

Baltimore's Catholic Hispanic Community Celebrates Our Lady of Guadalupe with Street Procession, Mass

The Archdiocese of Baltimore's annual Mass for Our Lady of Guadalupe will take place Sunday, December 13, 2009 at 2:00 p.m. at the Baltimore Basilica, Cathedral and Mulberry Streets. Archbishop Edwin F. O'Brien, Archbishop of Baltimore, will con-celebrate 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.

Prior to the start of the Mass, a vehicle procession will follow the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe through the streets of Baltimore beginning at 11 at Our Lady of Pompei Church, 229 S. Conkling St., and ending at the Basilica.

At 1 p.m. the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe will be followed into the Basilica by children carrying flowers and wearing traditional costumes that reflect the different countries and cultures which make up the rich diversity of Baltimore's Hispanic community.

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. Already more than 50 percent of American Catholics under the age of 25 are 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 churches have Masses in Spanish.

Media note: Media planning to cover this event are asked to contact Sean Caine at (410) 547-5378 or scaine@archbalt.org