

QUEEN OF THE AMERICAS GUILD
VOTIVE MASS OF SAINT JUAN DIEGO
SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE, LA CROSSE
JULY 30, 2010

First Reading: *Sir* 3:17-24

Responsorial Psalm: *Ps* 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9, 10-11

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

Alleluia Verse: *Mt* 11:25

Gospel: *Mt* 11:25-30

HOMILY

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

As members of the Queen of the Americas Guild and pilgrims to the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe, we rightly enter into our annual days together by uniting ourselves to Our Lord Jesus Christ in His Eucharistic Sacrifice. By our participation in the Holy Mass, we, with childlike confidence, are responding directly to the invitation of Our Lord: “Come to me, all you labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest” (*Mt* 11:28).

All of us know the labor and burden of daily life in Christ, the labor and burden of turning away, each day, from sin in our lives, in order that we may turn to Christ, offering our lives to Him in pure and selfless love. We also know, thanks to the generous gift of God’s grace in our souls, the truth of Our Lord’s promise that, in the midst of the struggle to live faithfully for Him, we find rest in His glorious pierced Heart which is ever open to receive us. We find that rest, most of all, in the Holy Eucharist, in the lifting up of our hearts to His glorious pierced Heart as He makes present for us, ever anew, the outpouring of His life for us on Calvary. Although we struggle, in order to follow Christ faithfully, we discover, in the struggle, the truth of Our Lord’s reassuring words: “For my yoke is easy, and my burden light” (*Mt* 11:30).

Although we experience difficulty in resisting the temptation to sin and in giving up our own pleasure and convenience for the sake of loving selflessly God and our neighbor, we find, in the purification of our hearts and our elevation of them to Christ, deep and abiding joy and peace, the joy and peace which are an anticipation of the eternal joy and peace which Our Lord

has prepared for us in our lasting home of Heaven. It is, most of all, in His Eucharistic Sacrifice that Our Lord Jesus Christ, God the Son Incarnate, reveals to us all that the Father wishes us to know about Him and His plan for our eternal salvation. When we, with humble trust, lift up our poor, doubting and sinful hearts to Our Lord, He receives them into His own Sacred Heart. In His glorious pierced Heart, He purifies our hearts of sin and fills them with His unceasing and immeasurable love, so that we, in turn, may love God and our neighbor faithfully and unconditionally.

Saint Juan Diego, the faithful messenger of Our Lady of Guadalupe, shows us the way to place our hearts into the Sacred Heart of Jesus, to know the love of God for us, above all, in the Holy Eucharist, and to respond to His love with love of Him and our neighbor. Saint Juan Diego shows us the way to Christ, which he learned at the feet of the Mother of God, Our Lady of Guadalupe. Saint Juan Diego teaches us to imitate his example of childlike trust in the Mother of God and her Divine Son by heeding the admonitions of the inspired author of the *Book of Sirach*:

Humble yourself the more, the greater you are,

and you will find favor with God....

What is too sublime for you, seek not,

into things beyond your strength search not.

What is committed to you, attend to; (*Sir* 3:18, and 21-22).

As the Holy Scriptures teach us, it is enough for us to know that we are doing God's will. Our attention must be directed to what God has committed to us, to our vocation in life and our particular work in the world. Other concerns distract us from our life in Christ and uselessly consume time and energy which should be devoted to living our vocation and to fulfilling the responsibilities of our work.

Consider the humility and trust which Saint Juan Diego demonstrated in carrying out the mission confided to him by Our Lady of Guadalupe. He naturally questioned his abilities to accomplish what Our Lady was asking; he was a simple man and judged himself to be out of place in bringing the important request of the Mother of God to the Bishop. When, at first, he seemed to fail in carrying out the mission and when he was soon faced with the grave illness of

his uncle, he asked Our Lady to choose a different messenger and even tried to avoid her in order to delay doing what she was asking.

Before these temptations, Our Lady assured him that he was her chosen messenger. Listen to her words to him, which are unmistakable in their meaning:

But it is very necessary that you plead my cause and, with your help and through your mediation, that my will be fulfilled (*Nican Mopohua*, no. 59).

Regarding his worry about the grave illness of his uncle, Juan Bernardino, Our Lady assured him that she was watching over him, protecting him, and interceding for him. Listen once again to her words:

Am I not here, I, who am your mother? Are you not under my shadow and protection? Am I not the source of your joy? Are you not in the hollow of my mantle, in the crossing of my arms? Do you need anything more? (*Nican Mopohua*, no. 119).

Saint Juan Diego, trusting in the words of the Mother of God, abandoned himself to doing everything that she was asking of him, challenging and difficult as the mission was. By humbly attending to Our Lady's instructions, he brought a great blessing to his uncle and to all the people. The blessing of his cooperation with the will of God, as it was made known to him by Our Lady of Guadalupe, continues to reach us today, as we honor him, strive to imitate him, and ask the help of his prayers.

Through our spiritual friendship with Saint Juan Diego, we are led to Our Lady of Guadalupe who, in turn, leads us to the Heart of her Divine Son. Striving to imitate the example of his humility and trust, we draw ever closer to the Mother of God who intercedes for us, that we may do God's will in all things. Through our spiritual friendship with the Virgin of Guadalupe and Saint Juan Diego, we are inspired and strengthened to know the truth about our life in Christ, taught to us by Saint Paul. God indeed has chosen us whom the world may consider to be foolish, lowly and weak, in order that those who consider themselves to be wise, noble and strong might know and love Christ Who alone is "for us wisdom from God, as well as righteousness, sanctification and redemption" (*1 Cor* 1:30).

Following the example of Saint Juan Diego, placing ourselves with trust into the all-loving arms of the Virgin of Guadalupe, let us now, in the Eucharistic Sacrifice, place our hearts into the glorious, pierced Heart of Jesus. Uniting our hearts to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in His Eucharistic Sacrifice, we will find the rest and strength we need to be humble and obedient in doing all that God asks of us. Resting in the glorious pierced Heart of Jesus, let us, through the intercession of Our Lady of Guadalupe and Saint Juan Diego, ask Our Eucharistic Lord to bless the members and the work of the Queen of the Americas Guild, and to bless all pilgrims to this holy place dedicated to Our Lady, His Mother whom He has given to us as our Mother.

Heart of Jesus, salvation of those who trust in You, have mercy on us!

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

Saint Juan Diego, pray for us!