



INTERIOR OF GUADALUPE BASILICA

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portance to be attached to the timing and locality of the miracle of Guadalupe.

America's Role

The message of the miraculous medal was given in France, but the association grew primarily in America and then went from America to the world. It was Father Skelly, an American Vincentian, who was most directly responsible for the promulgation of the Miraculous Medal through the world and for the canonization of St. Catherine Laboure.

The La Salette Missionaries have served on the mountain of La Salette for a century as a bare handful of men. Then suddenly they began to flourish . . . when they came to America, from where they were able to extend the message of La Salette not only to France but to the world.

And with the message of Fatima, which spread slowly in its normal course, came the phenomenon of the Blue Army . . . founded by an American priest (Monsignor Harold Colgan) and now recognized as *the* Fatima apostolate of the world.

So the leadership of America in the twentieth century has been utilized by Our Lady in Her Age. This nation which she marked in the very beginning as Her own now blossoms with Her apostolate, for all the world.

Of All Nations

One is most impressed, in studying the portrait of Our Lady, to find a true incarnation of her own description: "He that is Mighty hath

"**E**xplosion in Mexico" was the title of an article in the last issue of SOUL, which has resulted in a deepening appreciation of the miracle of Guadalupe throughout America.

Many have wondered why such a tremendous and important miracle right on our own doorstep — as it were — should have been so little known. The general question raised is: "What is the importance of this explosion to us here in the United States?"

Little Realized

Does it not seem probable that this great explosion of faith, resulting from a miracle in which the "Ever Virgin . . . Mother of the True God" gave the world her self-portrait, had a significance beyond its time and beyond the Mexican heights on which it took place?

We call our age (and rightly so) the age of Mary. We see this age as beginning in Rue du Bac, in Paris,

in 1839, then growing through the following century at La Salette, Lourdes, and finally Fatima.

But exactly three hundred years before Rue du Bac (where Our Lady gave us the Miraculous Medal), the miracle of Guadalupe took place.

So Guadalupe was first.

This primacy of the apparitions of Our Lady of Guadalupe is not merely temporal. Certainly had Catherine Laboure, the children of La Salette, Bernadette, or the children of Fatima, seen the "miracle of Guadalupe", they would have recognized Our Blessed Mother at once . . . from her portrait. And when we review the great apparitions of this "Age of Mary" we find that they all had their prologue in the miracle of Guadalupe . . . where all the prime doctrines of Mariology were set forth by Our Lady with amazing clarity and simplicity.

Perhaps, too, there is some im-

"Explosion MEXICO"

by John M. Haffert

done great things to me because he hath beheld the lowliness of His handmaid." Here in this picture one sees both greatness and simplicity. Here is a portrait of dignity beyond that to be found in the portrait or picture of an earthly queen . . . together with simplicity to rival that of the humble Indian whom her eyes reflect at her feet.

But in addition to this paradox of the magnificent one sees the image of a virgin mother whose features are not specifically of any nation. The more one studies this infinitely lovely face, the more one sees a reflection of all human loveliness, of all continents, of all nations.

Only Beginning

And, like most great miracles, the miracle of Guadalupe is only beginning. It grew in importance at Rue du Bac. It grew more on the heights of La Salette and in the grotto of Lourdes. And it has grown most in the Miracle of Fatima.

While Our Lady appeared in all these places with messages for her children, in America she left her portrait . . . a miraculous image of *her own self*. And the closer the world comes . . . through all the apparitions . . . to the reality of Our Lady, and to appreciation of her vital role in bringing the world to Her Divine Son, the more important becomes the possession of her portrait and an understanding of the profound words she spoke when she performed the miracle of the portrait.

That great explosion of faith occurred in America as history was about to lift the curtain upon a new era not only on this continent but upon the world. And only as the great apparitions of Our Lady have unfolded during the subsequent four hundred years after the miracle does the miracle of the portrait begin to shine forth in its true meaning and splendor.

The designs of God are perhaps never fully known by us here on earth. But can we in America be far wrong in presuming that the Miracle of Guadalupe reveals that Our Blessed Mother is very close to us, and relies greatly on her apostles in America to make known to all the world the message of Her Age? Even as Father Peyton's Family Rosary Crusade has been spread from America to old countries where the devotion of the Rosary had cooled; even as the age-old Scapular Devotion began to flourish from America through the nations of the twentieth century with new vigor; even as the Legion of Mary, born in Ireland and supported from America, has begun to march across the earth; even as

the Association of the Miraculous Medal and the Blue Army of Our Lady of Fatima and the praying millions of the apostolate of Our Lady of Sorrows have risen from America to sweep across the entire earth; even so has Our Lady united Her apostles to extend Her explosion of faith . . . "the ever Virgin, Holy Mary, Mother of the True God Who is Author of Life, Creator of all Things, Lord of Heaven and earth, Present everywhere."

Ever The Same

She is the same Mother . . . the same Queen . . . the same Conqueror in all of God's Battles.

In the great struggle between communism and democracy, between atheistic Marxism and freedom under God, America and Russia are the focal points of conflicting power.

Our Lady knew it would be so.

And this Patroness of all the Americas wages a war, primarily from America, which will end in the victory which at Fatima she promised to all men: "Russia will be converted."

FATHER HAROLD J. RAHM, S.J., NATIONAL PROMOTER OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE, MOTHER OF THE AMERICAS APOSTOLATE, DISTRIBUTING HOLY COMMUNION IN THE BASILICA PLAZA, DEC. 12, 1961.

