



## Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Des Plaines Announces Cancellation of Festivities and Pilgrimages to the Shrine on Dec. 11 and 12, 2020

Pilgrims are asked to celebrate in their homes and parishes

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**Des Plaines – (Nov. 24, 2020)** - Very Rev. Esequiel Sanchez, Rector of the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Des Plaines, Ill. announced today that celebrations of the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe at the Shrine on Dec. 11 & 12 are cancelled due to the on-going pandemic. After consultation with Cardinal Blase Cupich, archdiocesan, and governmental officials on the severity of the local course of the pandemic it was determined that protecting the health and safety of the thousands of pilgrims who yearly visit the Shrine is best accomplished by closing the Shrine grounds and live streaming services.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has caused much hardship and pain for so many,” said Fr. Sanchez. “the message of comfort offered by Our Lady of Guadalupe to St. Juan Diego: ‘Am I not here, I, who am your mother?’ extends particularly to us today. While we cannot observe this feast as we have in the past, it is still a time of prayer, petition and hope.”

The Shrine invites all the Faithful to celebrate this very important feast day in the safety of their own homes or in their home parishes. We also encourage pilgrims to consider making their pilgrimage to the Shrine throughout the month of December or at another time during the year when the threat level has subsided.

We will again have the help of the local police in keeping the Shrine secured and will direct traffic and individuals away from the Shrine during this time. Parishes are also strongly discouraged from organizing any pilgrimages or Guadalupe Torch Runs to the Shrine. Since there will be no admittance to the grounds, parking both on the Shrine grounds and in offsite parking lots will be unavailable.

Please check the Shrine website at [www.solg.org](http://www.solg.org) for updates as well as a schedule of livestreamed Masses and parish websites for local masses and registration information.

### **About the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe**

Located at 1170 N. River Rd. in Des Plaines, the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe has attracted millions of people as a place of pilgrimage since its humble beginnings.

On July 4, 1986, the missionary image of Our Lady of Guadalupe, brought from Mexico, was accepted for permanent display on the grounds of Maryville Academy. In 1997, Msgr. Esteban Martinez, from the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico, blessed the grounds and poured soil from the Tepeyac of Mexico onto the New Tepeyac of America, which was authorized by the Basilica to be a site to fulfill mandas (promises) to Our Lady. In 2013, Francis Cardinal George, OMI, decreed the land around where the image was placed to be a Shrine. Each year, on December 12, the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, thousands make the trip from parishes throughout the Archdiocese and the Midwest to honor Our Lady.

On April 21, 2018, the inaugural Mass for St. Joseph Chapel, located on the grounds of the former gymnasium was celebrated. The Chapel represents only the third Church in the Archdiocese of Chicago largely funded by the Hispanic Catholic community. The first two are Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in the South Chicago neighborhood and Misión San Juan Diego in Palatine.

### **About the Archdiocese of Chicago**

The Archdiocese of Chicago, the third largest in the United States, serves more than 2.2 million Catholics in 290 parishes in Cook and Lake counties, a geographic area of 1,411 square miles. The Archdiocese, pastored by Cardinal Blase J. Cupich, has more than 15,000 employees in its systems and ministries, including Catholic Charities, the region's largest nonprofit social service agency. The



Archdiocese also has one of the country's largest seminaries. The Archdiocese's 162 elementary and secondary schools comprise one of the largest U.S. private school systems. Its schools have garnered 94 U.S. Department of Education Blue Ribbon Awards.

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