

BOOKS

A Protestant Finds Guadalupe Miraculous

"The Image of Guadalupe." by Jody Brant Smith. Doubleday (New York, 1983). 16 pp., \$14.95.

Reviewed by
Msgr. Charles E. Diviney
NC News Service

An estimated 10 million people visit the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City annually to look at a portrait of Our Lady and to pray for her intercession.

This life-sized image of the Virgin Mary is said to have appeared miraculously on a cactus cloth "tilma" or cape of Juan Diego, an Aztec peasant, in 1531.

Jody Brant Smith is an associate professor of philosophy and religion at Pensacola Junior College in Florida. A non-Catholic, he nevertheless was intrigued

by the story of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and he researched all the historical sources he could find concerning its origin and subsequent changes.

Then, fascinated by the fact that even though the portrait is 450 years old and the colors are bright as ever, and the cactus cloth shows no signs of decay, which is unusual since the cloth seldom lasts more than 20 years, Smith decided to investigate the sacred picture more thoroughly.

To do so he enlisted the aid of Philip Serna Callahan, an entomologist with a background in biophysics and a Catholic from Gainseville, Fla., who would photograph the pictures using infrared film for a majority of the pictures. He also consulted an ophthalmologist and a

computer engineer. What he learned from all this is tremendously interesting.

Before I give you a summary of his findings, here is an encapsulated explanation of the origin of the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

Juan Diego was a convert to Catholicism, living in a small village five miles from Mexico City. On Saturday, Dec. 9, 1531, he left home to attend Mass in the Church of Santiago in a nearby village. On the way way he saw an apparition of Our Lady at the base of a hill called Tepeyac. She told him to go to the bishop's palace in Mexico City and tell him to build a church on that site.

Juan Diego followed her orders, but his request was rejected. He was told to bring some sign to prove the truth of his story.

When the peasant made this request known to the Virgin she instructed him to gather some roses growing nearby, despite the fact that it was winter. He wrapped them in his cloak and carried them to Bishop Juan De Zumarraga, a Franciscan. When he opened his cloak the roses fell to the floor, revealing, much to his astonishment, a beautiful portrait of Our Lady on his cape.

The rest is history. Several churches have been erected through the years to house this sacred object and multitudes have been greatly moved by devotion to it. For example, in just one period of time nine million Aztecs entered the church largely due to this apparition.

What this book describes about the scientific investigations defies any natural explanation.

First, even though there is no doubt that the picture has been added to and touched up from time to time, there is proof that the original image is composed in a manner no artist has been able to either imitate or explain.

Further, the eyes of the portrait are done in a way never seen before in a painting, as testified to by the expert ophthalmologist and the computer expert.

It's a technical explanation but to oversimplify, the eyes of the Virgin are curved and have distinct images in them of the people she is looking at. Who these persons are is not proven yet, but they are truly visible.

As a result of his studies the author says that "both Dr. Callahan and I were forced to admit that, in some irreducible way, the image of Guadalupe is indeed a miracle."

(Msgr. Diviney, who has taught Mariology at St. Joseph's College in Brooklyn, is a consultant to the Bishop of Brooklyn.)

Local Chapter of Gray Panthers Sponsors Convention

The newly formed chapter of the Greater Rochester Gray Panthers will hold its first convention, 7 p.m., Wednesday, April 13, at the First Unitarian Church, 220 Winton Road S. There will be an election of officers, committee reports, a business meeting and guest speakers.

Founded by a group of Rochester-area residents of varying ages and background, Gray Panthers of Greater Rochester is, like its parent organization, opposed to age discrimination, which they say hurts Americans of all ages.

According to a chapter news release, the local chapter began in April 1982, when four residents met informally to talk about the possibilities of a local Gray Panthers chapter. They were the Rev. Richard Gilbert

and Rev. Katharine Russell of the Unitarian Church, Rev. Bruce Cadenhead of Laurelton United Presbyterian Church, and John Skvorak, director of the Regional Council on Aging.

After a mailing to area organizations concerned with problems of the aging, the first public meeting of the Gray Panthers was held on Nov. 11, 1982. From that meeting a steering committee emerged, charged with expanding the organization, defining its agenda, and planning the first convention. Members of the committee are: Margaret Northrup, Virginia and Kenneth Barkey, Donald Feder, Dvora Lederman, James Rice, Darlene Long, Doris Naundorf, Hyla Sandgrund, Nancy Fenity, and Patricia Swayze.

Kidera to Retire As Nazareth Prexy

Robert A. Kidera, president of Nazareth College for the past seven years, will retire June 30, 1984.

Kidera officially informed the board of his intention in a letter noting that he had recently had his 65th birthday and would be looking forward to a less demanding life, according to Appellate Court Judge Emmett J. Schnepf, chairman of the college's board of trustees.

Praising Kidera's "vigorous and prudent leadership," Schnepf said the board has asked Trustee Joseph P. King to serve as chairman of a presidential search committee

ME Program

Ithaca — A Marriage Encounter information night has been scheduled for 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, April 12, at the Women's Community Building, 100 W. Seneca St., Ithaca.



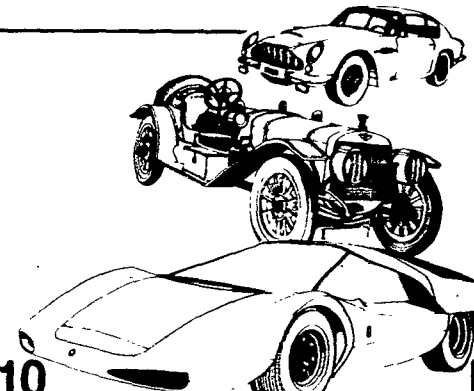
ROBERT A. KIDERA

which will be composed of representatives of the board, administration, faculty, alumni and student body.

"We are pleased that Bob Kidera can continue his appointment for a year beyond normal retirement," Schnepf said.

APRIL ATTRACTIONS

SPRING CAR SHOW



Tuesday, April 5 to Sunday, April 10

SPONSORING DEALERS

Durfee Chevrolet, Vanderstynne Ford, Transitowne Dodge, Ralph Pontiac, West Ridge Chrysler Plymouth, Doan Buick/AMC Jeep, Hart Taylor Datsun, Hart Taylor Lincoln Mercury, Jim Sandy Chevrolet



Ask About the Long Ridge Mall-WWOR Great Escape Weekend for 2

at the Marriott Airport

Booth located at Center Court, Directory Area. Winner to be announced April 18.

Charm School Registration

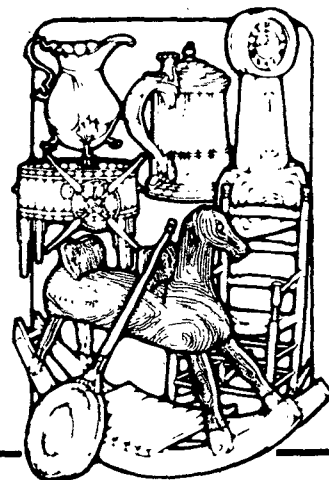
GIRLS aged 4 to 17

BEGINNER and ADVANCED CLASSES

CLASS SCHEDULE: May 14 to June 4

FEE: \$20 payable at registration

Applications available at the Mall Promotion Office or Center Court Area/Directory.



Coming APRIL 12-16 ANTIQUE SHOW and SALE



APRIL 18-21 Week of the Young Child

Classroom Demonstrations, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Children's Art and General Information on Child Care.

APRIL 22, 23, 24 LAWN, GARDEN and PATIO EXPO

Presented by the John Deere Corp. and featuring the Weekend Gardener, JIM BENNETT.

APRIL 27 - MAY 1 HOME SHOW Exhibits and Giveaways.



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