

Opening Prayer  
December 12, 2014  
Our Lady of Guadalupe and Foundation Day



**Introduction:** On December 12, 1831 Catherine McAuley, Mary Ann Doyle and Elizabeth Harley professed vows as the first Sisters of Mercy. They were in the chapel of the Presentation Sisters, had no Rule and as yet, and no fourth vow of service. What they did have was very precious: a shared mission to serve the poor, sick and uneducated. As we begin, let us join our hearts with Mercy around the world and let us rejoice in the invitation to seek justice, be compassionate, and reflect God's love to the world.

**L: Antiphon: We accept God as our first and all encompassing love.**

1. O Love, my Beloved  
How powerful is your Name in all the earth!  
You, whose glory is sung in heaven by the angels and saints.
  
2. Who with the innocence and spontaneity of a child,  
Confound those who are mighty and proud,  
You quiet the unloving and fearful.
  
1. When I look up at the heavens at the work of Love's creation,

at the infinite variety of your plan.  
What is woman that you rejoice in her,  
And man that you do delight in him?

2. You have made us in your image, You fill us with your Love  
You have made us co-creators of the earth!  
guardians of the planet!

1. To care for all your creatures,  
To tend the land, the sea and the air we breathe;  
All that You have made You have placed in our hands.

2. O Love, my Beloved,  
How powerful is your name in all the earth!

**All: Antiphon: We accept God as our first and all encompassing love.**

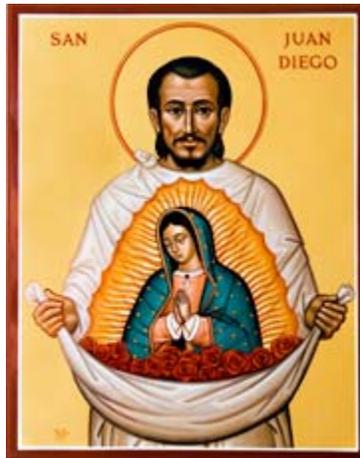
**Reading:** from the Familiar Instructions of Catherine

By our vocation to the Order of Mercy, and by a most sacred vow at our Holy Profession, we are engaged to comfort and instruct the sick poor of Christ. This is the principal reason why we are called "Sisters of Mercy" and why, to the faithful discharge of this duty, so many graces are annexed. Remark the words of Our Blessed Lord, quoted in the first section of this Rule: "Amen I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these my least (children) you did it to me." Oh! What an ineffable consolation to serve Christ in the person of the poor, and to walk in the very same path which (Jesus) trod! And this happy vocation is ours, all unworthy though we are of such a grace.

Pause      *Reflect on your own call to Mercy and your ongoing response.  
Notice the stirrings within.*

Hymn:      What Have We Done for the Poor Ones?  
              *Lori True There Is Room For Us All*

Today, we also remember Juan Diego, who exactly 300 years before the Foundation of the House of Mercy, is stopped in his tracks by the question asked by Mary of Guadalupe: "where are you going?" Juan leaves his plans to be her messenger and to ask that a place be built where the prayers, the cries and the heartbreak of people can be heard. Mary assures him that "God is with you" and the mestizo church emerges from the suffering of a conquered people. Guadalupe and Dublin: dwellings for the least.



**L:** Let us place our needs and the needs of the world in the loving arms of God:

Spoken intercessions

**L:**Let us pray: As You shed your profound mercy and light on us, O God, help us to spread your mercy to those most in need. We are grateful for the example of Catherine McAuley and Juan Diego, whose openness and courage broke the bonds of terror in many hearts. We ask that you give to us those same gifts through the love of Our Lady of Guadalupe and Our lady of Mercy. Amen