



### *SANTOS: OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE*

“Our Lady of Guadalupe” is the patron saint of Mexico. Her position in Catholic iconography evolves from a story involving a 57-year-old Aztec convert, Juan Diego, who encountered the Virgin Mary on a hillside in the Tepayac hills in central Mexico. Mary wished to have a church built on the site in order to have a location in which the compassion of Christ could help the inhabitants of New Spain. After two unsuccessful attempts to convince the Bishop-elect, Fray Juan de Zumarraga, that he had actually experienced the miracle of the Virgin Mary, Juan Diego received a sign of her divinity to present to the Bishop. She sent him to collect roses, which she arranged carefully in his cloak, and sent him to see the Bishop. When Juan Diego unfolded the cloak to show the Bishop the roses, instead there was an image of the Virgin Mary inscribed on the material. The Bishop was convinced and a church was built on the spot. Today, it is a cathedral and the most visited religious site in the Western Hemisphere.

Our Lady of Guadalupe is the patron saint of Mexico. She is credited with ending a devastating epidemic that ravaged Mexico City in 1736-1737. She was named Patroness of Mexico City in 1737, and of New Spain in 1746. In addition, her image has been associated with Mexican nationalism, both in during the Revolt of 1810, and the Zapata rebellion of 1914.

Our Lady of Guadalupe is the most important saint, and the most important *bulto/santo* in the Catholic Church in the Southwest.