

Homily
Memorial of St. Juan Diego Cuauhtlatatzin (coo-ouh' tlaa'-to ah' tsin)
December 9, 2022

This morning, as I was praying with my wife, I looked at my dog's ear, flicking and jerking as he was laying there nearly asleep. At that moment, I was moved to the thought that if I had not seen that, God did. And then I thought about how many countless events happen throughout the world and throughout the universe that go unnoticed by us yet are absolutely present to our God.

In the same moment, I felt loved knowing God is watching me and at the same time overwhelmed with the vastness, power and grandeur of a Loving Father. He knows all, He loves all, no matter how small or seemingly insignificant.

And He reveals things to us as He sees fit. He has a plan; no matter how hard I work at my plan, His is better.

For example, yesterday we celebrated the Immaculate Conception. Today we remember Juan Diego, an unremarkable man we know little about until Mary came to him in a series of visions. This simple man brought the image of our Blessed Virgin to the local bishop resulting in what we now recall as Our Lady of Guadalupe. Our Lady saw fit to leave her image on Juan Diego's cloak still visible today at one of the largest Christian pilgrimage destinations, receiving over 20 million visitors every year.

It's the little things that matter. We have the opportunity every day, today even, to make a difference in our own lives and in the lives of those around us. Not necessarily in big ways, but small, simple ways that make this world a better place, moment by moment, bit by bit.

In today's first reading, we are told how God chose the foolish of the world to shame the wise, and the weak of the world to shame the strong. It's humbling to hear, but I need to hear this more often than I care to admit.

In today's Gospel, Jesus reminds us to remain meek and humble, not wise and learned, which to me says that I should refrain from thinking so much of myself and seek God's wisdom. It is when I'm focused on solving my own problems and forget the God of the Universe who loves me and wants the best for me that I lose my way. It is in God's care that I can be content. It is in my own arrogance that I trip over myself.

Juan Diego was a simple man who trusted in our Blessed Mother. That's a good example to follow, if I can just get out of my own way.

In this season of Advent, we are given the opportunity to pause and reflect on the incomprehensible gift God is about to shower upon us. Today, we are given the opportunity to remember that God has a plan for us, if we just get out of our own way and rely on the God of the Universe who knows us, loves us and wants the best for us.