

SCIENCE AND GUADALUPE VIRGIN

Ana Hernandez
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Next you will find some interesting ideas. Some are translated from Spanish information and some are copied directly from the web. If somebody needs the original sources, please do not hesitate to contact.
Please excuse my bad English. It is not my first language.

PRIVATE REVELATIONS

There are two kinds of revelations: (1) universal revelations, which are contained in the Bible or in the *depositum* of Apostolic tradition transmitted by the Catholic Church. These ended with the preaching of the Apostles and must be believed by all; (2) particular or private revelations which are constantly occurring among Christians. When the Church approves private revelations, she declares only that there is nothing in them contrary faith or good morals, and that they may be read without danger or even with profit; **no obligation is thereby imposed on the faithful to believe them.**

The Catholic Church has officially recognized Guadalupe apparition like a private revelation.

OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE APPARITION.



A unique apparition of the Blessed Virgin Mary: the one where she left us a miraculous life-sized portrait of her self.

The "Nican Mopohua" is the original narration of the apparitions written in nahuatl (Aztec language). It was written in 1545, fourteen years after the Guadalupe event of December 9 to 12, 1531. Here you can find an English Translation.

<http://www.sancta.org/nican.html>
<http://www.interlupe.com.mx/nican-e.html>
<http://www.interlupe.com.mx/4-e.html>

For more historical information of the apparition in Spanish you can search in:
http://www.virgendeguadalupe.org.mx/apariciones/documentos/documentos_index.htm

AN IMAGE THAT IS NOT PAINTED BY HUMAN HANDS.

Guadalupe Virgin Image was not painted by human hand and here you can read some of the evidences:

1. THERE IS NOT A SCIENTIFIC EXPLANATION: THE TILMA SHOULD HAVE DETERIORATED LONG AGO, BUT IS STILL INTACT.

Virgin Mary, left an Image of herself imprinted miraculously on Juan Diego's tilma, a poor quality cactus-cloth, which should have deteriorated in 20 years but shows no sign of decay 474 years later and still defies all scientific explanations of its origin.

The "tilma" or "ayate", a kind of cloak worn by primitive native Mexicans, is the place where the Image of the Virgin of Guadalupe was miraculously stamped on December 12th, 1531. It consists of two pieces of coarse cloth made of agave fibers of about 1.70 per 1.05 meters (69.99 per 41.3 inches) joined together in the center by a seam of thread made of the same material.

The seam is visible up the middle of the figure, turning aside from the face.

The original has inexplicably been preserved, in spite of the fact that, it has been touched and handled by many people, it has been exposed to dust, heat, humidity, saltpeter, acid, and that it has suffered several attempts. It is located in the Tepeyac Shrine in Mexico City.





Here you can see an indian tilma made of maguey (agave) fiber.

The weft of the "ayate" is so simple, porous and coarse that one can see through it easily, and the fiber of the maguey is such an unsuitable material that no painter would have chosen it to paint on.

As early as the 18th century, scientists showed that it was impossible to paint such an image in a fabric of that texture.



For centuries the picture of the Virgin of Guadalupe was exposed to the rigors of the weather, with no protection against dust, humidity, heat, the candles' smoke and the continuous rubbing of thousands and thousands of objects that had been touched to the venerated image, in addition to the constant contact of the hands and kisses of an infinite number of pilgrims.

Scientists can not explain why the tilma repel insects and the dust suspended in the air.

It has been proven that the maguey fabric breaks down easily; cloth woven with this vegetable fiber does not last more than 20 years, and - nevertheless - Juan Diego's ayate has lasted over four centuries in perfect condition.

2. THERE IS NOT A SCIENTIFIC EXPLANATION: SCIENTISTS, HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO DETERMINE THE ORIGIN OF THE PIGMENTS THAT GIVE COLOR TO THE PICTURE AND HOW IT WAS PAINTED.

In 1936, the German Richard Kuhn (Nobel Prize winner in chemistry) has found that the Image did not have natural, animal or mineral colorings. The origin of the pigments of these figures is unknown.

In 1979, Americans Philip Callahan and Jody B. Smith studied the Image with infrared rays and discovered to their surprise that there was no trace of paint and that the fabric had not been treated with any kind of technique. They reported that the portions of the face, hands, robe, and mantle had been painted in one step, with no sketches or corrections and no paintbrush strokes.

How is it possible to explain this Image and its consistency in time without colors, on a fabric that has not been treated? How is it possible that, despite the fact there is no paint, the colors maintain their luminosity and brilliance?

Callahan and Smith showed how the Image changes in color slightly according to the angle of viewing, a phenomenon that is known by the word iridescence, a technique that cannot be reproduced with human hands.

Callahan was a biophysicist at the University of Florida, an expert in infrared photography, and himself a painter. He concluded that the original Image is unexplainable as a human work.

It is not painted, and no one yet knows how it was stamped on St. Juan Diego's tilma. On a 10 centimeters (3.29 inches) distance, it only can be seen the natural ayate cloth. The colors float on a distance of 3 decimes of millimeter over the fabric.

Ophthalmology and optics confirm the inexplicable nature of the Image—it seems to be a slide projected onto the fabric. Closer analysis shows that there is no trace of drawing or sketching under the color, even though perfectly recognizable retouches were done on the original, retouches which moreover have deteriorated with time. In addition, the background never received any primer, which seems inexplicable if it is truly a painting, for even on the finest fabric, a coat is always applied, if only to prevent the fabric from absorbing the painting and the threads from breaking the surface. No brush strokes can be detected. After an infrared analysis conducted on May 7, 1979, a professor from NASA wrote, «There is no way to explain the quality of the pigments used for the pink dress, the blue veil, the face and the hands, or the permanence of the colors, or the vividness of the colors after several centuries, during which they ordinarily should have deteriorated... Studying this Image has been the most moving experience of my life.»

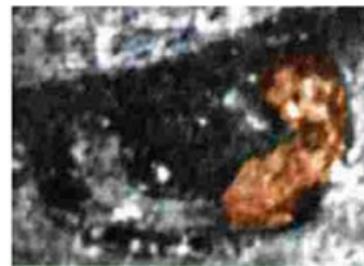
3. THERE IS NOT A SCIENTIFIC EXPLANATION: IT HAS BEEN POSSIBLE TO DISCOVER IN BOTH EYES GROUPS OF PEOPLE AND OBJECTS PLACED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE MOST PRECISE OPTICAL LAWS: JUST IN THE EYES OF A LIVE PERSON.

Science discovered that Mary eyes have the three effects of image reflection on a human eye. As well, modern technology has revealed, in her 7 and 8 millimeters (0.2 and 0.3 inches), tiny human images that could not be painted by people, even in our days. These are images of those who observed the unveiling of the tilma. It apparently reflects in her eyes what was in front of Our Lady in 1531!



Alfonso Marcué, the Basilica's official photographer in Mexico city, discovered in 1929 what seem to be the image of a bearded man, reflected in Mary's right eye.

More than 20 years later, on May 29, 1951, Jose Carlos Salinas Chavez, examining with a magnifier, a good photograph of the face, rediscovers the same image and also located it on the left eye too, in the same place which it could be projected in an alive eye.



Since then, many people had the opportunity to inspect closely the eyes of the Virgin on the tilma, including more than 20 physicians, ophthalmologists.

The first one, on March 27, 1956, was Dr. Javier Torroella Bueno, MDS, a prestigious ophthalmologist. In what is the first report on the eyes of the Image issued by a physician, he certifies the presence of the triple reflection (Samson-Purkinje effect) characteristic of all live human eyes and states that the resulting images are located exactly where they are supposed to be according to such effect, and also that the distortion of the images agree with the curvature of the cornea.

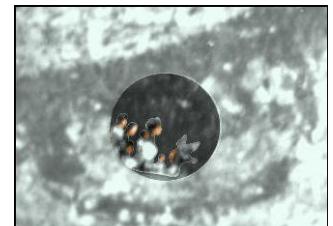
The same year another ophthalmologist, Dr. Rafael Torrija Lavoignet, examined the eyes of the Image with an ophthalmoscope in great detail. He observed the apparent human figure in the corneas of both eyes, with the location and distortion of a normal human eye and specially noted a unique appearance of the eyes: they look strangely "alive" when examined.

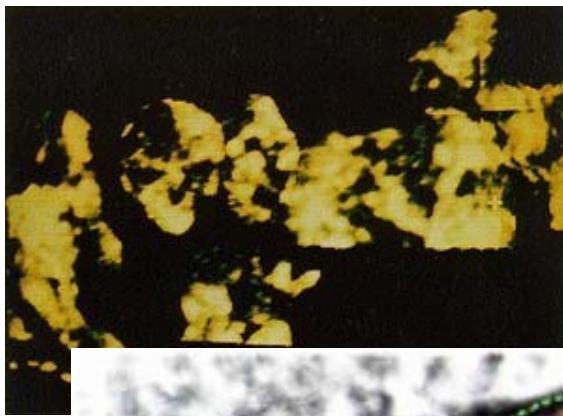
Many other examinations by ophthalmologists have been done of the eyes of the Image on the tilma after these first ones. With more or less details all agree with the conclusions of the ones mentioned above.

But a new and fascinating kind of analysis of the eyes started in 1979, when Dr. Jose Aste Tonsmann, Ph D, graduated from Cornell University, while working in IBM scanned at very high resolutions a very good photograph, taken from the original, of the face on the tilma. After filtering and processing the digitized images of the eyes to eliminate "noise" and enhance them, he made some astonishing discoveries: not only the "human bust" was clearly present in both eyes, but another human figures were seen as reflected in the eyes too!

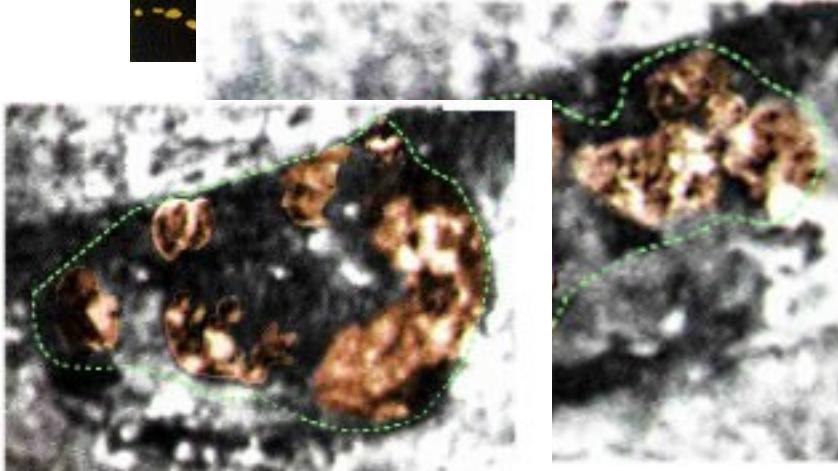
Dr. Jose Aste Tonsmann published his last studies on the eyes on the tilma in the book "El Secreto de sus Ojos" (The secret of her eyes), with complete details and photographs of his work. Perhaps one of the most fascinating aspects of the studies is his conclusion that Our Lady of Guadalupe not only left us her miraculous Image as proof of her apparition but some important messages too. These messages were hidden in the eyes on the Image until our times, when new technologies would allow them to be discovered, when they are most necessary.

That would be the case with the image of a family in the center of the Virgin's eye, in times when families are under serious attack in our modern world. The image of various human figures that seem to constitute a family, including various children and a baby carried in the woman's back as used in the 16th century, appears in the center of the pupil, as shown in this great image of the right eye highlighting the family, generously provided by Dr. Tonsmann.





According to Dr. Tonsmann, from left to right we can see "the Indian", "bishop Zumarraga", the "translator", "Juan Diego showing the tilma" and below "the family".

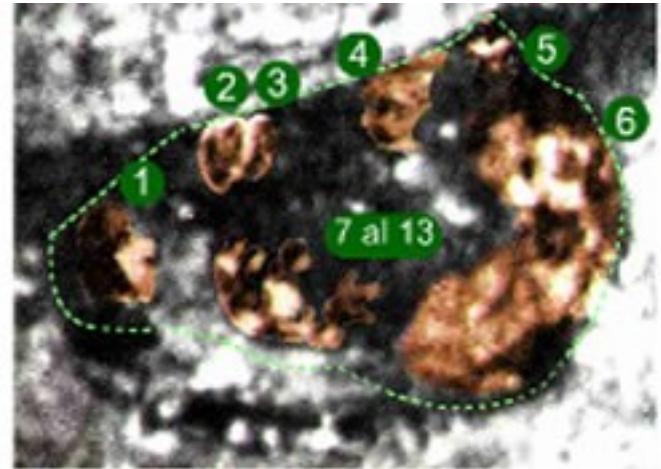


LEFT EYE

RIGHT EYE

Dr. José Aste Tönsmann magnified the iris of the Virgin's eyes 2,500 times and, through mathematical and optical procedures, was able to identify all the people imprinted in the eyes. Though the dimensions are microscopic, the iris and the pupils of the Image's eyes have imprinted on them a highly detailed picture of at least 13 people, Tönsmann said. The same people are present in both the left and right eyes, in different proportions, as would happen when human eyes reflect the objects before them. He used a digital process used by satellites and space probes in transmitting visual information.

These figures are not visible to the human eye, except for one: that of the Spaniard, which is the largest. Nobody could have painted such tiny silhouettes.



1. A seated indian, who is looking with attention. He is full-length. He is seated on the ground. His head is lightly lifted. It seems that he is looking up, in sign of attention and reverence. He has a kind of hoop in his ear and sandals in his feet.

2. A



white elderly man. He has a bald patch, prominent straight nose, deep-set eyes that are looking down and white beard. This person looks like Zumarraga bishop, as he appears at Miguel Cabrera paintings of XVIII century.



3. A young man. His features show amazement. It seems that he is speaking to Zumarraga bishop. Like Zumarraga bishop did not speak nahuatl, it is believed that this young man was an interpreter. It is believed that he is Juan Gonzalez, a Spanish born between 1500 and 1510.



4. Saint Juan Diego. It is the face of a middle-aged man, with indigenous aspect, with light beard and mustache, hook nose and half-opened lips. He is wearing a coned hat. This kind of hat was commonly worn by indigenous dedicated to work in fields at that time.

He had tied a tilma around his neck. It seems that he is extending his right arm and that he is unfolding his own tilma before the bishop. The hypothesis supposes this figure belongs to Saint Juan Diego.



5. A black woman. Behind Saint Juan Diego, appears a woman of dark complexion, possibly a slave who was in the bishop's service. Father Mariano Cuevas wrote in "Church history in Mexico" that Zumarraga said in his will that he released the slave. We also know that she was called Maria.



6. In both corneas appears an unknown man with Spanish features who looks on pensively, stroking his beard with his hand. He is looking to the place where Juan Diego is unfolding his tilma.

A mystery inside the mystery (composed by figures 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 y 13)

In the centre of both eyes appears a group denominated indigenous family. These images (7-13) have a different size compared to the other figures. However, these people have the same proportion and they are part of a different scene.



(7) A young women with delicate features. It seems that she is looking down. She has her hair wove with flowers. Over her back it is a baby in a rebozo (8). Rebozo: a long woolen or linen scarf covering the head and shoulders (also used a sling for holding a baby); traditionally worn by Latin-American women.

In a lower level, to the right, there is a man with a hat (9) between both, it can be watched a couple of children (boy and girl 10 y 11). Other 2 figures, a middle-aged man and a middle-aged women (12 y 13) are stood behind the young mother.

In 1991, analysis made by outstanding ophthalmologists, identified micro artery circulation in the free edge of the image's eyelids and cornea. No human painter would have been able to reproduce such details.

The ophthalmologic studies done to Mary's eyes also have detected that her pupils constrict when they are exposed to light and they dilate when it is removed, exactly like in a alive eye.

4. THE IMAGE WAS TRULY A MEXICA CODEX, A MESSAGE FROM HEAVEN LOADED WITH SYMBOLS FOR THE AZTECS.



Helen Behrens, a North American anthropologist, discovered in 1945 what the eyes of the Indians had "read" in the painting of the "Mother of the true God by whom one lives" in December of 1531.

The Image of Our Lady of Guadalupe is a marvelous cultural synthesis, a masterpiece that presented the new faith in such a way that it was immediately understood and accepted by the Mexican Indians. It is impossible to describe in few pages the rich and complex symbolism contained on this painting-codex because every detail of color and of form carries a theological message.

The most important symbols of Christianity are synthesized in Our Lady of Guadalupe, in a very unusual language. It contains the sediment of both cultures, the Hispanic and the Indigenous, represented through an iconography that summarizes the most precious symbols of both cultures. An innumerable number of messages turn it into true hieroglyphic writing. All these would be vital in order to evangelize the people in the New Spain.

The Virgin's height is 143 centimeters and she is represented like a 18 to 20 old years young woman.

The face imprinted in the "ayate" is that of a mestizo girl; an ethnic anticipation, since at that time there were no mestizos of that age in Mexico. Mary thus assumes the sorrows of thousands of children, the first of a new race, which at that time were rejected both by the Indians and by the conquerors.

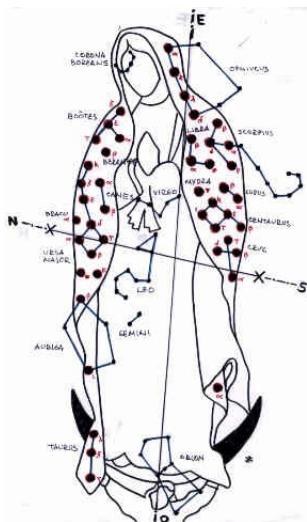
Here you can find a summary list of some of the symbols. It can take hundred of pages to explain all of them.

1. Stands before a Brilliant Light - Sun rays completely surround the Virgin of Guadalupe as if to indicate that she is their dawn. She is the Mother of Light, Mother of the Child-Son, Mother of the True God. She makes Him descend to the "center of the moon" (Mexico in Nahuatl) to born, to illuminate and to give life.

Our Blessed Mother's Image surrounded by luminous light, standing on the moon, and with stars on her mantle reflects the description found in the Book of Revelation: "A great sign appeared in the sky, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars" (12:1).

These rays are also symbols of divine victory over the pagan religion. Sunrays were symbolic of the Aztec god Huitzilopochtli. Therefore, our Blessed Mother, standing before the rays, shows that she proclaims the true God who is greater than Huitzilopochtli and who eclipses his power.

2. Blue Mantel with stars - Blue was a sign of royalty, a sign of virginity. The blue star sprinkled cloak is the "Tilma de Turquesa" (turquoise tilma) used by the nobles that denoted the rank and importance of the bearer.



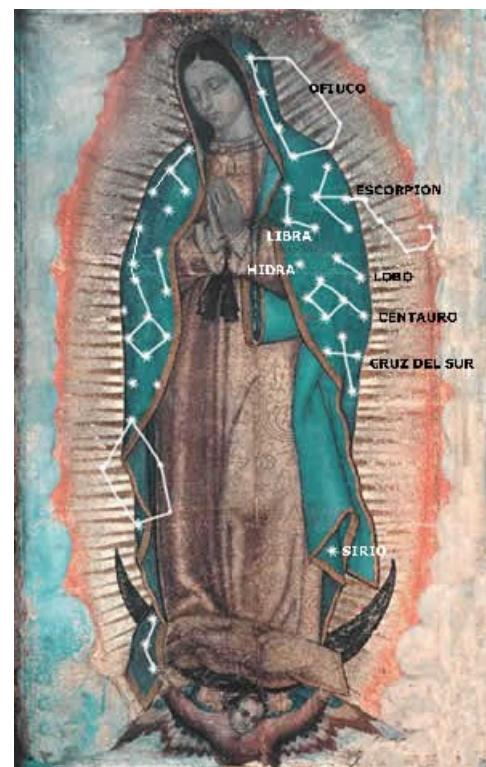
Indians lived by the stars and here she wore them showing her God is more powerful than the stars. The stars on her mantle indicate that she comes from Heaven, as Queen and loving Mother.

The sky of the winter solstice, which took place on a Tuesday, December 12, 1531, at 10:30, Mexico City time, is represented very accurately on the Virgin's mantle.

Interestingly, the research of Father Mario Sanches and Dr. Juan Hernandez Illescas in 1981, attests that the stars on the mantle appear exactly as they would have in the sky at the moment Juan Diego opened his tilma before Bishop Zumárraga on December 12, 1531.

The main constellations of the Northern sky can be seen on the right of the mantle. On the left, the Southern ones, which can be seen from the Tepeyac in winter at dawn. The East is situated in the upper part and the West in the lower part. The mantle is opened and there are other groups of stars, which are not marked in the Image, but they are present in the sky. The Boreal Crown is located above the Virgin's head; Virgo is on her chest, in the region of her hands. Leo on Her womb, precisely above the sign of Nahui Ollin, with his main star Regulo, the small king. Gemini, the twins, is found in the region of the knees and Orion is located where the Angel is.

Summarizing, the main stars of the winter constellations can be identified on the Virgin's mantle. All of them are in the right place.



3. Head Bowed - Indian culture gods and goddesses looked you straight in the eye to show their power and were often depicted with large eyes. Mary, with her head bowed, showed she was neither a god nor goddesses, that there was a higher power above her.

For the Aztecs, when a woman does not have a tied up hair meant that she was pregnant. How ever, she had a part in the middle of the head what meant that she was virgin. In the form she has her hair meant that **she was a pregnant virgin**.

4. Grayish skin - Color of the skin of the 1st generation of intermarriage of the Spaniards with the Indians of the Americas. Message for us is: we are neither Indian, Spanish, French, American, etc ... but all ONE people in the eyes of GOD.

5. Forehead - Dove (Holy Spirit).

6. David the King (Prophet).

7. Tiny images in eyes.

8. Brooch with black Cross - Recalling the death of Christ on the Cross for the salvation of all mankind. The gold brooch under her neck also represents sanctity.

9. Solomon the King.

10. Heart on the back of the hand - Sacred Heart as we depict it with flames above. Only in Guadalupe and Fatima apparitions have this sign on the hand appeared which shows they are related.

 11. Key between her hands - Hands are folded pointing upward towards Heaven. Prayer is the KEY to Heaven. Her hands are joined in prayer of supplication, therefore not a goddess; there is someone greater than Her.

Her right hand is whiter and delicate. The left hand is darker and stouter. They symbolize the union of two different races.

12. The Nativity, The Babe lying in the manager, the ox, a mule, and the lambs.

13. Scourging of Jesus at the pillar and Christ dying on the cross.

14. The Cross of Calvary, the Cave of Bethlehem and the rivers of Living Water (Jesus).

15. Fur Cuffs - Symbolizes royalty.

16. Abraham.

17. Holy Face.

18. Black sash - In means pregnancy (new life). This would indicate she was pregnant with the Child Jesus at the time of the apparition. The ends of the bow, in the Aztec word represented the end of a cycle and the starting of a new age. In the Image it meant that with Jesus starts a new age for the old and the new world.

Gynecological measurements have determined that the Virgin in the Image has the physical dimensions of a woman who is pregnant. Under the belt that holds the dress in place, at the very location of the embryo, a flower with four petals stands out.



19. Nahui Ollin.- Sun Flower (flower with four petals) – **This is the main symbol of the Image.** An Aztec symbol, which represents the presence of God. She has it on her belly. This is showing that she is the mother of God and it is marking the place where the baby is located. This Nahui Ollin was a symbol of plentitude, fecundity and new life

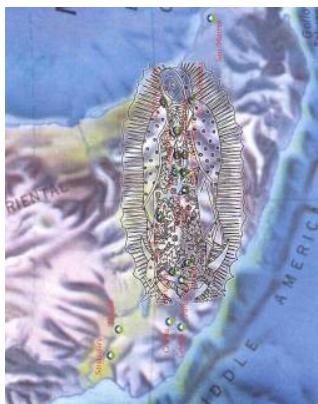
The Solar Flower is the most familiar of Aztec hieroglyphs, and which symbolized for them divinity, the center of the earth, heaven, time, and space.

The proportions of Mary's bodily dimensions are entirely consistent with the stage of pregnancy on December 9th for Jesus birth to occur on Christmas day. This is the graphic conclusion of gynecologist Carlos Fernandez del Castillo.

One of the physicians who studied the tilma placed his stethoscope down the sash and listened rhythmic heartbeats. They repeated 115 per minute, like the heartbeats of a baby in the womb.

The tilma temperature is always 98.6 Fahrenheit, like an alive human been.

20. Jewish dress of two thousand years ago - Mary was Jewish. Her clothing also has special significance. The rose color of our Blessed Mother's dress has two interpretations, either as a symbol of the dawn of a new era, or as sign of martyrdom for the faith.



21. Gold thread design in dress - It has also been found that by imposing a topographical map of central Mexico on the Virgin's dress, the mountains, rivers and principal lakes coincide with the decoration on this dress.

22. LUZ - Light in Spanish.

23. Daniel the Prophet.

24. Jesus in the Sepulcher.

25. US (United States) - There were no states or countries at that time, only known as the Americas (Patron Saint of America).

26. Crested Moon - Indians worshipped Tezcatlipoca, god of night. He was represented as a crested moon. The Blessed Mother's standing on the moon indicates divine triumph over evil.

27. Bible - Old and New Testaments. In Genesis, Mary is the woman who will crush the head of the serpent.

28. Cherub (Angel) - Shows that Our Blessed Mother is a heavenly being. An angel, a symbol of royalty for the Indians, supports her. The angel is holding: the pink dress represents earth; the blue mantle represents heaven meaning: Heaven and earth are witnesses to the truth of the apparition message.

The angel wings are like eagle wings. They are asymmetrical and colorful. The tones are very similar to the colors of the Mexican bird tzinitzcan. This was the bird that Juan Diego listened to announce him the apparition.

31. Jesus' hands blessing the bread at the Last Supper.

32. Hands raised with Child - Presentation of Jesus in Temple.

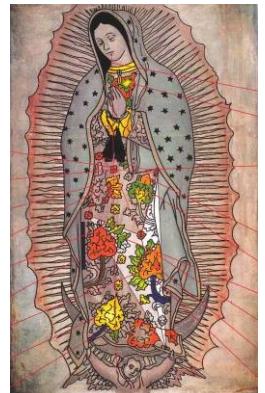
33. Angel holding up big baby could also represent the Presentation in the Temple of Jesus.

34. Judas and the demon face (two-faced). In his hands he holds the money bags (Judas sold Jesus for 30 pieces of silver.)

35. Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane - Jesus kneeling in prayer by a rock in the garden.

36. Clouds surrounding the entire Image – They meant an Advent, God was arriving.

Many other details of the Image of Mary form an extraordinary document for our age. It have been listed some of the symbols, but really each object in Guadalupe's Virgin Holy Image has a meaning and it could take several days to explain everything. This is only a summary of the most important and interesting ones.



5. PICTURE OF REMARKABLE BEAUTY.

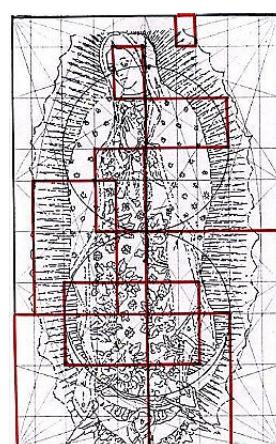
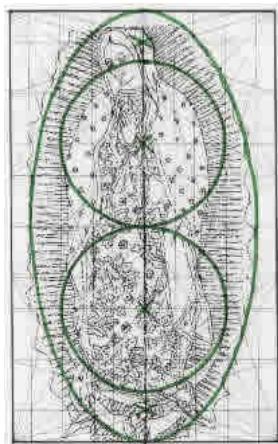


Regarding a picture analysis of our Lady of Guadalupe, we could say that it is a picture of remarkable beauty. According with Alberti, in a painting we must observe in general terms the colour, the line and the composition. About the composition, we define it as the harmonic union of the parts to make a whole, making an unity in the variety of the objects. One of the most beautiful manners to obtain it, is the golden, gold or divine proportion It is formed by an square to which a rectangle is added, in order to make an space in which the minor side belongs to the bigger in relation of 1 to 1.6181 denominated golden number. This golden proportion appears in all art expressions. From Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece, until now. It had been studied by Pitagoras, Euclides and Vitrubio. In the Renaissance it was investigated by Uccello, De la Francesca, Pacioli and Alberti. Michelangelo, Raphael, Leonardo and Durero utilize it frequently and also modern painters as Mondrian. It is also used in the sculpture and in the architecture since Ictinus in the Parthenon until Le Corbusier. It is finded also in the proportions of the different parts of the human body or in several animals, is the model of growing of the vegetable gems, snails fossils and may be identified in the form of the Galaxies and in association of atoms from some molecules. For all those things it is an important technic element that gives unit, equilibrium, balance, elegance in all Universal Art.

Regarding the central seam of the Juan Diego's "tilma", the golden proportion is identified clearly in our Lady of Guadalupe's Image. This golden proportion gives an special beauty. It is also an important argument to show the aesthetic value of the Image to which it is not possible to add or to take away any element if their originals place without deterioring its beauty.

It makes also unprobable, from the aesthetic point of view, that we can find so many signals of different disciplines, it is impossible to consider that is only a fruit of the casuality.

According to studies carried out by Dr. Hernández Illescas in 1984, the "ayate" presents the elements of composition and volume of the rectangle and aureate proportion, of the art of modeling of the early Renaissance, a fact that makes it remarkably beautiful. An unpublished angle, is the iconological and iconographic study of the worshipped Image of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The result of such studies is the extraordinary discovery of the fact that both the American and the Mediterranean-occidental symbols are present in the Image. It is worth remembering that Iconography and Iconology are part of the History of Art, both disciplines study the images and their particular or universal meanings.



6. THE TILMA WITHSTOOD A CONCENTRATED NITRIC ACID SPILL ON IT (1791), AS WELL AS A BOMB BLAST IN 1921.

An accident occurred while attempting to clean the glass covering the tilma when a relatively large amount of nitric acid seeped down on the tilma itself. The expected result would have been for the fabric of the tilma to be destroyed or for the Image on the tilma itself to be discolored. However, no such damage actually happened, only a mild streaking in one corner appeared. Time has been erased the stain.

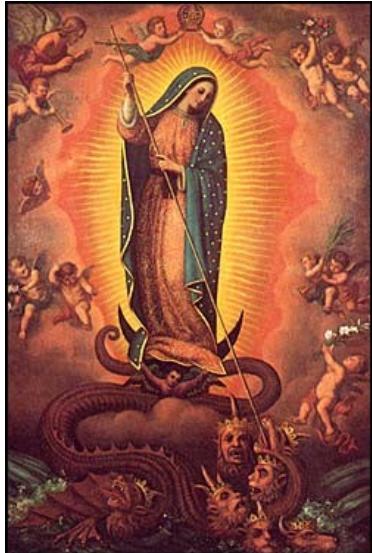




At the beginning of the 20th century, a painful period of revolutions in Mexico, a load of dynamite was put by unbelievers at the foot of the Image, in a vase of flowers. The explosion destroyed the marble steps on the main altar, the candelabras, all the flower-holders. The marble altarpiece was broken into pieces, the brass Christ on the tabernacle was bent. The windows in many of the houses near the basilica were broken, but the pane of glass that was protecting the Image was not even cracked. The Image remained intact. Since 1993, the tilma is protected by bullet-proof glass in the Basilica of Guadalupe.

7. THE MOST IMPORTANT ONE: THE EVENTS THAT FOLLOWED HAVE NEVER BEEN DUPLICATED BEFORE OR SINCE ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD, AT ANY TIME.

By their fruits you will know them. Matthew 7, 15 - 20.



Even the Spanish people destroyed many temples and idols, the Aztecs continued worshiping their gods in secret. Naturally, they did not want to convert to the new religion brought by the conquerors. They were very very sad with the conquest.

History records the greatest miracle of Guadalupe: after years of frustrating efforts to convert the Indians, over nine million Indians had converted within ten years. There is no other explanation for this phenomenon.

It is believed that Our Lady used the Aztec Nahuatl word of **coatlaxopeuh** which is pronounced "quatlasupe" and sounds remarkably like the Spanish word Guadalupe. **Coa** meaning serpent, **tla** being the noun ending which can be interpreted as "the", while **xopeuh** means to crush or stamp out. So Our Lady must have called herself the one "who crushes the serpent."

This recalls the prophecy of Genesis 3:15: I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; She will crush your head, and you will strike at his heel.



We must remember that the Aztecs offered annually at least 20,000 men, women and children in human sacrifice to their gods. In 1487, just in a single 4 days long ceremony for the dedication of a new temple in Tenochtitlan, some 80,000 captives were killed in human sacrifice.

Certainly, in this case She crushed the serpent, and few years later millions of the natives were converted to Christianity.

If you want to see more about the meaning of her name:
<http://www.sancta.org/nameguad.html>

Numerous technical examiners of the Holy Tilma converted not only to the True Faith, but also this awareness, when trying to describe God's Mother in earthly terms; they discovered instead the mystery of her presence and mission.

Guadalupe is the most frequented Marian shrine in the whole world. Every year up to 20 million pilgrims come to Mexico's capital from all over the world, three times as many as visit Lourdes. Only the Vatican receives more pilgrims.

Each December 12, more than 3 million visit Guadalupe shrine. In 2004, 6.5 million attended between December 9 and 12, pilgrimages groups came in buses, bicycles or on foot to the capital, according to local authorities.

WHERE we can find something like that? It is very unusual.

An incredible list of miracles, cures and interventions are **attributed to God by her intercession**.

Since the apparitions of 1531, 25 of 45 popes have made pronouncements on Our Lady of Guadalupe. Here are some of them:

- 1557 The Archbishop of Mexico canonically establishes the truth of the apparitions.
- 1736 Mexico loses 700 000 lives to the plague. In 1737 Our Lady of Guadalupe is declared Patroness of the country and December 12 is proclaimed both a civil and holy day.
- 1754 The Sacred Congregation of Rites in Rome issues a decree approving the Office and Mass for Our Lady of Guadalupe.
- 1754 Pope Benedict XIV issues a Bull approving Our Lady of Guadalupe as Patroness of Mexico. He quotes Psalm 147: "**To no other nation has such a wonder been done.**"
- 1887 Pope Leo XIII orders the crowning of the sacred Image
- 1894 Pope Leo XIII approves new Office and Mass for Our Lady of Guadalupe
- 1895 The crowning of the Image of Our Lady of Guadalupe by two Archbishops of Mexico, one the personal delegate of Pope Leo XIII. The pope wrote: "The Mexican people rejoices before your wonderful Image ... may it preserve its faith, strong and immovable."
- 1910 Pope Pius X proclaims Our Lady of Guadalupe the Patroness of Latin America
- 1933 Coronation of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Rome itself by Pope Pius XI.
- 1945 Pope Pius XII ordered the Image to be crowned again on October 12 and pronounced her the Empress of all the Americas. During his reign, His Holiness Pope Pius XII ranked the sanctuary of Our Lady of Guadalupe second among Catholic churches. "The Most Blessed Virgin must be proclaimed Queen, not only because she is the Mother of God, but also because it was God's Will that she should play a unique part in the work of our eternal salvation," proclaimed Pope Pius XII.
- 1960 During his reign, Pope John XXIII composed a prayer to Our Lady of Guadalupe, invoking Mary as Mother of the Americas and Heavenly missionary of the New World.
- 1966 Pope Paul VI sent a beautiful Golden Rose to the Basilica on March 25.
- 1979 Pope John Paul II visited the Basilica on January 27. He was the first pope to do so. He called upon her assistance as Mother of the Americas.
- 1981 Cardinal Casaroli, Papal Legate, on December 12, at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, referred to the sanctuary of Our Lady of Guadalupe as the Marian heart of the Americas.
- 1990 Pope John Paul II visited the Basilica for the second time calling upon Mary as the "Star of Evangelization". This same year, Pope John Paul II beatified Juan Diego in the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe along with several Mexican martyrs.
- 1999 Pope John Paul II visits for a forth time the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico and issues his Apostolic Exhortation Ecclesia in America. N. 11 of this document explains how the Americas came to encounter the Lord through Our Lady of Guadalupe. In his homily from the Solemn Mass, he declared the date of December the 12th as a Liturgical **Holy Day for the whole continent.**
- 2002 July 31st. Pope John Paul II returns to the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe to canonize St. Juan Diego, **the first American Native to be canonized.**
- 2005 Pope Benedict XVI, offer prayers at a statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe and he said that the people of Mexico and Latin America invoke Mary as mother under the title of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

OTHER INTERESTING COMMENTS:

THE VIRGIN IS NOT JUST ABOUT THE CHURCH - SHE IS MEXICO

In my country there is a saying: "While 90 of 100 Mexicans are Catholic, it is certain that 100 of 100 Mexicans are Guadalupans, devotees to the Virgin." There are some Mexicans that do not believe in the apparition, but certainly there are more Mexicans that believe in it.

When anthropologists search for a common bond, for the thing that gives Mexicans their national identity, they have to reject the usual concepts. Language did not unite Mexico, as 117 dialects were deciphered by 1575. Ethnic background didn't provide a bond, not in a country of people who have evolved from raping Spanish fathers, enslaved Indian mothers, with a goodly number of Austrians, French, Germans, Irish, Black, and Chinese added during the ensuing centuries. The geography of this land ranges from tropical seacoasts to grand mountains, huge deserts and mountain mesas. Certainly neither class structure and education, nor occupations nor politics serve to bring the people together as a whole. Even the vast majority of the country served by the Catholic Church finds that alone does not make them brothers.

Truly, the Virgin of Guadalupe is the band that binds this disparate nation into a whole. She is the common denominator of this land. She is giving a sense of Nationalism and Patriotism to the Mexicans.

A MESSAGE OF TRUST AND HOPE. OUR LADY REPEATS US THAT SHE IS OUR PROTECTOR MOTHER.

One of the most important messages that Our Lady gave to Juan Diego is contained in these famous phrases:

"... I am the ever virgin Holy Mary, Mother of the True God for whom we live, of the Creator of all things, Lord of heaven and the earth. I wish that a temple be erected here quickly, so I may therein exhibit and give all my love, compassion, help, and protection, because I am your merciful mother, to you, and to all the inhabitants on this land and all the rest who love me, invoke and confide in me; listen there to their lamentations, and remedy all their miseries, afflictions and sorrows..."

... that nothing should frighten or grieve you. Let not your heart be disturbed. Do not fear that sickness, nor any other sickness or

anguish. **Am I not here, who is your Mother?** Are you not under my protection? Am I not your health? Are you not happily within my fold? What else do you wish? Do not grieve nor be disturbed by anything."

Mary is telling us:

1. God is the only God and Creator of everything. Mary is not God. She is only His creature and He has given her a great mission.
2. We should not live sad and anguish because Mary helps us and she has answers.
3. God and his commandments and ways should be in the first place in our lives.
4. The source of our happiness is God.
5. Mary takes us to Jesus. If she does not take you to him, then she is not Mary. It is something else.
6. Mary defends you from de malignant. He is looking for you living sad, anguish and your condemnation.
7. Mary only wants: You can know Jesus, love Him and that you live for Him

THE IMAGE AND THE PRO-LIFE MOVEMENT.



Our Lady of Guadalupe has been declared the "Patroness of the Unborn."

Like was said before, nine million Aztecs were converted to Christ by the power of the Image of Our Lady of Guadalupe. At that time, the Aztec peoples were practicing human sacrifice. As a result of the Image's presence among the people, their hearts were converted to the true God and the practice of human sacrifice was abolished.

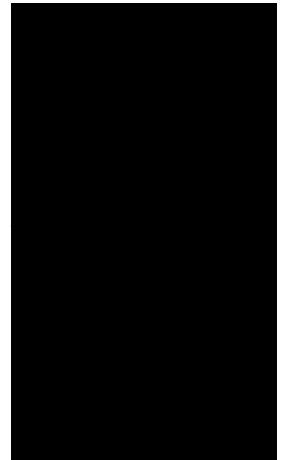
Unfortunately, the current society practice millions of human sacrifices of innocent babies through abortion. The Image of Guadalupe Virgin is being used again to change the hearts of our people. She is being used to avoid abortions that are causing the loss of many human lives. As well, Our Lady of Guadalupe has been used to heal and to help to find peace in women that suffer because they decided to practice an abortion.

WHO WAS THIS JUAN DIEGO?

On July 2002 he was the first indigenous canonized by the Catholic Church.

You can read more about him and you can find a list of some of the documents that prove the existence of Juan Diego:

<http://www.sancta.org/juandiego.html>
<http://www.interlupe.com.mx/3-e.html>
<http://www.virgenguadalupe.org.mx/> (Spanish)



SOME APPROVED MARIAN APPARITIONS.

The Church does not require belief in any apparition or other private revelation. However, she does exercise her judgment for the protection of the faithful in declaring some apparitions to be inauthentic, others to be "worthy of belief." Investigations into alleged apparitions are rigorous. The three which follow have been judged worthy of belief, and devotions related to them have been encouraged by the truth. Each has miracles associated with it, which are unexplainable by the best scientists in the world, as testimony to its authenticity: *Guadalupe, Lourdes y Fatima*.

WHY DOES MARY HAVE SO MANY FACES WHEN APPEARING TO HER DEVOTEES?

We should remember that independently from apparitions, Mary has been endowed with countless titles and advocations. They reflect in part Mary's identity, personality and role. But even more importantly, they express our love, creativity and personal as well as collective needs.

The history of apparitions suggests that Mary usually chooses the form and message of apparition, which is most adapted or needed in a given situation. The many faces of Mary are proof that God does not work independently from us but mostly with and always for us.

DO CATHOLICS REALLY WORSHIP THE VIRGIN MARY? DISTINCTION BETWEEN ADORATION AND VENERATION

Some have made accusations that Catholics adore Mary, her statues and paintings. Is it true? Certainly not. We do not worship Mary. We worship only God, and Mary is not God.

Catholics, since the early days of the Church, have made a distinction between the honor we call *adoration* or worship, which is given only to God, and the honor we call *veneration*, which is given to Mary and the saints. Christians have venerated Mary since the third

century because he is the Mother of Jesus; she is found in the Bible numerous times; and, she is the best example we could have of a person of faith and grace.

It is true that there have been people who, through love of the Blessed Mother or through lack of religious formation, seem to *adore* her in their devotional practices. The Catholic Church does not approve such practices. In fact, the Church seeks to correct such abuses by religious education.

No, Catholics do not worship Mary, if by worshiping is meant adoring. She is not God for us, has never been and will never be. Addressing prayer to Mary is like asking a dear and close friend for help. Do we make a God of our friend when asking him to keep us in his prayers? Do we divinize him/her when asking for his prayerful support in sickness and the trials of life? Believers on earth and in heaven constitute a living community, which the major Christian denominations recognize as the communion of saints. The saints in heaven are not dead. Their Christian example of virtuous living and their closeness to God makes of them powerful allies for us struggling mortals. They do not take God's place; they are an expression of his grace.

Likewise, there is nothing in Mary that would not have been in God and come from him. She is a pure product of God; this is the essential meaning of Mary's sinlessness. Never forget: if God wanted the exclusively direct relation between him and you and me he would never send Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God, never allow scripture to be the foundation of our faith, never encourage his Son to found the Church or institute the sacraments. Christianity is the religion of mediation, essential and foundational in Christ; participative and subordinate in his Church and in varying degrees in the believers.

INTERCESSORY PRAYER.

Intercessory prayer is very pleasing to God (see I Timothy 2:1-4). He particularly loves it when His children come before Him as a group interceding for others (Matthew 18:19-20). If this true of the saints on earth, then why not of those in heaven as well? They are our brothers and sisters; they care about our well-being and salvation. They also pray on our behalf, and even join us in our prayers. This is why we Catholics ask the saints to pray for us.

The Bible says that our prayers can be hindered by sin or selfishness (James 4:3). Since the saints are now with Jesus and free from sin (Romans 6:7), their prayers can actually be more efficacious than ours. They only ask for what they know to be God's will for His Church, so they are always heard, as the Bible says: "*If we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.*" (I John 5:14-15)

Now, Mary is among the saints in heaven, as we have seen. So all of this is true of her as well. She is united with us in the Body of Christ; she knows what we are going through, cares about us and prays to God for us. Since her prayers are untainted by sin or selfishness, God hears and answers her. Therefore the Blessed Virgin Mary does in fact influence our souls and our lives from heaven.

MARY AND THE BIBLE

Mary is highlighted numerous times in the Bible. As Father Juan Diaz, S.J., writes in his wonderful book, *Miriam the Galilean Woman*, the first one to begin praising Mary is God. He greets her through the words of the angel in Luke 1:28, the first words of the Hail Mary: "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women." Mary accepted the message of the angel and agreed to be the Mother of the Lord.

Later, in chapter two, Luke features Mary in the infancy narratives and at the presentation of Jesus in the temple.

Matthew, quoting Isaiah, speaks of the virgin birth and of the Nativity.

When Jesus starts His public life, it is at the request of Mary during the wedding feast of Cana (John 2:1-12). During Jesus' public life, Mary is mentioned; and, at the foot of the cross, Jesus gives Mary to his beloved disciple, John.

The accounts of the Resurrection, the Ascension and Pentecost all indicate the presence of Mary. It is almost surprising that Mary is not honored by other churches, because she is present at almost all the significant moments in Christ's life described in the Holy Scriptures, is not honored by other churches. It seems a glaring omission.

We Catholics believe that the Christian faith is incomplete without Mary.

WOMAN OF GRACE; WOMAN OF FAITH

Our devotion to Mary should move us to see her as a wonderful model of faith whom we should imitate. She was truly human in every respect except sin; she knew *fear* and *embarrassment* when she was pregnant out of wedlock; she knew *sorrow* as she realized King Herod sought to kill her son; she felt *confusion* when she and Joseph found Jesus in the temple after they had feared he was lost; she felt *devastated* by the suffering and death of Jesus; and, finally she must have felt terrible *loneliness* after the deaths of both Joseph and Jesus.

Yet the Scriptures describe her as a woman of grace and faith; someone whose example we need today.

MARY IN CHRISTIAN TRADITION

It is not difficult to see why Mary has had a most important place in Catholic tradition through the centuries. A wall of the Catacomb of Saint Priscilla in Rome has a simple painting of Mary dating from the second century. Father Diaz' book, mentioned above, quotes this early Christian prayer from the fourth century:

"Your mantle of mercy protects us, O Mother of God. Do not forsake us in our need, but free us from every evil, you who are the only pure and worthy one of praise."

The Rosary, the Hail Mary, the Angelus and other Marian prayers have been to us, and Christians of every age, a great comfort. Mary takes our prayers to the Father and her Son, Jesus. What better intercessor could we have?

We honor Mary under different titles. "The Mother of God," the "Immaculate Conception," the "Mother of the Church," and "Our Lady of Guadalupe" are examples. These and other titles bring out the richness of who she is. Some of the finest art and music through the centuries have been created in honor of the Virgin Mary.

DO CATHOLICS ADORE IMAGES LIKE IDOLS?

We only adore God.

The Second Council of Nicea, following the divinely inspired teaching of our Holy Fathers and the tradition of the Catholic Church, vigorously defended the veneration of the images of the Saints: "we order with ever rigour and exactitude that, similar to the depictions of the precious and vivifying Cross of our redemption, the sacred images to be used for veneration, are to be depicted in mosaic or any other suitable material, and exposed in the holy churches of God, on their furnishings, vestments, on their walls, as well as in the homes of the faithful and in the streets, be they images of Our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ, or of Our Immaculate Lady, the holy Mother of God, or of the Angels, the Saints and the just."

Sacred images "are given due honour and veneration, not because there are believed to contain some divinity or power justifying such cult, nor because something has to be requested of an image, nor because trust is reposed in them, as the pagans used to do with idols, but because the honour given to sacred images is given to the prototypes whom they represent."

Deuteronomy explained the prohibition of every representation of God by the hand of man. Nevertheless, already in the Old Testament, God ordained or permitted the making of images that pointed symbolically toward salvation by the incarnate Word: so it was with the bronze serpent, the Ark of the Covenant, and the cherubim. The Christian veneration of images is not contrary to the first commandment, which proscribes idols. Indeed, "the honor rendered to an image passes to its prototype," and "whoever venerates an image venerates the person portrayed in it."

HOW TO SEND PETITIONS TO OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE IN A MASS AT THE BASILICA.

There are many places where you can write your petitions to Our Lady on line. In the official website of Guadalupe Virgin you can write your petitions and they will be offered in 9:00 am mass at the Basilica.

<http://www.virgendeguadalupe.org.mx/peticiones.htm>

I hope that you found interesting this information. Thank you for reading this long document.

If you need a Spanish version, please contact Ana Hernandez alhernant@mac.com

Si necesita una versión en Español, por favor contacte a Ana Lilia Hernández Torres alhernant@mac.com

If you need to find the original documents, do not hesitate to contact.