



The Miracle of Guadalupe And The Dark Night of Obama

During his presidential campaign President Barack Obama promised that transparency would govern his administration. As its first year comes to a close, it is apparent that his regime is anything but open. Thousand-page legislation is rushed through with a mind-boggling expediency as dozens of unvetted and unaccountable czars roam the halls of government under the cover of darkness.

The Conquest of Darkness

As Americans accelerate their descent into cultural darkness, they should look to Our Lady of Guadalupe. Her apparition in Aztec, Mexico promises to hold the key to survival in what is becoming the *dark night of Obama*. Before the advent of Hernando Cortez and his Spanish conquistadors, human sacrifice was practiced on a far greater scale than in any other time in history. Early Mexican historians estimated that one out of every five children in Mexico was sacrificed. At the dedication of a new temple of Huitzilopochtli in 1487 in Tenochtitlan, (now Mexico City) the Aztec ruler and demon worshiper Tlaacael presided over the sacrifice of more than 80,000 men, women, and children during a 4-day ceremony in some vain attempt to appease Aztec gods.

Along with fortune-seekers, missionaries flocked to the New World, hoping to convert the native populations to Christianity. They had little success. In stark contrast, the twenty years after Our Lady of Guadalupe's appearance, her message of divine love and the image on a poor Indian's cloak soon inspired millions of conversions, and changed the face of a continent. According to Catholic historian Warren Carroll's 1983 book, *Our Lady of Guadalupe And the Conquest of Darkness*, the conversion of Mexico from devil-worship *was the most sudden and spectacular mass conversion in all of history*.

It was on Saturday, December 9, 1531 that the Virgin Mary appeared to Juan Diego, a recent Indian convert, on the hill of Tepeyac in central Mexico. While on his way to the chapel for early Mass, Juan heard the sound of birds singing like a heavenly symphony. He then noticed a celestial lady standing on the hill bathed in a golden light. Just as Mary

would speak to Bernadette at Lourdes in her native Patois dialect, she spoke to Juan in his Nahatl language. She told him that she was the *Virgin Holy Mary, Mother of the True God* and expressed her wish that *a temple be erected... so I may therein exhibit and give all my love, compassion, help, and protection*.

A Tiny Rope

Shaken by what he had seen, Juan rushed to Tenochtitlan to the palace of the Bishop-elect, Fray Juan de Zumarraga and requested an immediate audience. Bishop Zumarraga was one of the first 12 Franciscan missionaries to go to Mexico and he became Mexico's first bishop. The bishop's servants were skeptical and rude to Juan. He pleaded with them to let him talk to the bishop. After a long wait, the 57-year-old widower got to speak to the bishop. After having listened attentively to his incredible story, the bishop told Juan he would review his story and address *the wishes and desires for which you have come*.

Disheartened by the bishop's reluctance to believe the veracity of Our Lady's appearance, Juan went back to the top of Tepeyac and found her waiting for him. In his characteristic humble manner he begged her forgiveness for his failure to convince the bishop. He told her how unworthy he was of this sacred mission since he was as insignificant as *a small rope, a tiny ladder, the tail end, and a leaf*. He beseeched her to find someone of importance and esteem who could be more readily believed.

The Blessed Virgin answered: *You must understand that I have many servants and messengers, to whom I must entrust the delivery of my message*, but it was Juan she chose as her ambassador for this mission. She then ordered him to *go again tomorrow and see the bishop*. She urged him to go in her name so that he could make *known my wish in its entirety that he has to start the erection of a temple*. Juan vowed to return the following day with the bishop's answer.

A Doubting Thomas

Juan ran into the same clerical resistance as he had the first time. He knelt before the bishop's feet and cried as he told of Our Lady's mandate. The Mexican bishop acted more like a *Doubting Thomas* than a man of faith. He told Juan that a sign was very necessary, so that he could believe that the Lady was truly sent from heaven. Juan begged the bishop to tell him what kind of sign he would believe. Unfortunately the bishop provided no details about an acceptable sign that would convince him of Juan's truthfulness.

Meanwhile the bishop's servants tried to follow Juan but lost him in the Mexican countryside. Out of pure expediency they told the bishop that he had not met any woman and had concluded that he was not a truthful messenger. In the meantime, Juan was with the Blessed Virgin telling her of the need for proof. She told him to return the following day and she would give him the sign that *he will believe you, and in this regard he will not doubt nor will he be suspicious of you.*

Unfortunately, Juan could not return the next day because he had to care for his uncle Juan Bernardino, who had become seriously ill. After two days, with his uncle near death, Juan went to summon a priest. His journey required him to pass Tepayac Hill where Mary was waiting for him. She implored him not to worry about his uncle because *Am I not here with you who am your Mother? Are you not under my shadow and protection?* She told him that there was no need for a priest because his uncle had already recovered from his illness.

To satisfy the bishop, she instructed him to go to the top of the hill and gather the flowers there. He agreed to do as she commanded even though he knew that the hilltop was not suitable for any kind of floral growth because of its many crags, thistles, weeds and thorns. As he approached the top a frosty mist wafted over the summit. When it lifted he was amazed to see many varieties of exquisite roses de Castilla blooming out of season. He gathered them in his *tilma*, the common attire for most Mexicans. When he came down from the hill, Our Lady took the flowers in her hand and then placed them back in the *tilma*, saying, *My son the least, this diversity of roses is the proof and the sign which you will take to the bishop.* She told him this sign would convince the bishop to build the temple she had ordered during her first appearance.

The Miracle of Guadalupe

Juan faithfully carried the roses, safely enwrapped in his *tilma* to the bishop's palace where he again was kept waiting a long time. While he was waiting the bishop's servants approached him to see what he was carrying. Fearful that they may harm him, Juan uncovered his *tilma* so that some of the flowers were visible. Upon seeing all the beautiful roses the servants unsuccessfully tried to take them from his cloak.

They rushed to tell the bishop what they had seen. When Juan was finally admitted to the bishop's chamber, he knelt before him and told him that he had brought the sign he requested. However when Juan unfolded his white *tilma*, all the roses scattered on the floor. There

miraculously imprinted on his *tilma* was the precious image of the Virgin Mary. It is still clearly visible in its 16th century splendor in the Basilica of Guadalupe in Mexico City.

When the bishop saw the image everyone fell to his knees. He knew immediately that this was a sign from God and that he needed to build a chapel for Our Lady. When he rose to his feet, he removed the *tilma* from Juan Diego's neck and placed it in his chapel. The bishop then went with Juan to see his Uncle Bernardino, who told them that the Lady had not only appeared to him but had cured him. The following day, the bishop told him: *Show us where the Lady from Heaven wished the temple be erected.*

Both Juan and his uncle were the guests of the bishop in his home until the temple dedicated to the Queen of Tepeyacac was erected where Juan Diego had seen her. After the dedication of the new church, the sacred image on the *tilma* was transferred there. The entire city came to see and admire the image and to pray. It is arguably Mexico's most popular religious and cultural image and the focus of many elaborate pilgrimages. The *tilma* was displayed in the Cathedral of Mexico City for public veneration.

As a footnote to Guadalupe, even after many tests, Juan's *tilma* has defied the canons of science. An ordinary *tilma* lasts no longer than 20 years. Juan's garment has lasted for 450 years. On another note, during the anti-clerical violence that permeated Mexico City in the early 1920s, a radical worker, Luciano Perez laid a floral wreath on the main altar of the basilica, just in front of the image of the Virgin on November 14, 1921. There was a bomb in the wreath, which exploded as he left the church. The explosion destroyed the altar steps, the candelabras, even the windows of neighboring homes, but miraculously the window protecting Our Lady's image was untouched.

The Talking Eagle

Originally called *Cuaubtlatoatzin*, which means *the talking eagle* Juan Diego was born in 1874. Despite his humble circumstances, Juan was descended from a royal lineage. He devoted himself to hard work in the fields and to manufacturing mats. He also owned a piece of land with a small house on it. Between 1524 and 1525 a Franciscan priest, Fr Peter da Gand, one of the first Franciscan missionaries, baptized both Juan and his wife Maria Lucia.

Juan was a solitary, almost mystical character, prone to spells of silence and frequent penance. Before the apparitions he always walked from his village to Tenochtitlan, 14 miles away, to receive instructions in the faith. In 1529 Maria took sick and died. Juan then went to live with his uncle Juan Bernardino, who had acted as his foster father since the early death of his parents.

After the Miracle of Guadalupe, Juan moved to a room attached to the chapel that housed the sacred image, after having given his business and property to his uncle. There he cared for the church and the first pilgrims who came to pray to the Mother of Jesus, and propagating the account of the apparitions to his countrymen.

Juan also had a deep devotion to the Holy Eucharist, and by special permission of the bishop he received Holy Communion three times a week, a highly unusual practice in the 16th century. Juan died on May 30, 1548, at the age of 74. On July 2002 in the Basilica of Guadalupe, he was canonized during a ceremony celebrated by Pope John Paul II.

A Pregnant Message

Tradition teaches that Our Lady of Guadalupe's standing in front of the sun and on the moon with the stars on her cloak was a pointed message to the Indians to whom she had come in the name of a God more powerful than their gods. Tradition also teaches that she was with child as indicated by her belt. As a result she told the Indians to respect pregnancy and stop sacrificing their babies to their false gods.

The Church has always considered Our Lady of Guadalupe as the *Protectress of the Unborn* and has seen her as the instrument that may end legalized abortion in the Western Hemisphere. Her appearance to St. Juan Diego ended the slaughter of the innocent that characterized the 16th century in pre-Christian Mexico among the Aztecs. Today she stands brightly as the perfect model for those who want to end the slaughter of the millions of innocent unborn babies now.

When Our Lady appeared to Juan's uncle she told him she wanted to be called Santa Maria de Guadalupe, which in their language means *I smash the serpent with my foot*. This image of the lady and the serpent is riven with symbolism for the modern world, which has immersed itself in a satanic culture of death.

The Satanic serpent has had an impact of Biblical proportions on nascent human life in the 20th and 21st centuries. The Book of Leviticus tells how the Lord told Moses about the serious crime of offering children for sacrificial immolation, a pointed reference to the Canaanite custom of sacrificing children to the pagan god Moloch. This is little different from the current American custom of sacrificing unborn children on an altar of existential choice and moral relativism.

Since President Obama has chosen to push the policies that advance the latter, it is incumbent on Christians to beseech Our Lady's help in thwarting the pernicious policies of the culture of death that now reign throughout the United States and the world. Just as the Aztec priests executed thousands of their own people, the modern day priests of secularism have put millions of the unborn to the sword to appease their gods of materialism and self-indulgence.

A New Crucible

In addition to abortion and child sacrifice, the appearance of Our Lady of Guadalupe to a humble Indian in 1531 is immensely significant to the whole world. Warren Carroll points to the mass Mexican conversions after her 16th century apparition and shortly after England had left the Catholic Church over King Henry VIII's marital dispute.

Our Lady's appearances in Mexico have been unique to the entire Western Hemisphere. An estimated 10 million visit her Basilica, making Mexico City the most popular Marian shrine in the world, and the most visited Catholic Church in the world next to the Vatican.

Many Popes have had a deep affection for Our Lady of Guadalupe. Altogether 24 Popes have officially honored Our Lady of Guadalupe. In 1754, Pope Benedict XIV praised the miraculous nature of Our Lady's Mexican appearance. Pope John Paul II visited her sanctuary four times from 1979 to July 31, 2002. In 2002 at Juan Diego's canonization, Pope John Paul II called him a *model of perfectly inculturated evangelization*. In 2004 he referred to Our Lady as the *Patroness of Life*, proclaiming her as God's holy instrument for the reconversion of the Americas.

The success of the Church in Latin America has ensured a promise of hope for the future of the Church. The apparition of Guadalupe was a reconciling sign between two peoples who were in conflict on the continent, the Indians and the Spanish. Due to Our Lady's appearance in the 16th century, the Mexican people changed their way of life in rejecting their Aztec tradition of the pagan sacrifice of their children. In America's similar crucible, Our Lady's message promises to open the blinds on the dark night of Obama.

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William A. Borst, Ph.D. can be contacted at PO Box 16271; St. Louis, MO 63105 or write BBPROF@sbcglobal.net

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Eleanor Schlafly, *Publisher*
William A. Borst, Ph.D., *Feature Editor*
e-mail: info@mindszenty.org
web site: www.mindszenty.org

Christmas Blessings

Dear CMF Friend,

Christmas 2009

Anniversaries are a marvelous gift from God! Last year marked the 50th anniversary of the Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation: fifty years of honoring our dear patron, the late Joseph Cardinal Mindszenty who struggled for the freedom of his people in Hungary.



This year I celebrated a personal anniversary, my Silver Anniversary as a priest. For twenty-five years I have had the privilege of serving God's people in this special way. As I think back over all those years and all those Masses, one of the most moving moments was when I was able to concelebrate the Burial Mass in Hungary for Cardinal Mindszenty.

Eleanor Schlafly and several of us from the Foundation were privileged to accompany the great Cardinal's remains from Austria to his free Hungarian homeland. The beauty of God's grace was visible in those moments, as was the great love of the people for their heroic shepherd.

**That is why I support the
Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation
and why I now ask for your support!
Please send a Christmas Gift to CMF today!**

Not all anniversaries give cause for jubilation, however. This year also marks the 60th anniversary of the Communist "Revolution" in China. Seeing the massive parade of weapons in the Communist celebration brought to mind the many May Day parades of the Soviet era in Russia. It also brought to mind the many bishops, priests and laity who suffered and died in Chinese prisons, and some are still in those prisons, because their loyalty to their Church made them "enemies of the State."

China observed another anniversary this year: the massacre at Tiananmen Square 20 years ago, an event the Communists would rather the world forgot. This occasion was followed by increased repression and censorship in China, lest too many remember.

Our own saintly Council Member, the late Father John Houle, S.J. had all too much firsthand knowledge of the horrors of Communist prisons in China. Through his intercession, and the help of Our Lady Queen of Peace, may those still suffering under Communism and other totalitarian regimes find freedom and peace.

New Guadalupe Shrine in the U.S.

In the summer of 2008 Archbishop Raymond L. Burke initiated, opened and dedicated a beautiful new Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in La Crosse, Wisconsin. Pilgrims are becoming aware of this special opportunity for visits, retreats, spiritual conferences, meetings, family gatherings and more. For information, contact Tel: 608-782-5440, or www.guadalupe Shrine.org or Sister Christa Marie, FSGM. P.O. Box 1237, La Crosse, WI 54602-1237

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We- YOU! - have accomplished much, with the help of God and His Blessed Mother. We hope you will continue to be active in this struggle against tyranny and injustice. Please consider sending a Christmas gift to the Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation! Our important mission, to defend Faith, build Families and work for Freedom must move forward in the months and years to come so that more people will be informed of the many threats from militant atheism.

At this Christmas season, our Council Members will be pleased to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for your intentions. May the newborn Christ Child bless you, your family and our world with true and lasting peace!

With blessings and gratitude,

Kevin E. Rettig

Reverend Kevin E. Rettig
CMF Council Member