

Baltimore's Catholic Hispanic Community celebrates Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe

The Archdiocese of Baltimore's annual Mass for Our Lady of Guadalupe will take place Sunday, December 11, 2011 at 12:30 p.m. at Sacred Heart of Jesus/Sagrado Corazon de Jesus Parish in Baltimore's Highlandtown neighborhood. Archbishop Edwin F. O'Brien will concelebrate the Mass with Bishop Mitchell T. Rozanski, Auxiliary Bishop of Baltimore and Vicar for Hispanics, and the Spanish-speaking priests of the Archdiocese of Baltimore. Rev. Robert Wojtek, C.Ss.R., Pastor of Sacred Heart of Jesus/Sagrado Corazon de Jesus Parish, will preach the homily.

In this colorful celebration of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the local Hispanic community seeks to celebrate the symbolic heart of its own culture and religious experience, to protect the dignity and sacredness of human life, and promote the reconciliation of all people.

Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared to an Indian peasant, St. Juan Diego, on Dec. 12, 1531, on Tepeyac Hill, near what is now Mexico City.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops reports that Latinos are on track to become a majority in the U.S. Catholic Church, with already more than 50 percent of American Catholics under the age of 25 Latino. A Spanish priest celebrated the first Catholic Mass in North America at St. Augustine, Florida 500 years ago. About 70 percent of the 47 million Hispanics in the United States are Catholic.

In the Archdiocese of Baltimore, 18 Catholic parishes have Masses in Spanish. This is the first celebration of the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe at the newly-created multicultural parish of Sacred Heart of Jesus-Sagrado Corazon de Jesus.