



The Holy See

FEAST OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

HOLY MASS

HOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS

St Peter's Basilica

Tuesday, 12 December 2023

[Multimedia]

The first thing that comes to mind is the image of the Virgin on the tilma or cloak.

It is the image of the first disciple, of the Mother of believers, of the Church herself, that is imprinted in our humbleness and in what we have, which is of little value, but which will become something great in God's eyes. It is imprinted on the tilma.

The Virgin entrusts Juan Diego with a small task, to gather some flowers. In mysticism, flowers symbolize the virtues that the Lord infuses in the heart; they are not our own doing. The act of picking them reveals to us that God wants us to welcome this gift, that we 'enhance' our fragile existence with good works, eliminating hatred and fear.

If we look closely, in the message of Guadalupe, the Virgin's words, "Am I not here, I who am your mother?", take on new meaning. This "being" of the Virgin, this "being there" is to remain permanently imprinted on those poor garments that emanate virtues gathered in a world that seems incapable of producing them. Virtues that fill our poverty in the simplicity of small acts of love that illuminate our 'tilma', without us realizing it, with the image of a Church that carries Christ in her womb. The image of the tilma, the roses, this is the message, so simple, without any comment, along with the certainty that she is mother, that she is here. And this message protects us from many social and political ideologies, that often use the reality of Guadalupe in order to

gain a following, to legitimize themselves and to make money. The message of Guadalupe does not tolerate ideologies of any kind. Only the image of the tilma, the roses.

L'Osservatore Romano, Weekly Edition in English, Friday, 15 December 2023, p. 3.

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