

An illustration of the Virgin of Guadalupe. She is depicted from the waist up, wearing a blue mantle with white stars and a pinkish-red tunic with a black sash. Her hands are clasped in prayer. Behind her is a large, golden, sunburst-like halo. The background is a bright blue sky with stylized green cacti on either side. The title text is overlaid on the lower part of the image.

# OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE AND HER DEAR JUANITO

Written by  
Sr. Marlyn Evangelina Monge, FSP

Illustrated by  
Amy Rodriguez



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Dedicated to my beloved mom, Evangelina Monge:  
By her daily lived example she has passed on to me,  
my siblings, and her grandchildren  
a deep faith in God and loving devotion to Our Lady.  
Thank you for teaching us how to be authentic disciples of Christ.





A desert landscape at night. The sky is dark blue and purple, filled with stars and a faint Milky Way. In the foreground, there are several saguaro cacti of various sizes, some with arms. The ground is sandy and covered with sparse, dry vegetation. In the background, there are dark, silhouetted mountains under the starry sky.

Dark. Still. Quiet.

Those are the words that best described the pre-dawn morning as Juan Diego found the well-worn path at the foot of Tepeyac hill. In many ways this December Saturday morning was like any other day: the world around him was asleep. His footsteps were the only sound that broke the silence.



Suddenly the most amazing sound filled the sky. The music was like singing birds. It was so beautiful he stopped to enjoy it. *Where is it coming from?* he wondered. *It seems to be coming from the top of this hill. It is like nothing I have ever heard. Am I dreaming? Am I in heaven?*

Just as suddenly as it started, the music stopped. Everything was quiet once again. Then a gentle voice called out in his native language, Nahuatl, “Juanito, Juan Dieguito.”



He recognized the affectionate nickname, but wondered who was calling him. *I have never seen anyone else on this path at this hour.* The voice, like the music, came from the summit. He climbed quickly to the top of the hill just as the sun began to rise. There he saw a young indigenous woman standing. The ground and plants near her gleamed like emeralds and turquoise. Her clothes glowed and it appeared that rays of sunlight were coming from her. Then she looked at him and smiled. *She is the most beautiful lady I have ever seen!* he realized.



“Come closer, my son,” she beckoned with a nod of her head.

*She must be a princess*, Juan Diego thought, so he knelt before her. Speechless in her presence, he just listened.

Looking at him with love, she asked, “My most beloved son, Juan Diego, where are you going?”

He replied, “I am going to the church in Tlatelolco for Mass and to learn more about the faith.”

“My dearest son,” she said, “I am the ever-Virgin Mary, Mother of the true God. I want a church built on this site so I can be a faithful Mother to you and all the people of this land. It will be a place where I can lead all my children to God. A place where people can come to seek my help. I am a compassionate Mother to all who cry out for mercy, to all who entrust their worries and fears to me, and to people of different ancestries. I am your Mother.”







“Go to Mexico City, my son,” she continued. “Let the bishop know that I have sent you. Tell him everything you have seen and all that I have told you. Go in peace and do the best you can.”

Juan Diego responded, “I am your humble servant, my most noble Lady.” He left immediately and took the path headed west to Mexico City.



When, at long last, he was given entrance into the bishop's home, Juan Diego told Bishop Juan de Zumarraga everything he had heard and seen. But the bishop didn't believe him. He thought that Juan Diego had imagined it all, or worse that it was the work of a demon. Disappointed, Juan Diego returned the way he had come.

Walking and lost in thought, he came across the place where the Virgin Mary had appeared to him—and there she was again!