

OUR LADY COMES TO MEXICO

One day nearly 500 years ago, a poor Aztec Indian named Juan Diego was hurrying to Mass on a cold December day. Juan was passing a big hill when he heard a woman's voice calling his name, "Juan Diego! Juan Diego!"

Juan turned and saw a beautiful woman with a turquoise cloak full of stars. She had the dark skin and dark eyes of the native people, just like his.

"Juan, I am Mary, the Mother of God. Go and tell the bishop to build a church here in my honor."

"My Mother, the bishop will never listen to a poor man like me."

"Please, Juan."

"I will go."



Juan walked to the bishop's palace. "What do you want?" the bishop asked.

"The Mother of God wants you to build a church," Juan answered.

"Go home. Don't waste my time," the bishop said.

Juan went back to the beautiful woman. "I failed you," he said.

"Please try again, Juan," the woman said.

Juan visited the bishop again.

"I don't believe you saw the Mother of God," the bishop said. "Prove it."

Juan felt very sad. "I failed again, Mother," Juan told the beautiful woman. "You will have to send someone more important."

"I have chosen you, Juan Diego. I will give the bishop proof. Pick roses and take them to him."

"Roses don't bloom in December," Juan said. But when he looked, he saw roses on the hill. He filled his cloak with roses and went to the bishop's house.



"Are you back again?" the bishop said. "What is in your cloak?"

Juan opened his cloak, and the roses fell on the floor. The bishop went down on his knees. Juan wondered why. Then Juan looked at his cloak.

He saw a picture of the beautiful woman who had spoken to him.

"I will build a church for the Mother of God," the bishop said.



The Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe stands on the hill today in Mexico City. Juan Diego's cloak is there.

The image on it reminds the native peoples of the Americas that the Mother of God is a mother to all of us.



1. Why does the lady choose Juan Diego?
2. Why doesn't the bishop listen to Juan Diego?
3. Why do you think Mary appears as a Native American?