

## **Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> Week Advent Our Lady of Guadalupe 2022**

The shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe, near Mexico City, is one of the most celebrated places of pilgrimage in North America. On December 9<sup>th</sup> 1531, the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to an Indian convert, Juan Diego, and left with him a picture of herself impressed upon his cloak. Devotion to Mary under this title has continually increased, and today she is the Patroness of the Americas.

This special feast for Mexico is a reminder that God often chooses the most unlikely people to herald Good News. Juan Diego was influential in bringing the people of Mexico among others to Christ. Just as Mary brought Jesus into the world for its conversion, God used the Mary to bring people to her Son.

Christmas reminds us once again of the importance and value of Mary to our faith.

Balaam was a prophet of Baal. He was asked to curse the people of Israel. God, however thought otherwise and used Balaam to bless his people. Once again, God working in mysterious ways.

Whenever the image or the power of the leaders of the people in Jesus' day was challenged, they always shrank back and avoided committing themselves. Yet, Jesus knew they did not want an honest answer but were seeking some way to bring him down. What we do know is that some among these leaders and elders of the people acknowledge Jesus to be the Messiah and followed him. It would not be difficult to think that Mary could have played a big part in any conversion when questioned about her Son after his resurrection. Let us seek the help and guidance of Our Lady of Guadalupe to open us in a new way to Christ this Christmas, that his light will shine ever more brightly in our lives.

**Sean Connery used to take photos of himself up against every bookcase he ever saw.**

He loved his shelfies.

**I saw a long stick of bread posing for a photo.....** ... apparently it was a roll-model.