



SANCTUARY OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE Mexico City

The Basilica of Guadalupe, located in Mexico City, is one of the most important Marian shrines in the world, as well as a central symbol of faith and national identity in Mexico.

The apparitions of the Virgin of Guadalupe to Juan Diego took place in December 1531. The Virgin appeared to him on four occasions on the hill of Tepeyac, asking him to build a temple in her honor. In the last appearance, the image of the Virgin miraculously appeared imprinted on Juan Diego's tilma, a cloak made of cactus fibers. This event is widely recognized and celebrated as one of the most momentous events in the religious and cultural history of Mexico.

The devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico is deep and ingrained. The Virgin of Guadalupe is considered the patroness of Mexico and is venerated by millions of people throughout the country. Her image is present in homes, churches, and public places, and her feast day, on December 12th, is one of the most important and crowded religious celebrations in Mexico.

The Basilica of Guadalupe annually receives millions of pilgrims in search of faith, hope, and spiritual consolation. Pilgrimages to the basilica, whether on foot or by transportation, are a deeply rooted tradition in Mexico. It is estimated that around 20 million people visit the Basilica of Guadalupe each year, making it one of the most visited religious destinations in the world.

The Virgin of Guadalupe is not only a symbol of Mexican faith. Her image is an emblem of unity and pride for Mexicans, as it represents the fusion between indigenous and Spanish cultures, as well as the appropriation of the Catholic religion brought to these lands by the Spanish during colonization. The Virgin of Guadalupe is considered a maternal and protective figure. Her image transcends religious and ethnic boundaries and has become a symbol of national identity.

The devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe is manifested in various forms in Mexico. The faithful come to the Basilica of Guadalupe to show their faith, make pilgrimages, and present their petitions to the Virgin. Many walk long distances from different parts of the country, some carrying candles, flowers, or images of the Virgin. Others attend Masses and special religious services, pray the rosary, and participate in Marian festivities.

The image of the Virgin of Guadalupe is revered not only as a religious figure but also as a symbol of hope, protection, and miracles. Numerous miracles and healings are attributed to her, and it is believed that she intercedes for her devotees before God. Her image is considered sacred and has been the subject of study and research, arousing admiration for both its artistic appearance and its supernatural origin.





The complex of the Sanctuary of the Basilica of Guadalupe is composed of several sites, temples, gardens, sculptures, and museums, each with its own historical, artistic, and spiritual significance. Below, I will mention some of them along with the year of their inauguration:

1. Chapel of the Hill (1531): Built on the hill of Tepeyac, the site where the apparitions of the Virgin of Guadalupe to Juan Diego took place. This is the first chapel dedicated to the Virgin Mary, which she requested to be built through Juan Diego to Fray Juan de Zumárraga, the bishop of Mexico in the 16th century.
2. Old Basilica of Guadalupe (1709): Constructed to accommodate the growing number of pilgrims, this basilica housed the iconic image of the Virgin of Guadalupe for over two centuries.
3. New Basilica of Guadalupe (1976): Inaugurated in 1976, this imposing modern structure stands alongside the old basilica and is the main place of worship in the current sanctuary complex. Its circular design and its roof shaped like a crown and mantle are internationally recognized.
4. Church of El Pocito (1709): This church, also known as the Chapel of El Pocito, houses a small image of the Virgin of Guadalupe known as "El Pocito." The church is a place of great devotion due to the belief in the miraculous water from the well located there and is considered one of the important sites of the sanctuary. It is a gem of New Spanish baroque architecture.
5. Church of San Juan Diego or First Hermitage (1531): This church is known as the First Hermitage or Chapel of San Juan Diego. This historic church is a sacred site of great importance as it was where Juan Diego safeguarded the venerable image of the Virgin while the Chapel of the Hill was being built. It is believed to be one of the places where the Virgin appeared to Juan Diego.
6. Fountain of Offerings (1976): Located in the garden of the Basilica of Guadalupe, the Fountain of Offerings is a monument dedicated to the Virgin of Guadalupe. It is situated in a visible location for pilgrims in the gardens of the Marian sanctuary. The fountain represents the devotion and offerings that indigenous Mexicans bring to the Virgin, such as flowers, candles, and corn. The characters represented include Juan Diego and Fray Juan de Zumárraga.

These sites are some of the most significant within the complex of the Marian sanctuary of the Basilica of Guadalupe. Each of them has its own historical and spiritual importance. Undoubtedly, all of this contributes to the experience not only of faith but also of those who visit Mexico's most important Marian sanctuary.





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