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MARY IS MOTHER OF THE CIVILIZATION OF LOVE

Knights of Columbus Honor Our Lady of Guadalupe

MEXICO CITY, SEPT. 9, 2010 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- The head of the Knights of Columbus is encouraging the faithful to turn to Mary as Mother of the civilization of love that we as Christians are working to build.

This was one of the points addressed by Supreme Knight Carl Anderson on Wednesday in an event honoring Our Lady of Guadalupe.

The knights encouraged the faithful to gather worldwide to pray the "Rosary of Guadalupan Love" for an initiative they called the "Universal Day of Our Lady of Guadalupe."

The prayers centered in Mexico City, where this particular Rosary of Guadalupan Love was prayed in the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe. It was also held as part of the celebrations surrounding the 200th anniversary of Mexico's independence, which was declared Sept. 16, 1810.

The event honored Mary as the "Shield and the Patroness of Our Liberty" and as the "Mother of the Civilization of Love."

A communiqué from the knights noted that the particular rosary prayers were designed to "connect the messages Our Lady of Guadalupe gave to St. Juan Diego with the seven sacraments of the Church and the Church as the sacrament of salvation."

In Mexico City, Javier Najera read the address written by Anderson, who was himself unable to be in attendance.

Transformative love

Anderson affirmed that Our Lady of Guadalupe "exemplifies the transformative power of God's love -- a love that made her his mother and that inspired her sinless life."

"Our Lady made this love present at Tepeyac," he added, "transforming Juan Diego into a messenger, a man of Church and of charity, and eventually a saint."

The supreme knight encouraged his listeners to also be messengers of the Gospel, noting that "only if we live a distinctively Christian life can our actions clearly speak the answer to others in a universal language and give the world the hope it needs, a hope that cannot be found either in a single individual or in humanity as a whole."

He affirmed that Our Lady of Guadalupe "has come to symbolize many things," but she gives a particular "message of unity."

"She is the spiritual mother we all share, perfectly enculturated, a symbol of the 'catholic' aspect of a Church where all are full members and all are welcome as equal heirs to the kingdom of God," Anderson stated.

Thus, he continued, "Our Lady of Guadalupe can play a vital role in shaping our new culture."

The supreme knight explained: "Our Lady of Guadalupe presented to the Spanish and Indians alike a model of cultural dialogue. Neither exclusively Spanish nor exclusively Indian, she appeared as a mestiza -- a woman who transcended any cultural divide and called the Europeans and Native Americans alike to her Son.

"She came to two cultures that had recently been at war, and called them to overcome their differences and join a common cause: the evangelization of the Americas and, in this way, the building of a new civilization."

Building bridges

He affirmed, "From the halls of government to the parish pews, the willingness and ability of

Catholics to respond to the 'perfectly enculturated' call of the archetypal American Christian, Our Lady of Guadalupe, and to build bridges between those in the United States and those in Mexico, and throughout the hemisphere, will shape our future."

"This is a special responsibility of Catholics in the United States and Mexico -- especially leaders in business and finance," Anderson stated.

"What happens in America will have a profound effect on the Church and the world, and what happens between the United States and Mexico will shape the future of our hemisphere," he noted.

"Catholics in both countries have every reason to work for a day when such close neighbors are even closer friends," the supreme knight said.

He encouraged the faithful to do this work, "inspired by a belief that our unity as persons is stronger than any differences a border can raise, and our mission as Catholics is stronger than nationalism."

Anderson affirmed: "Beyond our common human family as men and women, we recognize a deeper bond of kinship as children of God and brothers and sisters of Christ, a bond that specifically orients us to the service of others.

"As Christians, and specifically as Catholics, we have a right to encourage in each other and expect in our dealings with each other a common measure of faith, hope, and love."

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On the Net:

Rosary of Guadalupan Love: http://www.kofc.org/un/en/resources/communications/documents/holy_mary_guadalupe.pdf