

Homily

Our Lady of Guadalupe

Rev. Peter G. Jankowski
December 12, 2019

Zec 2: 14-17

Judith 13: 18b, c, d, e, 19

Lk 1: 26-38

D G
Oh María, Madre Mía
D A
Oh Consuelo Del Mortal,
D G
Amparadme y Guiadme
D A D
A la Patria Celestial

Oh Mary, my mother
Oh consoler of mortals
Protect me and guide me
to the celestial peace.

D G
Con el ángel de María
D A D
Las grandezas celebrad;
D G
Transportados de alegría
D A D
Sus finezas publicad.

Salva Jubilo del cielo,
Del excelso dulce imán;
Salve hechizo de este suelo,
Triunfadora de Satán.

Quien a ti ferviente clama,

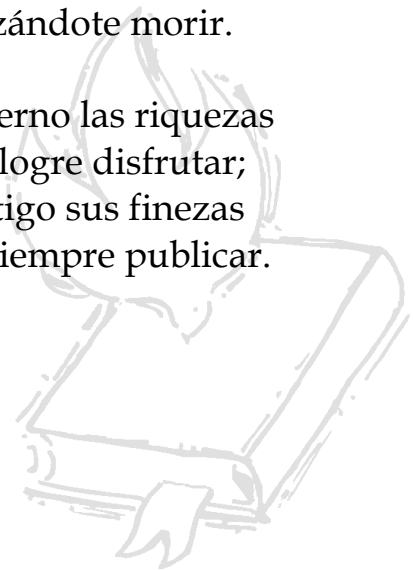
Halla alivio en el pesar;
Pues tu nombre luz derrama,
Gozo y bálsamo sin par.

De sus gracias tesorera
La nombro tu Redentor;
Con tal madre y medianera
Nada temas, pecador.

Pues te llamo con fe viva,
Nuestra, oh Madre, tu
bondad;
A mí vuelve compasiva
Tu mirada de piedad.

Hijo fiel quisiera amarte
Y por ti no más vivir;
Y por premio de ensalzarte,
Ensalzándote morir.

Del eterno las riquezas
Por ti logre disfrutar;
Y contigo sus finezas
Para siempre publicar.



As we celebrate our 480th anniversary of our Blessed Mother's appearance to St. Juan Diego in Tepayac, Mexico in the year 1531, I was reflecting on the various cultures that have gathered in church to celebrate these various feasts in honor of our Blessed Mother. As we have experienced with our celebration of *Our Lady of Guadalupe*, we here at St. Patrick's have honored Holy Mary with dancing, Mariachi music and an evening vigil in her honor. At the end of Mass, we will sing hymns of praise for our Blessed Mother and we will distribute flowers to all the women in our community who reflect the presence of Mother Mary in their lives. We will end the evening with more celebrating and dancing in our parish gym to celebrate the presence of this Theotokos, this mother of God within our American community, north and south.

In reflecting on my ministry here in Joliet, I came to realize how so many different cultures honor the presence of the Blessed Mother in their lives. Just recently, the Slovenian community gathered here at the parish to honor Mary with accordion music and this most popular hymn:

C Am
 Je angel Gospodov
 D G
 Oznanil Mariji,
 C Am
 In ona spočela
 D G
 od svetega Duha.

Češčena si, Marija
 Je angelski glas;
 Bo zadnja ura bila
 Marija, Prid po nas.

C Am
 I love you, O Mary,
 D G
 Your name I proclaim,
 C Am
 In joy and in sorrow,
 D G
 I call on your name.

Te amo, María
 Su nombre proclamo
 En buenos o malos tiempos
 A María yo canto

In the English Speaking community, one of the more popular hymns
 written in honor of Mary comes from Carey Landry, who wrote this
 most popular hymn some thirty years ago:

D G D
 Hail Mary, full of grace,
 G D
 the Lord is with you.
 G D
 Blessed are you among women,
 C G
 and blest is the fruit of
 D
 your womb, Jesus.

G D
 Holy Mary, Mother of God,
 G D C
 pray for us sinners now and at
 G D
 the hour of death. Amen.

Refrain:

 D G D
Gentle woman, quiet light,
 A D
morning star, so strong and bright,
 G D
gentle Mother, peaceful dove,
 A A7 D Dm
teach us wisdom; teach us love.

Verse 1:

 G D
You were chosen by the Father;
 A D
you were chosen for the Son.
 G D
You were chosen from all women
 E (E7) A A7
and for woman, shining one.

Verse 2:

 G D
Blessed are you among women,
 A D
blest in turn all women too.
 G D
Blessed they with peaceful spirits.
 E (E7) A A7
Blessed they with gentle hearts.

As a person born from a Polish culture, my experiences of the faith have been directed towards the stories of our Blessed Mother appearing in Częstochowa, Poland. As a person who has lived in Joliet for a quarter of my life, I have been regaled with stories of our Blessed Mother appearing in a window on the East Side of Town. As a person

who supports the Chicago Bears, I am distraught to find out that our Blessed Mother reduced herself to visiting Green Bay, Wisconsin, which is the only approved site in the United States of a Marian apparition. Mother Church has cited many locations around the world at which our Blessed Mother has appeared such as Lourdes, France, Fatima, Portugal or Akita, Japan. I would be remiss in an Irish Parish if I did not recognize the apparition of *Our Lady of Knock*, which happened in Ireland the year in 1879. Throughout the world, many cultures claim that our Blessed Mother appeared to them personally, whether it be China, Egypt, Rwanda, Ecuador and many places in between. Each Catholic culture that claims to have witnessed the grace of the visits from our Blessed Mother's mark the occasion with song, music and great celebration as we do today. Each of these cultures claim Mary to be close to their heart as if she were a member of their family.

And that is the beauty we find in celebrating our Blessed Mother today. She is your mother; she is the mother of the Americas, both North and South. She is the mother of Egypt and Japan and Lourdes and even Green Bay. She is the mother of us all, the *Theotokos*, the Mother of God,

who embraces every culture and every people because she loves all of us. And as a Church, we venerate our mother in various ways and means to show respect and honor for the woman who loved that Christ-child and each one of us as well.

As a universal Church, we too have a custom in honoring our Blessed Mother that might seem unique to all the other cultures throughout the world. The custom is called *silence*, the gaze into the icon of Mary through whom we encounter the icon of her son, the divine Son Emmanuel, *God is with us*. It is the gaze of humility that allows us to enter the life of the Blessed Mother and to model the type of life of service of which we have read these weeks prior to the Nativity of the Lord: *"I am the servant of the Lord; let it be done to me according to thy word"* / *"Yo soy la esclava del Señor, cúmplase en mí lo que me has dicho"* (Lk 1: 38) and *"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my Spirit rejoices in God my Savior because he has looked with favor on his lowly servant"* / *"Proclama mi alma la grandeza del Señor, se alegra mi espíritu en Dios, mi Salvador porque ha mirado la humillación de su esclava"* (Lk 1: 46-48).

This is the custom that models the type of eternal Sabbath rest that those of faith will enjoy with the Lord for the rest of their existence, the type of loving silence that most parallels gazing into the eyes of the one you love the most. It is the custom of removing oneself from the ways of the world so that everything seems to disappear except for the believer and the one with whom the believer loves, in this case, the holy Mother of God. And in that gaze, a different song can be heard – a song not meant for the ears but for the heart where God rests.

It is of that song that the universal Church sings each night before resting for sleep, a song devoted to our Blessed Mother that priests and religious share around the world at night. It is the song of *The Salve Regina*, *The Hail Holy Queen*, a song which removes us from this world and delivers us to her world where all is at calm and all is at peace. It is this custom that I would like to offer you tonight, the song of the faithful throughout the world that we spiritually sing together as one to the mother who appears everywhere and reveals her son everywhere for all of us. I would like to offer this song to you in Latin:

*Salve Regina (Mater) misericordiae,
vita, dulcedo, et spes nostra, salve.
Ad te clamamus, exsules filii Hevae;
ad te suspiramus gementes et flentes
in hac lacrymarum valle.
Eia ergo advocata nostra,
illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos converte.
Et Jesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui,
nobis post hoc exilium ostende.
O Clemens, O pia,
O dulcis (Virgo) Maria.*

*Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women
And blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesús.
Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us sinners
Now and at the hour of our death. Amen.*

*Dios te salve María, llena eres de gracia, el Señor es contigo,
bendita tu eres entre todas las mujeres,
y bendito es el fruto de tu vientre Jesús.
Santa Maria, Madre de Dios, ruega por nosotros los pecadores,
ahora y en la hora de nuestra muerte. Amén.*

This is our prayer.