowledge and devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity!

Join us and Share the Miracle!

A Very Special Opportunity

The Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in La Crosse, Wisconsin, is becoming an important pilgrimage destination for those devoted to Our Lady. The Queen of the Americas Guild is pleased to announce that it will be co-sponsoring a conference at the Shrine on August 5th and 6th.

Archbishop Raymond L. Burke, founder of the shrine and a member of the Queen of the Americas Guild Board of Directors, will be joining the group for an inspirational talk and dinner as well as celebration of Mass at the Shrine's church.

Other speakers and Guild board members will be on hand to share their love of Our Lady. Activities will include a steamboat ride on the Mississippi (optional), tours of the Shrine and a lunch buffet at the Shrine's full service restaurant, Casa Mariana.

Please consider joining us for this first ever visit to the Shrine. Learn more about the Shrine, the miracle of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and the Queen of the Americas Guild.

Space will be limited, and hotel rooms will be in short supply. Make your reservation early.

For more information or to make your reservation for the pilgrimage, call Sr. Christa Marie, Executive Director of the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe at 608-788-8601, or call Rebecca Nichols at the Queen of the Americas Guild at 630-584-1822.

To learn more about the Shrine, visit the shrine's web site at

shrineofourladyofguadalupe.org



Conference Schedule

Thursday, August 4

Arrival for early comers

Registration and Social Hour 7 – 8 p.m.
(at local hotel)

Friday, August 5

Board member meeting 8:00 - 12:00

Steamboat ride on the Mississippi 11:00 a.m.
Or free morning to explore La Crosse

Registration and tour of the Shrine 1:00 p.m.
and overview of the conference

Welcome by Queen of the Americas 1:30 p.m.
Guild President Frank Smoczynski

Adoration Hour at the Shrine/Confessions 2:00 p.m.

Afternoon Break - refreshments

Open 3:15 p.m.

Holy Mass – Celebrant Archbishop 4:30 p.m.
Raymond L. Burke

Dinner at Culina Mariana Café at the 5:30 p.m.
Shrine. Guest speaker: Archbishop Burke

Saturday, August 6

Continental Breakfast 8:30 a.m.

Address by Msgr. Hastrich 9:00 a.m.

Rosary for Pro-Life (Confessions) 10:30 a.m.

Holy Mass 11:00 a.m.

Lunch buffet at Culina Mariana 12:00 noon

Free time to walk the grounds, pray

Address by Fr. Richard Hogan 2:00 p.m.

Afternoon Break – refreshments 3:00 p.m.

Holy Hour and Benediction 3:30 p.m.

Dinner on your own

Optional Rosary 6:30 p.m.

Sunday, August 8

Closing Address by Frank Smoczynski 8:00 a.m.

Closing Mass at the Shrine 8:30 a.m.



Registration

Price is \$60/per person – includes meals per itinerary
\$30 Deposit is required to hold your reservation.

Reservations are taken on a first come, first served
basis until maximum capacity is reached.

Please send name, address and phone number,
along with deposit check payable to:
Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe
5250 Justin Rd.
La Crosse, WI 54601

According to its founder, Raymond L. Burke, former bishop of La Crosse, Wisconsin and now Archbishop of St. Louis, The Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe was established so that the message of God's merciful love toward His children of America, which the Mother of God entrusted to Saint Jan Diego in 1531, may be entrusted to us in our time.

Our Lady of Guadalupe is the Mother of America. By making a pilgrimage to her shrine, you will hear her message of divine mercy and hope.

The Shrine's mission is to pay homage to the Blessed Virgin Mary, under the title of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mother of America and Star of the New Evangelization,

...to honor Our Blessed Mother as the patroness of the Unborn,

... to be a fitting and efficacious instrument of the New

Evangelization,

... to be a place of sacramental encounter with Christ, especially in the Holy Eucharist Penance,

... to be a place of thanksgiving for God's many blessings, especially at the time of reception of the Sacraments or at personal milestones,

... to offer solace and strength to the physically and spiritually afflicted,

... to provide a place of rest and renewal for the weary,

... to educate adult Catholics in their faith and its practice,

... to apply to daily life the teachings and guidance of the Catholic Church, especially the words of Pope John Paul II.

The Shrine complex includes —

- The Shrine Church, now under construction, to be the heart of the Shrine where pilgrims can attend Holy Mass, participate in other devotions, and spend time in personal prayer.
- Our Mother of Good Counsel Votive Chapel where pilgrims may make an offering and request a candle. Reported to be the longest in the United States, the candle chapel contains 600 votive candles.
- The Pilgrim Center where pilgrims from far and near are welcomed to the Shrine. Holy Mass is celebrated regularly at the temporary chapel in the Pilgrim Center.
- The Grounds include rolling hillsides, open valleys and verdant fields, a place of peace and serenity.

About the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe

Fr. Richard Hogan



Born in Minneapolis, Rev. Richard M. Hogan graduated summa cum laude from the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul in 1973, then spent a year studying history at the University of Munich in Germany on a Fulbright grant. He earned an MA and a PhD in medieval history from the University of Minnesota. He was ordained a Roman Catholic priest in 1981.

Since his ordination, he has co-authored two books on the theology of Pope John Paul II with his classmate, the Rev. John M. Lavoie.

In these books, the two priests argue that Pope John Paul II has a new way of presenting the Catholic faith more appropriate to our century. Seeing the need to teach young people the Pope's new understanding of the faith, Fr. Hogan was one of the authors and editors of the Image of God series, a textbook program for use in Catholic religion programs for grade school children.

Listed here are some of the area hotels that are convenient to the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Prices quoted are based on availability at time of printing. Rates may vary. Early reservations are encouraged.

Stoney Creek Inn

3060 S. Kinney Coulee Road • Onalaska, WI 54650
(608) 781-3060
\$79 - \$299

Radisson Hotel La Crosse

200 Harborview Plaza • La Crosse, WI 54601
(608) 784-6680
\$129 - \$149

Holiday Inn & Suites

200 Pearl Street • La Crosse, WI 54601
(608) 784-4444
\$85 - \$105

Grandstay La Crosse

525 Front St. North • La Crosse, WI 54601
(608) 796-1615
\$54 - \$149

Baymont Inn La Crosse Onalaska

5377 N. Kinney Coulee Road • Onalaska, WI 54650
(608) 783-7191
\$72 - \$135

Bishop Madera Retires From The Military



Guild President Frank Smoczynski congratulates Bishop Madera on his retirement from the Military Services.

Most. Rev. Joseph J. Madera, M.Sp.S., Episcopal Moderator of the Queen of the Americas Guild, was honored in Washington, D.C. on the occasion of his retirement from the Military Services.

Bishop Madera was an Auxiliary Bishop for the Military Services, U.S.A., and spent many years traveling the globe in service to all our military personnel stationed worldwide. He has since moved to Sacramento, California, and will continue to be the Guild's Episcopal Moderator.

Bishop ListECKi Installed as Ninth Bishop of La Crosse

On March 1, Jerome E. ListECKi was solemnly installed as the ninth bishop of La Crosse. He succeeds his friend and former bishop Raymond L. Burke, now Archbishop of St. Louis, who attended the service. Also on hand was retired Bishop John J. Paul, the seventh bishop of La Crosse.

Bishop ListECKi was ordained a bishop in 2001 by Cardinal Francis E. George of Chicago and was an auxiliary bishop for the Archdiocese of Chicago until being installed in the La Crosse Diocese.

A native of Chicago, Bishop ListECKi was ordained a priest in 1973. He holds degrees in civil and canon law and is a retired lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserves.

Have Your Checked Your Mail?

During the last year or so, you may have received a request for your yearly membership donation to the Guild. We have instituted a program to remind our members yearly of the need for their financial support. The many activities of the Guild require a great deal of time and resources, and your \$30 membership is greatly needed and appreciated. As a not-for-profit organization, the Guild relies solely on donations to support its activities to promote the message of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

Please note that you will never be asked to donate more than once a year. Your mailing and donation information will be kept strictly confidential and will never be shared.

Remember, we are still working towards the goal of building a retreat center near the Basilica. Help us Share the Miracle!

Looking to the Future



Left to right: Frank Smoczynski, Ruth Sloan, Archbishop Raymond Burke, Bishop Joseph J. Madera, Steve Banaszak

As in any strong organization, the members of the Guild's Board of Directors periodically meet to look at what the group has accomplished in the past, where it is today, and where it wants to go in the future.

In September, Frank Smoczynski, Ruth Sloan, Archbishop Raymond L. Burke, Bishop Joseph J. Madera, and Steve Banaszak met in Washington, D.C. to look at the Queen of the Americas Guild today. They went through a formal planning process to assure that today's actions will take the Guild where it wants to be a year from now, five years from now, and even 30 years from now. They were led through this process by John Myrna of Myrna and Associates, Inc.

Three major issues on which the group focused were maintaining the strength of the board, moving forward with a plan for establishing the retreat center, and increasing membership through pro-active marketing efforts.

Sr. Marie Ramirez, M.C.M.



The Guild lost a dear friend when Sr. Marie Ramirez, M.C.M. passed away in San Antonio, Texas, on November 23. Sister Marie, formerly Mother Superior of the Cordi-Marian Sisters in Chicago, was a board member of the Guild for a number of years and offered valued support and wisdom.

Guild Shares Holy Cards During Spring Break Missions

The Queen of the Americas Guild recently had the pleasure of working with Brendan Kelly of College Compass, an organization that unites Catholic college students across the country and equips them to take the initiative to evangelize college life. Through Compass, Mr. Kelly is also involved in Spring Break Missions, which organizes and sponsors college students on mission trips to Mexico.

The most recent trip to Veracruz took place March 5th through 12th, 2005. Besides many charitable and evangelization activities, the students shared with the local youngsters hundreds of Our Lady of Guadalupe holy cards provided by the Queen of the Americas Guild. As you can see by the smiling faces, they were very much appreciated!



You can find more information about
College Compass
and Spring Break Missions at
www.collegecompass.org
or
www.springbreakmission.com

Now Available –

The New Learning Rosary

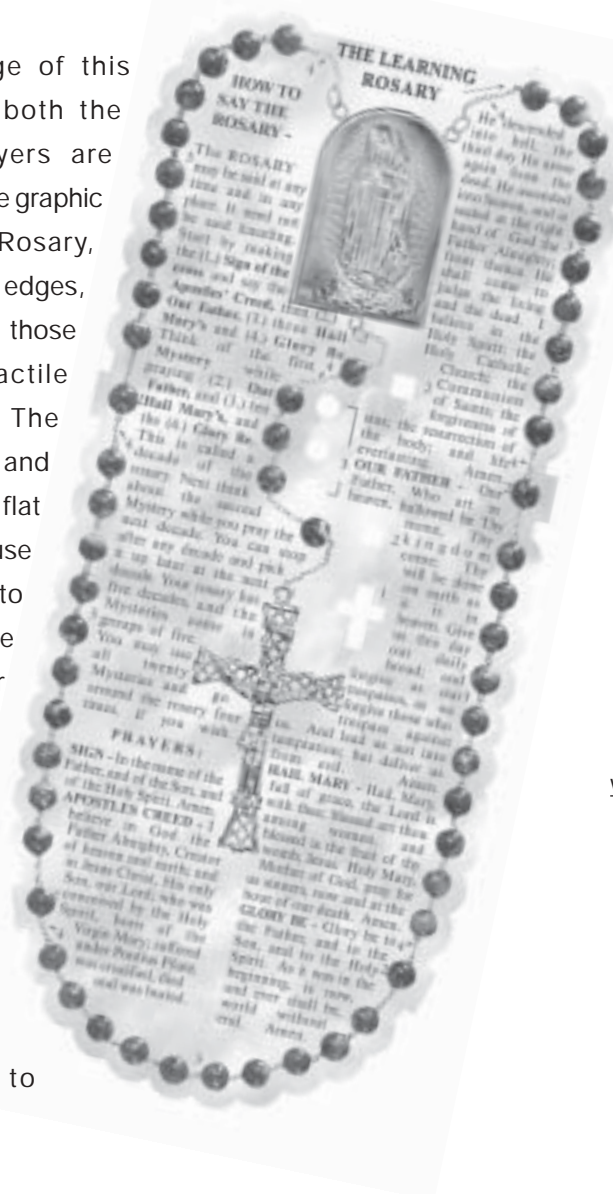
The Queen of the Americas Guild is dedicated to sharing the miracle of Our Lady of Guadalupe to the faithful everywhere.

As the rosary is clearly a Marian prayer, the Guild actively promotes saying the Rosary in devotion to Our Lady. His Holiness, Pope John Paul II, stated that the Rosary was his "favorite prayer." He issued his Apostolic Letter, *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, in 2002, detailing both the rosary's history and its place in current times.

This Learning Rosary has been completely redesigned to include the Luminous Mysteries as announced in His Holiness' Apostolic Letter in 2002. The Luminous Mysteries, along with the traditional Rosary meditations of the Joyful, Sorrowful, and Glorious Mysteries in the life of Jesus and Mary, are intended to enrich the traditional prayer, not to replace any part of it.

The great advantage of this teaching tool is that both the instructions and prayers are inclusive on one piece. The graphic representation of the Rosary, along with the contoured edges, make it an ideal tool for those who benefit from a tactile learning environment. The durability of the plastic and the convenience of the flat shape are also ideal for use in teaching the Rosary to large groups in remote areas as well as for everyday use.

Use this Learning Rosary as a tool for teaching others how to say the Rosary. It is particularly useful for young students, the sick or elderly, new Catholics, or those confined to institutions.



The Learning Rosary is available in Spanish as well as English from:
The Queen of the Americas Guild
P O Box 851
St. Charles, IL. 60174
Phone: (630) 584-1822
Fax (630) 587-2200
www.queenoftheamericasguild.org

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Wholesale
(orders 100 pieces and over)
\$1.00 each

Retail
\$2.00 each

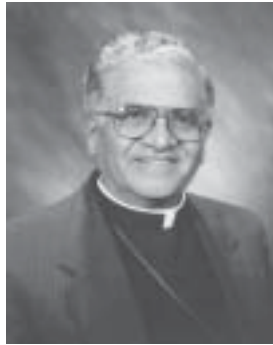
To the Mother's House

By Bishop Joseph J. Madera, M.Sp.S.

An invitation to the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in her original Shrine is extended to you once again. She expressed her desire to have a house where she could receive her children, listen to their wishes, pains and sorrows, hopes and expectations — a place where she could talk to them about God.

Children who live near their mother's house come to her in large - very large - numbers. They walk for several days and nights to experience her motherly tenderness. Others come on pilgrimage from far away. She receives each with personal concern, compassion and love.

They arrive delighted with the opportunity to be with their mother, there where she wants to receive them. They want to be face to face with their mother in contemplative love and joy. There is no need for words. They look at her in silence, and with a serene and hopeful glance they communicate with their mother and she responds to their



Bishop Madera

eager call with intense, tender and maternal tenderness.

Her children open to her the innermost part of their souls where reside all their joys, sorrows, hopes and expectations. The mother in turn pours upon them the peace and joy that can come only from the Lord.

All are heard and healed of their wounds. The Blessed Mother has poured upon their hearts the balm of her love. They are ready to return home.

Their souls are fully at peace with happiness and renewed hope. They now anxiously desire to share with others the beauty of the visit to their sweet mother who has taken the inmost joys and sufferings they carried in their hearts, and made them her own.

Accept the Queen of the Americas' invitation and join us this coming October 20th through 25th, 2005. We must go to our Blessed Mother to thank her for the gift of the new Pope the Holy Spirit gave us, Benedict XVI.

Juan Diego Reflects God's Love of the Poor

(Reprinted from the Houston Catholic Worker, September 1981)

In the Catholic tradition, there are many stories about the appearances of the Mother of Jesus. These stories tell about people to whom Mary has appeared, giving a specific message such as calling people to repentance or to build a shrine.

They are considered private revelations by the Church and not on par with Sacred Scripture. Thus they can be accepted or rejected by the faithful although most Catholics tend to see these revelations as part and parcel of Catholicism. One must not, of course impunge the Church's authority in these matters.

Historians and anthropologists give various reactions to these revelations. They tend to see them as rooted in hysteria and flourishing with Church connivance. Some Catholics see them as pious fantasies of the unlettered.

Whatever our beliefs, the message is clear: The Mother of Jesus appears only to humble, lowly lay people and always as an indigenous person. To some priests this points to authenticity. If the Church invented these stories, surely, they say, the Mother of Jesus would appear as a white woman to a Bishop of the western culture.

In the story of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mother Mary appears as an Indian woman to Juan Diego, a Christian Indian, and requests that a shrine be built.

The Church authorities refuse to take Juan Diego seriously, and he is treated rather shabbily, to say nothing of the oppression already suffered at the hands of the conquistadores who decimated the indigenous population and were the reason they rejected Christianity.

Finally, the good Bishop relents and says that he needs a sign to believe that the visions are authentic.

The sign is forthcoming when in the middle of winter Juan Diego unfolds his mantel in front of the Bishop and it is full of roses (Roses in December!). In addition, there is imprinted on his mantel the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe that we know today. The Bishop believed, and the shrine was built.

This story had great impact on the history of Mexico. Millions of Native Americans became Christian after these appearances, and they are the reason for the presence of Catholic culture in Mexico today.

The image of Our Lady of Guadalupe became a national banner and has been carried in many an event and even in battles.

The Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe has become a national shrine where millions of people go on pilgrimage.

Juan Diego was a poor and powerless Indian, yet at story's end he is the one who is rich and powerful in a gospel sense. It is for this reason that the Houston Catholic Worker is named Casa Juan Diego. We, too, are poor and powerless as are all of the Juan Diegos who come to us.

Ours is a pure faith operation. We are present here to serve the poor in the name of the Lord.

We do not expect the Lord or his Mother to appear to us, but we would like the Lord to appear in our lives and our work.

Even in working with the poor, we can be tempted to let our needs for success, visibility and influence dominate our thoughts, words, and actions to such an extent that we are trapped in the destructive spiral and upward mobility and thus lose our vocation. We want the simple message of the Gospel to speak in our lives. We ask your prayers that we may walk in the steps of Juan Diego.



2005 QUEEN OF THE AMERICAS GUILD 25th ANNIVERSARY PILGRIMAGE

Bishop Joseph J. Madera, Spiritual Leader
OCTOBER 20 – 25, 2005

Thursday, October 20

- Travel to Mexico City
- Transfer to the hotel (NH Krystal)
- Dinner at the hotel
- Welcome briefing / Guild introduction

Friday, October 21

- Breakfast at the hotel
- Gather in meeting room for Bishop Madera's explanation of the history of Our Lady of Guadalupe
- Travel to Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe for Mass on main altar at Basilica – concelebrated by Bishop Madera. Enjoy a guided tour of the Basilica and a close-up view of Our Lady's image from the walkway below.



Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe

- Box lunch
- Walk to the top of Tepeyac Hill where Our Lady appeared to St. Juan Diego
- Tour of Guadalupe museum and the remainder of the Basilica grounds
- View the retreat center property
- Stop on the way back to the hotel for a brief visit at the new Juan Diego Chapel.
- Return to the hotel for dinner

Saturday, October 22

- Breakfast at the hotel – check out of hotel
- Travel to Tlaxcala for Mass at the church of San Miguel del Milagro
- Visit to the Basilica de Ocotlan
- Continue to Puebla
- Check into the hotel (Holiday Inn Centro Historico) – lunch at hotel.



Puebla Cathedral

- Tour Santo Domingo Rosary Chapel, San Francisco church, other points of interest, short time for shopping at a local market
- Dinner at the hotel

Sunday, October 23

- Breakfast at the hotel, checkout
- Mass at Puebla Cathedral
- In depth tour of Cathedral, time to walk up the bell tower
- Lunch at a local restaurant
- Travel to Cholula, tour of the pyramid area with a chance to walk up to Our Lady of the Remedies church
- Possible quick stop at Santa Maria Tonanzintla



Santa Maria Tonanzintla

- Return to Mexico City, check in at hotel
- Dinner at the hotel
- Optional trip to Ballet Folklórico at the Palace of Fine Arts

Monday, October 24

- Travel to Tlaxiaco for Mass at the Shrine of the Fifth Apparition, where Our Lady appeared for the final time.
- Collection of miraculous holy water directly from the shrine's well
- Return to Mexico City for lunch at the hotel
- Tour The Plaza of the Three Cultures and the Church of Santiago de Tlatelco, where St. Juan Diego was baptized, and where he was headed when Our Lady appeared to him.
- Return to Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe for a final visit with Our Lady. Enjoy free time for personal reflection and prayer and to explore the beautiful Basilica grounds on your own.
- Dinner at hotel with closing remarks from Frank Smoczynski and Bishop Madera

Tuesday, October 25

- Breakfast at the hotel, checkout
- Transfer to Benito Juárez International airport for the flight home

For further information, contact:

Best Catholic Pilgrimages

1489 W. Palmetto Park Road #401

Boca Raton, FL. 33486

1-800-908-2378

www.bestcatholic.com

or

Queen of the Americas Guild

P.O. Box 851

St. Charles, IL 60174

(630) 584-1822

www.queenoftheamericasguild.org

Your Hotels

In Mexico City

NH Mexico City

Liverpool, 155; Zona Rosa

6600 Mexico D.F.

Tel. +52.5552.289928

nhmexicocity@nh-hotels.com

In Mexico City's most important financial, shopping and tourist area. Very close to the Independence Monument, the Paseo de la Reforma, and the National Anthropology and History Museum.

Cable TV, direct dial telephone, independent telephone line internet access, air conditioning, buffet breakfast, early riser breakfast, 24-hour room service, rooms adapted to the disabled.

In Puebla

Holiday Inn Centro Historico

2 Oriente 211 Centro Historico

Puebla, PUE 72000

Puebla

Laundry and dry cleaning service, ice machines, gymnasium, café, swimming pool, shuttle service, medical service

Historic, Inspiring Puebla

In past years, pilgrims attending the Queen of the Americas Guild conferences in Mexico City have been enthralled by their visits to the city of Puebla, but felt frustrated because there was so much to see and so little time.

This year, the conference will include an overnight stay in Puebla so the attendees may experience this historic city more fully.

Founded during colonial times, the city of Puebla is the capital of a state of the same name. In spite of a growing industrial base, Puebla has managed to preserve some of its old character, and it possesses some of the most important colonial works of art in Mexico.

The elegant and majestic Cathedral is the second largest in the country and many regard it as the finest in Mexico. Consecrated in 1649, it combines early baroque with the most refined architectural style of the Spanish Renaissance.

Somber on the outside, the inside features the fine main altar, the work of the famous neoclassical artist Manuel Tolsa and looks like a miniature Roman temple. Angel statues around the atrium symbolize the town whose full name is Puebla de los Angeles.

Almost next door is the **Casa de la Cultura**. Founded as a seminary in 1646, the cultural center has a sculpture garden, a tiny coffee shop, and an open air theater. Up the stairs is the splendid **Biblioteca Palafoxiana**, the oldest library in America.

Other highlights for the Puebla visitor include:

The Museo Bello, a fascinating and eclectic collection of decorative art amassed by a local industrialist in the 19th century.

The Museo Amparo with interactive videos giving information on the beautiful collection of pre-Hispanic artifacts.

The Templo de la Compania with its elaborate facade said to be the last resting place of China Poblana, a 17th century Asian princess whose statue surmounts a fountain in the town.

El Parian, Puebla's main tourist market, selling everything that is Mexican.

The church of **San Cristobal**, with its onyx windows and carved ceiling vault.

Santa Monica, an ex-convent now a museum of religious art.

Santa Rosa, another ex-convent, now a craft museum with a wonderful collection of the many crafts produced

in the State of Puebla. Every inch of the beautiful vaulted kitchen downstairs is covered with tiles.

The pride of Puebla's religious architecture is tucked inside the 16th century **Santo Domingo** church: the breathtaking **Capilla del Rosario** by the main altar is a dazzling mass of baroque gilt decoration.



Capilla del Rosario

Famous Talavera pottery is everywhere in Puebla. The technique was introduced to Mexico in the 16th century by Dominican monks from Talavera de la Reyna in Spain. Some workshops in and around Puebla give tours, explaining the process from beginning to end.

Travel Tips

What kind of clothing should I take?:

Casual dress is appropriate for nearly all occasions in Mexico. However, shorts should never be worn when entering a church. In bigger cities, evening attire tends to be dressy.

What else should I bring?

A pocket-size English/Spanish dictionary; camera and film; small appliances such as a hair dryer (Mexico's electrical current is 110 volts AC – the same as the U.S. and Canada.

Keep your travel documents and much of your cash and/or travelers checks in a safe place.

Is it safe to travel in Mexico?

Safety in Mexico City is comparable with other big cities. Store any valuables in your hotel's safe when possible, and keep a copy of your important document numbers in a safe place.

Where can I exchange my currency?

U.S. dollars are easily exchanged for pesos in banks, major hotels, airports and exchange houses. However, currency exchange is very often unnecessary, as the vast majority of stores and street vendors gladly accept U.S. currency.

Should I bring adapters for my small appliances?

Standard current is 100 volt AC as in the US. However, adapters are useful because three-prong outlets are not widely available.

Should I be concerned about the water?

Purified water is used in beverages and ice and for cooking in all big city hotels and restaurants. It is best to stick with bottled water and beverages without ice in outlying areas.

Health Tips:

- Follow good hygiene habits like washing your hands before you eat.
- Avoid eating from open-air food stands or buying food from street vendors.
- Avoid uncooked or un-pasteurized dairy products.
- Avoid drinking tap water, or from water fountains. Keep a bottle of purified water in your room.
- Eat lightly and ease into local eating and drinking habits gradually.
- Currently no vaccinations are needed to enter Mexico.
- Mexico has a nationalized healthcare system and almost every town and city in Mexico has either a national hospital or medical clinic. Before you leave home, check with your health insurance carrier. Chances are good that your insurance plan can cover you in Mexico.

A Land of Color and Beauty

Mexico City offers a feast of museums, religious and historical sites. Here are a few of the wonderful experiences to which you can treat yourself in this fascinating city:



Templo Mayor and Museo del Templo Mayor (Great Temple) – The most important religious structure in the Aztec capital, now under reconstruction.

Museo Nacional de Antropología – One of the top museums in the world, offering the single best introduction to the culture of Mexico.

Palacio de Bellas Artes – Opulent and dramatic, the Bellas Artes is the masterpiece of theaters in this architecturally rich city. The theater's curtain is a glass mosaic by Tiffany with a million pieces.



Palacio Nacional

Palacio Nacional and the Diego Rivera Murals – The National Palace stands on the site of Montezuma's palace. On the second floor are the fabulous Diego Rivera murals depicting the history of Mexico.

Casa de los Azulejos – The House of Tiles, one of Mexico City's most precious colonial gems.

Gran Hotel Ciudad de Mexico – One of the most splendid interiors of a downtown building, topped with a breathtaking 1908 stained glass canopy by Jacques Graber.

The Zocalo – One of the biggest public squares in the world, dominated by the Catedral Metropolitana and the Palacio Nacional.

Registration Form

The Path to Our Lady of Guadalupe The Queen of the Americas Guild October 20 through 25, 2005

Enclosed is my (our) reservation and deposit to secure my (our) place in the amount of \$250 per person, plus a non-refundable travel insurance premium of \$50 (land only) or \$65 (land and air) per person.

I understand the price is based on a group departure of 25 paying persons minimum, and I have read and understood the tour conditions.

This deposit is made payable to Best Catholic Pilgrimage

Land Only Price - \$895

Additional Air Fares

Departure from:

☐ Chicago - \$420

☐ New York \$490

☐ Phoenix - \$310

☐ Houston - \$290

☐ Los Angeles - \$385

☐ Other - _____

All prices are per person, double occupancy. Airline prices are based upon availability. Air tax and travel insurance premium not included in pilgrimage price.

Signature _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone () _____

Cell Phone () _____

Roommate _____



☐ I prefer single accommodations for additional \$235

Detach this form and mail with payment to:
Queen of the Americas Guild
c/o Best Catholic Pilgrimages
1489 W. Palmetto Park Road #401
Boca Raton, Florida 33486

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Requirements to Enter Mexico

The Government of Mexico requires that all U.S. citizens present proof of citizenship and photo identification for entry into Mexico. U.S. citizenship documents such as a certified copy (not a simple photocopy) of a U.S. birth certificate, a Naturalization Certificate, a Consular Report of Birth Abroad, or a Certificate of Citizenship are acceptable.

However, the U.S. Embassy recommends traveling with a valid U.S. passport to avoid delays or misunderstandings. Driver's permits, voter registration cards, affidavits and similar documents are not sufficient to prove citizenship for readmission to the United States.

U.S. citizens traveling as tourists beyond the 20-kilometer border zone or entering Mexico by air must pay

a fee to obtain a tourist card, also known as an FM-T, available from Mexican consulates, Mexican border crossing points, Mexican tourism offices and most airlines serving Mexico. The fee for the tourist card is generally included in the price of a plane ticket for air travelers.

Mexican law requires that any child under the age of 18, of any nationality, traveling into or out of Mexico, must carry notarized written permission from any parent not traveling with the child. The child must carry the original letter - not a faxed copy or scanned copy - as well as proof of the parent/child relationship (usually a birth certificate) and an original custody decree, if applicable.

For further information, go to the web at

<http://travel.state.gov/>

Web Site Update

Be sure to check the Queen of the Americas Guild web site often at

www.queenoftheamericasguild.org

We are constantly updating with the latest news and product information.

You can also find pilgrimage information, print out a registration form, or even send us an e-mail.

We'd love to hear from you!

Sharing the Miracle for 25 Years.

A Message From the President...

Frank Smoczynski



Twenty Fifth Anniversary of the Queen of the Americas Guild

In the past 25 years we have built the Queen of the Americas Guild into a center of information on Our Lady of Guadalupe. One of our main purposes has been to increase devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe. We have had over 35 major meetings, conferences, and pilgrimages to Mexico, bringing the miracle to as many people as possible. We established a center of Our Lady of Guadalupe in St. Charles, Illinois, as the operational and business office. All business functions such as accounting, membership, planning, marketing, fund raising, directing business, coordinating conferences and meetings, the management and production of the news magazine (which was a big job this year), and the coordination of the board of directors happens through this office.

In the last two years we have established a first-class web page, controlled out of St. Charles, which connects us with people all over the world. Our web page has the Guild history, product and pilgrimage information, a link to join our mailing list, and the brief history of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

Information is updated almost daily, and the site also includes links to other important sites, including the Vatican. In addition, a link to our e-mail address is available, so that you may contact us 24/7 on issues related to Our Lady of Guadalupe, or for any other information you might be interested in. Videos, DVD's and Powerpoint presentations are available for conferences. Religious music relating to Our Lady is also offered.

Other accomplishments

In looking back over the past 25 years and trying to measure what we were part of, we try to measure by how well known Our Lady of Guadalupe was 25 years ago. At that time, very few people in the U.S. knew anything about Our Lady of Guadalupe, except for the Spanish speaking people, including the Religious. Almost no images of Our Lady of Guadalupe hung in Catholic churches other than in the Southwest and California.

Our Lady of Guadalupe was rarely talked about as a major apparition in our lands. I say lands because, if you measure the continents, the U.S., Central and South America and Canada, you see that Mexico City is directly in the center of these lands. In those 25 years

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A Message From the President...

(continued from page 46)

that the Guild has existed, it has distributed over a million holy and devotional cards of Our Lady, the sacred image and other larger images suitable for framing.

The focus of the miracle was Our Lady's image that God imprinted on the tilma in 1531 and still exists today for all of us to see. We have taken high quality photos and used them in cards reproducing high quality detail. In effect, we are taking this image of the miracle and sharing it with you through a production of this card. Therefore, this is a continuation of this Miracle.

We always say, "Share the Miracle", and we are doing this by sharing these cards. Our Lady goes with her image. This is one way we spread the Miracle. We have helped people find larger size images for their churches and smaller versions for their homes, along with other related photos, religious images, and objects.

Another important resource would be books related to Our Lady of Guadalupe. We produce what we call "A Brief History of Our Lady of Guadalupe", and one of the books we highly recommend is the "Handbook on Guadalupe". We also help people find old books relating to this subject, and maintain our own library of books relating to Our Lady.

In addition to these physical things, we try to help people with any questions relating to Our Lady of Guadalupe and the miracle. We can't always answer your questions on the spot, but if we don't have an answer, we will always try to find one for you as quickly as we can. We have worked with the media over the years, and they come to us repeatedly.

We are happy to provide people printing books and magazine articles with information and graphics. Over the years, we have aligned ourselves with a great number of people and organizations that have helped

us in answering questions about Our Lady of Guadalupe, both historical and spiritual.

In 25 years, direct membership has gone from zero to many thousands registered and countless devotees dedicated to supporting our work.

We are fully operational within the Archdiocese of Rockford, Illinois, under the auspices of Bishop Thomas Doran. We are a not-for-profit organization, listed in the Official Catholic Directory.

Now that we look at the picture 25 years later, we find that most Catholics know of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and there are a great many more images of her across the U.S. and the world. We have seen Our Lady of Guadalupe in Rome, in Paris at Our Lady of Notre Dame, and at one of the side altars in the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C.

We found that we now have a greater understanding and knowledge of Our Lady of Guadalupe, both by the lay Catholics and by the Religious. We could say that we are blowing our own horn, but I believe that we have had a great deal to do with bringing Our Lady of Guadalupe to many people. A great many cards have been given out all over the world. Thousands were given out to the troops serving in the first Desert Storm, and also in the current war in Iraq. We have received thank you letters from people all over the world, and many more people have access to our services.

We can only promise that in the next 25 years, guided by our Board of Directors and our Episcopal Moderators, we will continue to spread the miracle of Guadalupe and bring Our Lady to more and more people across the world. Please continue to help us do this important work.

Whatever help you can give would be very much appreciated. We exist because of your prayers and donations.

I would like to thank everyone who has been involved with the Queen of the Americas Guild for their dedication and support throughout the last 25 years. My heartfelt gratitude goes to the founders, board of directors, staff, members, and especially my wife Beverly for her continued support.

– Frank E. Smoczynski

