

Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe

On this day when we celebrate the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, we are reminded that on the tilma of Saint Juan Diego, Mary appears as a young Aztec maiden. She is just starting to show as pregnant. The point of that depiction is to remind us that Mary gave birth to Christ. But she also gave birth to him anew into that world in fifteen hundred and thirty-one. This serves as a reminder to each of us, that we also have the baby Jesus living in us because of our baptism. We must also find a way to bring Christ to birth in the world today. In this pandemic year of two thousand and twenty.

In Gospel of Saint Luke for today, Mary is portrayed as traveling to visit her relative Elizabeth, the wife of the priest Zacharias. Elizabeth is expecting a child. That child will become John the Baptist. He will become the voice of one crying out in the wilderness to prepare the way of the Lord. John will also point to Jesus as the Lamb of God.

Mary is waiting for Jesus. He will be the son of the Most High God, the Messiah, the Savior of the world. Elizabeth and Mary give birth to their children as completely dependent babies. Each one will form her son into the man he will grow to be. Each of them will have a special way of being in this world. John the Baptist in the desert, dressed as a prophet and proclaiming a message of repentance. Jesus will come as a simple teacher and powerful healer, and then as a worker of wonders, and finally as the Son of God capable of raising the dead and raising himself.

How do you and I give birth to this Jesus in our world today? Let me suggest just Three ways. What are the virtues of Jesus? What are the interests of Jesus? What is the way of Jesus?

The virtues of Jesus: Humility. Meekness. Truthfulness. Love.

When we act humbly in our families or at work or in the community, we give birth to Christ. Every time we act kindly towards another, we cause Christ to be born at that moment and in that situation. Every time we speak the truth, we defend the truth and live in the truth that makes Christ be born in our world. Every time we act in love, we bring Christ to birth in our world simply through our Love.

The interests of Jesus: The poor and needy. The widow and the orphan. The refugee and the migrant.

Every time we reach out a helping hand to the poor and needy, we give birth to Christ.

Every time we care for the widow or orphan, we give birth to Christ.

Every time we help those who have lost their homes, or who have left their homes or their countries, or who have traveled far to find a safe place to live, we have given birth to Christ.

The way of Jesus: Compassion. A heart that serves. A friendly hand. Available to love.

Every time we act compassionately toward others or every time we act with a helpful heart or every time we lend a helping hand, we not only show our love but also bring it to birth.

We are less than two weeks away from Christmas. A very different Christmas this year. But perhaps this Christmas can be a little more like that first Christmas when all they could do was to concentrate on the joy of the birth of the little one, the gift from God,. When all they could do was enter into the stillness. When all they could do was to listen to the heavenly music. When all they could do was to be thankful to God for the simple gift of his love—in abundance—in the person of Jesus, the Christ child, the One sent to save the world by living like one of us. There's still much to do. But. Let us not forget the One to whom we owe everything. Our Lord Jesus Christ.

May the Lord bless us today and give us his peace.