

Hispanics celebrate Our Lady of Guadalupe

Archbishop Edwin F. O'Brien will be the main celebrant for the annual archdiocesan Our Lady of Guadalupe Mass Dec. 13.

The 2 p.m. Mass, held for the first time at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Baltimore, is expected to draw several hundred Spanish-speaking people from countries spanning the globe.

"It's a profound devotion of the people of Mexico, but also for Hispanics here," said Maria Johnson, director of the office of Hispanic Ministry for the Archdiocese of Baltimore. "All the countries recognize Our Lady of Guadalupe as patroness of the Americas."

Father Hector Mateus-Ariza, associate pastor of St. John, Westminster, will deliver the homily.

Johnson said for those who don't speak Spanish, the celebration "is an opportunity to see how deep the devotion is for Our Lady and to experience participation in the Mass."

In December 1531, the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to the Indian peasant St. Juan Diego on Tepeyac Hill, near what is present-day Mexico City. She left her image on his "tilma," or cloak, which was filled with roses.

In honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe, children donned in traditional attire will participate in a 1 p.m. procession, carrying roses through the church, which they will present to an image of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

In a reception at the Catholic Center following the Mass, Los Matachines dressed in elaborate costumes will dance in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

The number of Hispanic Boy Scouts has been increasing throughout the state of Maryland, according to the Baltimore Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America. This year, Scouts representing the Hispanic community will serve as honor guards during the Our Lady of Guadalupe Mass.