

# Foundation Day Prayer ~ December 12, 2013

Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe

[Suggested Prayer Environment : bright, festive colors; possibly roses or rose petals]

*Leader:* Today, we celebrate the founding of the Sisters of Mercy. We are reminded of Catherine's call to live the Gospel by addressing the needs of the sick, frail and elderly; educating women and children as well as embracing the marginalized. We remember our personal call to live Gospel values through the charism of Mercy, and to read the signs of the times by embracing the critical needs of our own era. Today's celebration coincides with the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe or La Morenita, a term of endearment by which she is fondly remembered by those to whom she showed herself in maternal kinship and loving intimacy. Her indigenous face mirrors the culture and character of an entire people, making us mindful of the myriad ways their presence enriches us and speaks to us of God's love.



## Song: Oh María, Madre Mía

Oh Ma - rí - a, Ma - dre mí - a, oh con - sue - lo del mor - tal,  
am - pa - rad - me y gui - ad - me a la pa - tria ce - les - tial;  
am - pa - rad - me y gui - ad - me a la pa - tria ce - les - tial.

Refrain translation: "O Mary, my mother, O consoler of mortals  
Protect me and guide me to the celestial peace."

Song Audio: <http://www.ocp.org/compositions/7528##tab:mp3>

*Reading 1:* "Catherine had an immense freedom of spirit and she rejoiced to find this in others so that Mercy communities would be marked by a love which respected others in their difference and uniqueness.

From "Affectionately Yours", by Mary Reynolds, RSM

*Quiet Reflection/Sharing:* What does celebrating Foundation Day and/or the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe mean to me personally? What does it call me to do?

*Leader:* In the spirit of Our Lady's words of encouragement to Juan Diego, we pray for protection and consolation: Let not our hearts be disturbed as we continue to walk in solidarity with all who seek fair and compassionate immigration policy reform. Let us not be distracted by anything or become down-hearted as we continue the Mercy way forward, believing that "anyone who implored your help or sought your intercession, whether for the pursuit of the common good or in personal anxieties was ever left unaided." Amen.

Adapted from Dn. Antonio Valeriano's "Nican Mopohua", translated by Mario Rojas Sánchez, 1978

## Reading 2: Ruth 1: 16-17

But Ruth said, "Do not press me to go back and abandon you! Wherever you go I will go, wherever you lodge I will lodge. Your people will be my people and your God, my God.

*Quiet Reflection/Sharing:* In what ways have I loved and respected others by honoring the differences and uniqueness of those with whom and to whom I minister through my prayer and action?

## Intercessions

*Leader:* God of mercy and justice, compassion and wisdom, we stand before you, in the shadow of Our Lady of Guadalupe and in solidarity with our immigrant brothers and sisters. "We know them or at least we know their stories, their struggles, their hopes and dreams. Recalling our own Mercy history: Sisters Frances Warde, Baptist Russell and hundreds of sisters who came, immigrants all, to our American shores, we revisit our own stories and ancestors who once or lately planted the roots of our own families in a country that accepted them, sometimes grudgingly, and offered them a new life. Stretch out your loving hand to each of us today as we dare pray for the strength to continue building a more just and inclusive society."

Adapted from Mercy Now link to Immigration Update  
"Prayer for Immigration Reform" May 9, 2013

*Leader:* Jesus, you urge us to love and serve you in others – friends and neighbors, strangers and even enemies. Reassure and encourage us when we fear racial, ethnic, or cultural differences:

*Response:* Give us the courage to open our hearts and hands.

*Leader:* Spirit of truth, kindle in us a passion to speak out against discrimination, prejudice, trafficking, injustice and violence to our environment:

*Response:* Lend us the vision and voice of the prophets, we pray.

*Leader:* Lead nations torn by racial and ethnic animosities and by class and religious prejudices into paths of peace with justice:

*Response:* Patient but persistent God, teach us your ways.

*Leader:* Creator of us all, act in our hearts and minds to heal and overcome crippling stereotypes and lingering prejudice:

*Response:* Create a new heart and renew a right spirit within us, we pray.

*Leader:* God of all peoples, may we know and honor your call to unity. Help us to seek and offer forgiveness and through the power of the Spirit enable us to extend and accept healing from one another. By your grace, draw us toward your vision of one united and wonderfully diverse human family. Hear and grant this, our prayer.

*All:* May God reign in our hearts. Amen.  
May God reign in our nation. Amen.  
May God reign throughout the world. Amen.



Adapted from Intercessions of Mercy, Joy Clough, RSM, Ed.