

Rev. Paul A. Hottinger

Live in Harmony and Peace **Our Lady of Guadalupe** Monday, December 12, 2016
8:15 AM Zec 2:14-17; **Lk 1:39-47** (We are supposed to be able to teach people how to live the life of Christ by doing it ourselves first.)

The gospels tell of Mary who is pregnant and without a husband at the time, but who is concerned also for her kinswoman Elizabeth. Now part of this concern may have been concern for her own well-being and safety and the safety of her child, but she goes in haste to Judah emphasizing she didn't live in Judah. **Mary lived in Galilee** that was heathen land. There were Jews there in colonies, but it wasn't really part of Judea. It wasn't part of Israel anymore. It is today, but it wasn't then. So Mary is coming from the outskirts. **She was one of the so-called anawim, the poor of the Lord**, the poor of the Lord whom the governor Nehemiah told those returning to Israel and Jerusalem after the exile in Babylon, to treat like gentiles and to have nothing to do with and not to marry. These were the anawim, those people who never were part of the elite that had been exiled, that really produced the religion of the book that we are familiar with. They were not of that group. They weren't educated. They weren't artisans. So **Jesus himself grew up on the outside of society. And he and his mother always had concern for those on the outside, the marginalized.**

Today's reading abbreviates the Magnificat, but that also expresses this concern for the marginalized, the desire of God to touch those who are hungry, those who are needy. And this again is what the **apparition at Guadalupe** is about. It's about **Mary coming to the aid of an oppressed people** and taking on their very language. She spoke to Juan Diego in his language, not Spanish. Now you might wonder: well, what language does the Blessed Mother use when she speaks? Well of course the language of the person she is speaking to. She dressed in the garment of an Indian, and her face that is caught on the tilma is the face of an Indian woman; and she told

Juan Diego, “I am your mother, and I am the mother of God.” She said both those things: **“I am your mother; I am the mother of God,” putting these together, connecting things.**

This is our work as Christian people, connecting everything to God and his work. She said the God who created everything and sustains everything. **It is the will of this God to have all of us live together in harmony and peace.** That is our work, and that is our practice. That is what it means to be a practical Christian person, it is to be working toward this goal. It is nice when we can read stories of miraculous events, but basically **it’s God who is expecting us to be the miraculous event in the lives of other people.** We are supposed to be the ones who give shelter, not necessarily simply physical shelter either. **We are supposed to be able to teach people how to live the life of Christ by doing it ourselves first.** None of us of course can bear all the burdens of the evils of the world. We don’t have to. We simply have to make a statement. We have to make an effort. **We have to choose something and do it in God’s name.**