



The Holy See

FEAST OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

HOLY MASS FOR LATIN AMERICA*HOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS**Vatican Basilica*

Thursday, 12 December 2019[\[Multimedia\]](#)

Today's celebration, the Bible passages we have heard and the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe that remind us of *Nican Mopohua*, bring to mind three words: woman, mother and mestiza.

Mary is a woman. She is a woman, a lady as the *Nican Mapohua* says, a woman par excellence. She presents herself as a woman and she presents herself with a message from someone else, hence as a woman and a disciple. Saint Ignatius liked to call her 'Our Lady'. And it is so simple that it does not presume anything else: she is a woman, a disciple.

Over time, Christian piety has always tried to exalt her with new titles: they were filial titles, loving titles of the People of God, which however did not mention her as being a woman-disciple.

Saint Bernard used to say that when we speak of Mary, there can never be enough praise; titles of praise but they never touched upon her humble discipleship. A disciple.

Faithful to her Teacher who is her Son, the only Saviour, she never wished to appropriate anything of her Son for herself. She never presented herself as a co-Saviour. No, a disciple.

And there is a Holy Father who goes around saying that the discipleship of motherhood is worthier. These are issues for theologians, but a disciple. She never took anything from her son for herself. She served him because she is a mother. She gives life in the fullness of time to this Son born of woman.

Mary is our Mother. She is the Mother of our people. She is the Mother of us all. She is the Mother of the Church, but she is also the image of the Church. And she is the Mother of our hearts, of our souls. There is a Holy Father who says that what can be said of Mary, can also be said in its own way of the Church and in its own way of our souls. Because the Church is feminine and our soul

has this ability to receive grace from God, and in a certain sense, the Fathers saw the Church as a woman. We cannot think of the Church without this Marian principle.

When we research the role of women in the Church, we can follow the path of functionality because women have functions to perform in the Church. But this is only half the journey.

Women in the Church achieve more with this Marian principle which “maternalizes” the Church and transforms it into Holy Mother Church.

Mary as a woman, Mary as a Mother, without any other essential title. The other titles — let us think of the Litanies of Loreto — are titles sung by children in love with their Mother, but they do not mention the essential nature of Mary’s being: woman and mother.

And the third word that I would attribute to her as I gazed upon her: she wanted to be a mestiza (mixed race) for us, she chose to appear as a mestiza. And not only to Don Juan Dieguito but also to the people. She chose to appear as a mestiza in order to be the Mother of all. She made herself mixed for all of humanity. Why? Because she made a mestizo of God. And this is the great mystery: Mother Mary made a mestizo of God, true God and true man, in her Son.

When they tell us that we should declare her as such or come up with another dogma, let us not lose ourselves in chatter. Mary is a woman, she is Our Lady, Mary is the Mother of her Son and of the Holy Mother hierarchical Church and Mary is mestiza, a woman of our people, one with a “mixed-race” God.

May she speak to us as she spoke to Juan Diego with these three titles: with tenderness, with feminine warmth and with a closeness of “mixedness”. Amen.