

12. December 2019

“Our Lady of Guadalupe”

Lk 1, 39- 48

Mary set out at that time and went as quickly as she could into the hill country to a town in Judah. She went into Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth. Now it happened that as soon as Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. She gave a loud cry and said, 'Of all women you are the most blessed, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. Why should I be honoured with a visit from the mother of my Lord? Look, the moment your greeting reached my ears, the child in my womb leapt for joy. Yes, blessed is she who believed that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled.' And Mary said: My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour; because he has looked upon the humiliation of his servant. Yes, from now onwards all generations will call me blessed.

On this day I would like to send a special greeting to Mexico, because today this day cannot pass without thinking of the Patroness of America, whose feast is celebrated especially in Mexico!

And indeed, the Virgin Mary, with her simple and yet so wonderful appearance, has made the martial Aztecs convert to the Catholic faith. The love of the Virgin Mary of Guadalupe is deeply rooted in the hearts of the Mexicans, and during my visits to this country, I was able to share in this love! Everywhere in this country the promise is fulfilled, which Mary herself pronounced: "*Behold, henceforth all the generations will bless me.*" (Lk 1,48)

And this happens rightly, for where has a man, except the Lord, who is God and man, surrendered unconditionally to God and to his plan of salvation as it did our Lady? No way was too far for her, no burden too heavy and no task too great to serve the Lord!

With the apparition in Guadalupe, we see that the mission of the Blessed Virgin Mary continues from heaven, for she has fulfilled the Lord's will to lead those to God who were converted before, by the work of the missionaries, only to a small number, and after her apparition millions of Indians came to faith!

God looked at Mary, and with what great love he looked to his daughter, to whom he entrusted his son! He also offers us this communion of love, for we all can become sons and daughters of the faith, all of us can carry Christ spiritually into this world. We can be sure that this is exactly where the Virgin wants to take us! What can she want more than that her son will be recognized and loved?

And Mexico?

Mexico must be faithful to its special heritage and that is to do what the Virgin in Cana said to the servants: *"Do whatever he tells you."* (Jn 2,5) Then the Lord, at her intercession, can turn water into wine and make Mexico a great sign of faith! May Mexico, as well as the other Latin American countries, remain faithful to the faith and, under the special protection of the Virgin Mary, not be disturbed by the antichristian darkness, which is spreading and infiltrating the Church!

The apparition of the Virgin Mary of Guadalupe is also a wonderful sign of true inculturation. She appeared as an Indian woman to the Indio Juan. There were many clues in her apparition that the Aztecs understood: the ribbon she girds indicates she is pregnant; although her open hair in Indian culture was the mark of a virgin, the four-petalled flower on her body, where her child rests, symbolizes the deity for the Aztecs; the medallion on her neck, identical in nature with those who wore the statues of the Aztecs' gods and should give them life. But instead of the Aztec Quincune, who was to be seen in the medallions of the statues, is to see the cross, the symbol of true life, her star-embroidered cape resembles those of the highest Tlatoanis, thus showing the importance and nobility of the wearer, to name just a few hints.

She told the Indio Juan, "I am the mother of the true God." Thus, after her appearance, Indians were led in large numbers to the Christian faith.

The difference to the Pachamamaidolatry, which took place in the Vatican, is obvious. The apparition of the Virgin of Guadalupe is, as it were, a heavenly inculturation in the service of Christianization, while the Pachamama ritual is the integration of a pagan idol into the true cult of the faith, thus a perversion.

In one of the most beautiful hymns to the Mother of the Lord, the Hymnos Akathistos, it says: *"To Egypt, you carried the fire of truth, the darkness of delusion has evaporated."*

Then some greetings to the Mother of God are expressing:

Hail, you dethroned the idolized idols

Hail, you sea, you devoured the world of the pharaohs

Hail you sign, which led those who were in darkness

May our Lady of Guadalupe support our faith and help people to find their way out of their confusion and to meet the true God.