



A Week at A Glance...12/11/2017 - 12/15/2017

On **Tuesday, December 12, 2017**, our Church will celebrate the **Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe**. This is in remembrance of the apparition of the Blessed Mother to a fifty-seven year old Aztec peasant named **Juan Diego Cuauhtlatatzin** that began on December 9th. It was the first known apparition to occur in the Americas.

On the morning of December 9, 1531, Juan Diego, a widower, who was still mourning the death of his wife, Maria Lucia, was walking near what is now Mexico City (Tepeyac Hill) when he came upon an apparition of a "Maiden" who was dressed in traditional Aztec clothing. He soon came to recognize her as the Virgin Mary, who spoke to him, instructing him to go to the local bishop, Bishop Zumarraga, a Franciscan, to ask that a church be built there in her honor. Juan Diego did what Mary asked of him, but the bishop, who did not understand the Indian dialect very well, did not believe his story. He wanted more evidence. Juan Diego went to Mary with the bishop's request. Mary asked him to return the next day and she would give him a sign.

After his departure from the Blessed Mother, Juan Diego learned that his uncle was gravely ill and wanted to see a priest. The next day, Juan Diego hurried to find a priest for his uncle. He did not return to Tepeyac Hill out of fear that Mary's visit would keep him from finding a priest in time to see his uncle before his death. Mary met Juan as he made his way to find the priest. When he told her the reason he did not meet her on the hill, Mary responded "*Am I not your Mother? Are you not under my protection? Do not let your uncle's illness trouble you, because he will not die. He is already well.*"

Mary instructed Juan Diego to go to the top of Tepeyac Hill. There he discovered beautiful Castilian roses, which were neither in season nor native to the region, growing on the rocky, craggy hillside. Juan Diego gathered as many as he could in his tilma (*a burlap-type cloak*) and brought them to Mary, who arranged them and instructed him to take them to the bishop.

When Juan Diego arrived at the bishop's residence and opened his cloak, the flowers fell to the floor and on the surface of the tilma was the image that has come to be known as "Our Lady of Guadalupe." Mary had spoken to Juan Diego in his native language, *Nahuatl*, and in this same language he gave the bishop further instructions, using her proper name, *Coatlaxopeuh*, (pronounced quatlaxupe) for the image. The name means "*The one who crushes the serpent.*" The bishop understood the name to be *Guadalupe*, which has a similar sound, and was already the name of a shrine honoring Mary in Spain.

Within seven years, through the miracle of this apparition, nine million Aztecs were converted to the Catholic faith. This was one of the greatest conversions in the shortest period of time in the history of Christianity.

Today, the tilma, made primarily of rough cactus fibers and typically of poor quality, hangs in the basilica built to honor Mary in Mexico City. The silken image imprinted on the tilma by Mary, herself remains undefiled. This defies scientific explanation, as it should have disintegrated centuries

ago. In 1979, scientists analyzed the cloak and discovered that it maintains a constant temperature of 98.6 degrees Fahrenheit, the same as that of a living human. A Mexican doctor also examined the tilma. He concluded that the dimensions of Mary's body in the image were that of an expectant mother due quite soon. Finally, one of the most common attributions lie with in the Blessed Mother's eyes. Tests, using magnification, show, reflected in both eyes, the images of 13 people. This appears to be a snapshot of Juan Diego and the people who were present as he unfurled his tilma before the bishop.

The shrine that was subsequently built on the spot of Mary's apparition, is where the original tilma can still be seen. It remains one of the most popular pilgrimage sites in the world. Our Lady's image on the tilma of Juan Diego, now Saint Juan Diego, remains an on-going sign of her love for her children. *Hail Mary full of Grace...*

FOSTER GIFTS: If you were purchasing gifts for the foster family that was sent out for grades 3 – 8, please return them by this Friday so I know what I may still have to purchase.

BAKE SALE: Thank you to everyone who baked and supported the bake sale. We earned about \$200 to put towards either the foster gifts or food for the Survival Center.

ALTERNATIVE STRUCTURED LEARNING DAY PROGRAM: We will be taking part in this program. A letter will be attached to this email as well as a hard copy was sent home today. In case we do not have school tomorrow, students have assignments that they need to complete at home. Please look at the letter that was sent home.

PARENT PORTAL: I sent out an email last week about the parent portal for student's grades. There is also a link on the website to access this. If you did not receive the email, you can contact us and we will give you your username and password.

LOTTERY CALENDARS: I do not have an updated amount at this time, but people are still taking out calendars so we greatly appreciate it.

CAREER DAY: We will be offering another Career Day for students this school year on Wednesday, May 9th. We hope that many of you will be able to be a part of this day. The students learned about many different careers that they may not have known about. If you are able to take the time and join us, please let me know. It will probably run a couple of hours in the morning.

CHRISTMAS MUSICAL FOR K - 8: We will have our Christmas musical for grades K – 8 on Tuesday, December 19th at 12:30 in the Pastoral Center.

CHRISTMAS MUSICAL FOR NURSERY SCHOOL: The Christmas musical for nursery school is Thursday, December 21st at 9:00 am. Since we have an early release, students will go home right after the show. All students are welcome to attend.

CHRISTMAS CHOIR: Students in grades 2 – 8, please consider joining the Christmas choir for 4:00 pm Christmas Eve mass. Practices will be on Mondays through December 18th from, 2 – 3 pm. If you are interested, it's not too late to join.

VOLUNTEER NEEDED: Looking for someone to help out from 8:30 – 10:00 in the morning. If you are interested, please give me a call. Thank you.

VOLUNTEER/CORI INFORMATION: If you are interested in volunteering this year, you will need to either attend one of our workshops which is about 3 hours long or view the program online which will be a little over an hour. You will also sign off on the Code of Conduct at the same time. If you even think that you may go on a field trip or volunteer, please go on the site and watch the videos. Your CORIs also need to be up to date. If you were in need of a CORI update, it was put in your back to school packet that the students brought home today. The site is

https://www.virtusonline.org/virtus/reg_2.cfm?theme=0&org=37495. If you sign up and take part of the course and then decide you need to finish this later you would actually go to **virtusonline.org** and then put in your username and password and finish the course.

CHRISTMAS BREAK: We will have an early release on Thursday, December 21st at 11:00 am. We will offer extended care on this day if the need is there. Please let Mrs. Flynn know if you are in need of it to see if we have enough students to offer it..

LUNCH TOKENS: Tokens can be purchased on the following days: December 20 (Wednesday); January 11, 26; February 9; March 2, 16, 29 (Thursday); April 13; May 4, 18; June 1.

FUNDRAISER INFORMATION

GIFT CARD ORDERS: Gift cards should be in soon. We will send them home or call when they are in.

TASTE OF WESTERN MA DINING BOOKS: PLEASE RETURN THE BOOK IF YOU ARE NOT INTERESTED IN PURCHASING IT. THANK YOU. Taste of Western Mass Dining and Activity books were sent home to every family. If you do not want to purchase it, please send it back in the bag it came in. If you are interested in purchasing it, please send it back with \$25. They make great Christmas gifts. If you are interested in purchasing more, please send in the paperwork or a note and we will send it home with your child.

STOP AND SHOP: Our school is participating in the A+ School Rewards program. Please register your card at Stop and Shop or online to help raise money for the school. You can either visit www.stopandshop.com and select Savings and Rewards and follow the prompts to create your account. You will need your 13 digit Stop and Shop card number and our school ID (05181) or if you do not know your card number you can call 1-877-366-2668 and choose option #1. If you registered last year, you do not need to register your card again. You can track the number of points you are earning for our school by checking your grocery receipt starting October 6 2017 – March 15, 2018.

COLLECTIONS

BOXTOPS/CAMPBELL UPCs/INK CARTRIDGES: We continue to ask for your support with the Box Tops, Campbell UPCs, Ink Cartridges

BOTTLES AND CANS: We are collecting clean bottles and cans with deposits. They can be dropped off in the containers in the parking lot by the other side of the dumpster.

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

SPANISH CLUB: Fridays from 2:00 – 3:00 pm for grades 5 – 8.

SEWING: Fridays from 2:00 – 3:30 pm.

MAD SCIENCE: Mad Science ends Wednesday, December 20th.

JUDO/JUTSU: Please talk to your child(ren) about joining the Judo class on Tuesdays and Thursdays after school. They can come out and try it, and if they like it they can join. It runs from 2:00 – 3:00 pm.

God bless,
Shelly Rose, Principal