

Guadalupe-Tonantzin
Our Lady of Guadalupe Sunday, December 12, 2021, 11:30 a.m., All Saints Church, Pasadena
The Rev. Alfredo Feregrino

I want you to imagine for a moment. If you feel comfortable, please close your eyes.

Imagine, that you are walking on a little hill at the moment of sunrise , when the light on the horizon begins to sprout in many directions, like golden fingers of sunlight, and the rising sun cast a rose color light across the morning sky with a with a wide range of red, yellow and orange colors. Can you see it?

Now you are sensing the smell of morning, can you smell the dew, those little droplets that appears on thin, exposed plants at daybreak ... can you smell the grass at the beginning of the morning.

Can you smell the morning dew?

And as you walk, suddenly you hear the chorus of melodic birdsongs, you hear the song of many precious birds, voices extremely soft and delightful, songs that you never heard before.

Just imagine the splendor and beauty of that place.

Then you stop and look around, seeing, smelling, hearing, and you think that maybe you're dreaming.

And suddenly a beautiful **voice** calls you **by your name** ...

Can you hear your name?

And when you turn to see who is calling you, you encounter the maternal presence of the divine gently calling you by your name.

Can you feel it?

Can you imagine this?

And beyond all comprehension, you experience an expanded sense of the magnificence of the divine all around you.

Just imagine how beautiful this moment could be.

Just imagine, how wonderful and precious this moment could be.

Can you imagine it?

Can you imagine this beauty and splendor?

This was what Juan Diego experienced.

This was the experience of Juan Diego as he approached the small hill called *Tepeyac* at sunrise, when the morning was just beginning.

This was what Juan Diego encountered when he came to the summit.

A noble Maiden was there, her perfect beauty and **magnificence** shining.

Her dress shone like the sun, the rock on which she was standing, seemed to be sending forth beams of light; Her splendor looked like that of precious stones, the ground sparkled as the rays of a rainbow in the mist. The plants around her looked like emeralds. Their foliage was the color of turquoise and gold.

Yes, magnificence and beauty was what Juan Diego experienced,

Beauty was what Juan Diego encountered in this event as it is described in the Narrative of the Nican Mopohua, the oldest narrative of the apparitions of Our Lady of Guadalupe. And written in Nahuatl, the language of pre-Hispanic Mexico almost 500 years ago.

This encounter of OLG with Juan Diego offers a message of blessings, universal inclusion and universal love.

An event full of beauty and mystery.

An event without explanation as we see in many divine encounters in our sacred scriptures.

You know, our sacred scriptures are full of events without explanation.

Scriptures are full of events that do not make sense to us, if we approach them using only rational analysis.

So, we must step beyond reason, into our hearts to understand the significance of this story. The Guadalupe event.

Scriptures are full of events in which divine messengers, visions, dreams and apparitions, reveal a God that communicates in many ways, telling us that God continues speaking and manifesting in specific events in our history.

Yes, God continues speaking in the here and now.

And this is why the Guadalupe Event, (The Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe) that we are celebrating today is relevant.

Here in this event, Our Lady of Guadalupe by her dazzling miraculous image , she is opening the door to the sacred, and guides us into the Holy mystery.

The mystery of the incarnation. She guides us into a God who would enters human life. She is showing us the future.

In her womb she is carrying the Messiah, the Christ, the one who will announce the good news to the poor, to proclaim freedom to the captives, to give sight to the blind, and to release the oppressed.

Our Lady of Guadalupe is not presented to us here as only a vessel, in this story she is the manifestation of the creator in feminine form, bringing to us the ultimate gift of magnificence of the birth of a new world, the gift of the beauty all around us, within us and within all humankind.

Yes, Our Lady is showing us a future and this is an announcement of hope, hope in the promises that God made to God's people.

Promises of restoration and renewal.

Restoration and renewal that assures us the true beauty, dignity and value that we have as individuals.

Restoration and renewal that assures the true beauty, dignity and value that we all have as persons.

Sometimes we believe that we need to be co-creators with God to free the captives, to give sight to the blind, and to release the oppressed.

But there is more than this,

Many times, we have been blind to the fact that we ourselves have been the captives, that we ourselves have been the oppressed.

Many times, we have been the ones who have been captive and oppressed to our inner feelings of worth-less-ness, inferiority and shame.

We tend to create stories about ourselves, stories that are not true at all, stories made of false beliefs.

We tend to create stories about ourselves, telling us that, we are not good enough, that we are not capable enough.

We tend to create stories about ourselves telling us that our skin color is not good enough, that our language is not good enough, that our culture is not good enough.

And then, we make the mistake of comparing ourselves to others.

Yes, many times, we have been blind to the fact that we ourselves have been the captives, that we ourselves have been the oppressed.

And we have been captive and oppressed because we have not been able to recognize the beauty around us, and the beauty within us.

The Guadalupe event invite us to see beauty, to see beauty around us. This is the manifestation of God love for us, the beauty in our world is a gift from the divine and extension of the always compassionate gaze, as a mother has for her children.

This is why Our Lady met Juan Diego with all her splendor and beauty.

In the Guadalupe event, Our Lady is the first to recognize beauty, dignity and value of Juan Diego a despised and humiliated Indian before the eyes of the conquerors.

In the Guadalupe event, Our Lady knows that God lifts up those who have been rejected, that God finds all of us useful in bringing forth a world where we are all one.

In the Guadalupe event, Our Lady brings with her the promise to give voice to the oppressed, to lift up the lowly and a deep commitment to justice and unity to make all humanity one, invites us into a new vision, a vision of inclusion.

The Guadalupe event invite us to recognize the dignity and worth that, we have as individuals and recognize it in other people. The Guadalupe event brings us the promise of powerful and truly unconditional love.

This is the promise in our baptismal covenant:

“Strive for justice and peace among all people and respect the dignity of every human being.”

Yes, The Guadalupe event invite us to count our blessings, to love ourselves, others and to see beauty in the creation all around us.

The Guadalupe event invite us to see beauty in ourselves and beauty in the others.

Just take a moment to see ...

We are beautiful, just look around you.

All of us, without exceptions are beautiful because we are created in the image and likeness of God.

For everything, that God has created is good,

And regardless of what the world say about us, we are Gods children created in God's image.

This is the embodied message that Our Lady of Guadalupe continue proclaiming, revealing us a God who shows up everywhere, making all things new.

Our Lady of Guadalupe blesses us with her compassionate gaze, embracing all of us within her divine love, the divine feminine face of God, glowing with splendor. She is the gentle divine Mother.

In her presence, all are worthy of love, and all of us are magnificent and precious.

Our Lady gives to us this beautiful world full of splendor, if we have the willingness to really notice that the blessings and the beauty are within us and all around us.

This is the God news that our Gospel proclaims.

AMEN!