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President's Page

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President's Page



Pope Encourages Meeting

As many of you (who were at the meeting in San Diego) already know, and the rest of you learn now, our meeting next year is planned for Mexico City. Why Mexico City? On several occasions in the recent past we have been asked to assist the doctors of Mexico in organizing the Guild movement. We are not equipped or set up to send out "organizers" like the AF of L or similar bodies. The Board of Directors, a year ago, explored the idea of meeting in Mexico City and inviting our neighbors to the meeting, hoping that the gathering would serve as a catalyst.

Acting on the direction of the Board, I wrote to Our Holy Father John Paul II and received permission and encouragement to invite the bishops, not only of Mexico, but of all Latin America, to send both medical and clerical observers in order to see for themselves what we do and what we are all about. This program has already begun.

France has Lourdes. Portugal has Fatima. Ireland has Knock. Poland has Czestochowa. We in America have Guadalupe, for Mary, Virgin of Guadalupe, has been decreed by the Holy See to be Empress of all the Americas; not of Mexico, not of Latin America, not of North America, but of all the Americas. Because of this, we formally call upon Our Lady to be our patroness and ask that each of you, every day, pray: "Mary, Virgin of Guadalupe, Empress of all the Americas, pray for us."

Each year's meeting has some unifying theme. This coming year it is the Holy Trinity, symbolized in North America. Just as St. Patrick saw

the Trinity in the three leaves of the shamrock, we can see the Trinity in the North American continent — with three great nations, Canada, the United States, and Mexico united in respect for and love of one another, united under the mantle of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Daughter of the Father, Mother of the Son, Spouse of the Holy Spirit. Each day we will single out one of the three persons of the Trinity, one of the three nations of our continent, and one role of Mary, Daughter, Mother, or Spouse of God.

I hope that through the next months these words come back to you, pressing forward from the back of your mind at Sunday Mass when the sermon is dull, welling up at night when you lie awake worrying about what you wrote or did not write on an order sheet on rounds that morning, rising up and filling your consciousness in the empty hours of darkness.

For then, you may come and join us in Mexico City in late September. Then you will come to Calvary on the hill at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe. You will pass behind the altar, beneath the portrait and suddenly realize, as I did a year ago — this is what she looks like! This is a picture of *her!* Just a picture, but one she left especially for us, her children in America! A picture she gave, especially for you and me! And having felt this in your heart, your heart will be forever changed.

Join us one second a day in prayer to Our Lady that this year may be fruitful for all of us, as we serve God by serving our fellow man, in prayer for the peace and justice of God for all our brothers and sisters in all of the Americas. Join us in saying:

Mary, Virgin of Guadalupe, Empress of all the Americas, pray for us.

— William Fitzsimmons, M.D.
