



**Our Lady of Guadalupe,
Empress of the Americas,
Patroness of the
Knights of Columbus**

Pray for us!

St. Juan Diego

Pray for us!

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Knights of Columbus
Who is
Saint Juan Diego?



Faith in Action

Faith

Biography of Saint Juan Diego

Juan Diego was born in the town of Cuautitlán around 1474. In 1524, with the arrival of the first Franciscan missionaries in Mexico, Juan Diego embraced the Christian faith and was baptized along with his wife, María Lucia, and his uncle, Juan Bernardino.

On Saturday, December 9, 1531, Juan Diego was on his way to Tlatelolco to attend catechism when Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared to him. She asked him to be her messenger and build a shrine in the valley of Tepeyac. There, she could offer all her love in the form of her Son, Jesus Christ. Our Lady asked Juan Diego to receive the local bishop's approval for the shrine. On December 10, the head of the Church in Mexico, Bishop Juan de Zumárraga, asked for a sign to believe that it was really Our Lady who appeared. Our Lady asked Juan Diego to go back to Tepeyac so that she could give him the sign that had been requested.

The next day, Juan Diego was unable to meet with Our Lady because he had to take care of his uncle, Juan Bernardino, who was gravely ill. Then, on December 12, Juan Diego departed to Tlatelolco to get a priest for him. Very distressed, he sought to avoid his

meeting with Our Lady, going around the hill of Tepeyac, planning in that way to avoid any delays. But it was then that she stopped him to tell him the most beautiful words:

"Listen, put it in your heart, my youngest and dearest son, whatever made you afraid and afflicted you, it is no longer; do not allow your face and your heart to be upset; do not be afraid of this illness or of any other illness, or of anything poignant and afflicting. Am I not here, I who am your mother? Aren't you under my shadow and my protection? Am I not the source of your happiness? Aren't you in the hollow of my robe and the crossing of my arms? Is there anything else you need?" Our Lady assured

him that his uncle was already cured. Precisely at that moment, Our Lady appeared before his uncle and not only gave him back his health but disclosed her name: "Santa María de Guadalupe."

Emboldened by Our Lady's words, Juan Diego sought to bring to the bishop the sign he had requested. She asked him to go to the top of Tepeyac Hill, where he would find beautiful flowers to cut and put in his tilma (cloak). Just as she said, Juan Diego found on



that dry and rocky hilltop – usually a place of death – the most beautiful and extraordinary flowers. He did as he was told and came down from the top of the hill bringing inside his tilma the precious sign that the bishop had requested. Our Lady arranged each one of the flowers in Juan Diego's tilma and sent him straight to Mexico City to deliver the promised sign to the bishop.



After much patience, Juan Diego found himself before the bishop to give him the sign. When he opened his tilma with the flowers, at that moment, the beautiful image of Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared on it. It was a surprise for the bishop and for all those who were there observing the development of this wonder. This event spoke of the immense love of God.

The image on the tilma shows the Virgin Mother as a mestiza (a woman of mixed race), wrapped in the sun with the moon at her feet, and her robe studded with stars. Her message and will is the spreading of the love of God and that is why she asked for a shrine, to offer His love to persons of every lineage who trust in Her.

*Adapted from
The Woman Who Changed the Face of a Hemisphere
Eduardo Chávez, Ph.D.*