

# Our Lady of Guadalupe

The Image of Our Lady of Guadalupe presents the Catholic Faith in a way that was immediately understood and accepted by the native Mexican Indians. It is impossible to describe fully the rich symbolism contained on the Tilma of Juan Diego because every detail of color and of form carries a theological message.

Our Lady's **hair**, parted in the middle and hanging loosely, indicates she is a virgin maiden.

Scientific analysis has shown **reflections** of people in the Virgin's **eyes**, just as any human eye would reflect. there are 13 total figures (including Juan Diego and Bishop Zumárraga) that form two scenes in both eyes.

One can **see a cross** in the center of the medallion that she carries on the upper part of her dress. This manifests her consecration to her Son Jesus, whose cross reminds us of both His total sacrifice for love and the moment when he gives us Mary as our Mother.

The symbol of the Cross was seen on the sails of the Spaniards' ships.

The Virgin's identity as a woman of heaven and earth is affirmed by her **garments' colors and decorations**: her reddish tunic is the color symbolic of earth, while the star-speckled green-blue mantle symbolizes the heavens. The mantle's color indicates her royalty, since only the Aztec emperors could wear cloaks of that color. The Virgin, Queen of heaven and earth, points us toward the truth that God is love, and mankind is the recipient of His love.

The **8-petaled flowers** symbolize the day of new creation. The 'blossom' is in the form of a hill, and the stem is presented as a river. The "hill-water" represented the concept of civilization. The 'hill' represents the highest point of encounter between God and man. **Viewed upside down**, the flower/stem takes the form of a heart – source of life, which belongs to and has its origin in God.

Our Lady's appearance is mestiza, both **Aztec and Spanish**, showing the two cultures coming together at this point in history.



**Our Lady stands on the moon.** The crescent moon symbolized the Aztec god Quetzalcoatl, the feathered serpent moon god. She has clearly crushed and defeated him. **The Virgin's shoe**, which appears over the moon, has no color, but is simply the raw tilma. This is inexplicable.

**An angel with eagle's wings** supports the Mother of God. The eagle was the "bird of the sun." Here the angel is the messenger of the Virgin. The angel wears both a tunic of the same color and a brooch like hers. The angel holds her mantle in one hand and the robe with the other, signifying the Son she bears is from both heaven and earth.

The stars on her mantle signify **she comes from heaven** - the Queen of Heaven. The **constellations** are in the **exact position** as appeared before dawn on the morning of December 12, 1531.

Her **hands are joined in prayer** and, therefore, she is not God but clearly there is one greater than she, and she points her finger to the cross on her brooch.

the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe depicts a **dark ribbon above her womb**, indicating that she is a woman anticipating the birth of God's only Son. The Spanish expression is encinta, "adorned with ribbon."

In the **center of her tunic, overlying her womb**, is a four petal jasmine flower which is the sign of the Divine and the center of the cosmic order to the Aztec. The Virgin's Baby, Jesus, is Divine and the true center of the universe.

The **4-petaled flowers** with leaves on her tunic symbolize to the Aztecs that the fifth-age, the age of Peace, has begun.

The Virgin of Guadalupe is shown **among the clouds**, representing her divine origin.

Our Lady **stands in front of the sun**. The sun symbolized the greatest Aztec god - Huitzilopochtli. She announces the God who is greater than their sun god.



SHRINE OF OUR LADY  
OF GUADALUPE