

# DIOCESE OF ORANGE



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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### CATHOLICS GATHER IN SANTA ANA FOR THE ANNUAL PROCESSION HONORING OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

**SANTA ANA, Calif., (Dec. 4, 2006)** - The Most Rev. Jaime Soto, Auxiliary Bishop of Orange, will lead a procession celebrating the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Sunday December 10, 2006 at 11:00 a.m. The procession will begin at the intersection of Bush and Fourth in downtown Santa Ana and proceed east on Fourth Street to Spurgeon. Our Lady of Guadalupe is the Patroness of the Americas and this annual procession honors the rich history of the Patroness and the liturgical Holy Day set by Pope John Paul II in 1999.

This event celebrates a miracle that occurred in 1531 when a “Lady from Heaven” appeared to St. Juan Diego at a hill called Tepeyac, located northwest of Mexico City. She identified herself as the Mother of the True God and she instructed him to have the bishop build a temple on the site. Miraculously, she left an image of herself imprinted on his tilma, a poor quality cactus cloth that was worn as clothing. St. Juan Diego’s tilma shows no decay after more than 450 years and is on display at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, in Mexico City, Mexico.

Over the many years, 24 popes have officially honored Our Lady of Guadalupe. His Holiness John Paul II visited her sanctuary four separate times: on his first apostolic trip outside Rome as Pope in 1979, and again in 1990, 1999 and 2002. In 1999, Pope John Paul II, in his homily from the Solemn Mass at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, declared the date of December 12th a religious feast for the whole North American continent in recognition of this event.

The procession in Santa Ana is a way in which the Diocese of Orange honors the Patroness of the Americas. This celebration is of great importance to Latino Catholics and seeks to unite the community.

“The passionate devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe has always been a living testimony to the preserving faith of the Latino people in the County of Orange.

The whole Catholic community in Orange asks for her intercession so that the Lord Jesus may inspire us all to celebrate the beauty of our diversity. God in his wisdom has brought us together as a gift to one another," said Bishop Soto.

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