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Religion

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The Philadelphia Inquirer

Saint's relic to be displayed

The archdiocese of Philadelphia said yesterday that area Catholics will get a rare chance to see an ancient relic associated with Mexico's patron saint.

The relic, now touring the country, is a shard from the cloak that a Mexican peasant is believed to have worn when the Virgin Mary appeared to him in 1531. The apparition became known as Our Lady of Guadalupe, patron of Mexico, and the cloak as the Tilma of Tepeyac.

The peasant, Juan Diego, became a revered figure and was named a saint last year. The canonization was controversial, however; some in the church protested that Diego probably never existed and that the tale developed as a way to evangelize Mexico's peasantry.

The Los Angeles Diocese, which has custody of the relic, organized the tour to mark the first year of Diego's sainthood. Thousands of Mexican Americans and others have venerated the relic during its 21-city tour.

The relic and a 17th-century statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe will be on display next Saturday, from 10:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. and from 7 to 8:30 p.m., at St. Gabriel of the Sorrowful Mother Church, 8900 Gap Newport Pike, Avondale. Information: 215-587-5632.

ADL director to lecture

The national director of the Anti-Defamation League, Abraham Foxman, will give a public talk Tuesday about the "New Anti-Semitism" that has been chronicled in academic and cultural circles worldwide.

Foxman has made headlines for his criticism of actor Mel Gibson over the depiction of Jews in *The Passion*, Gibson's forthcoming film about Jesus' crucifixion.

Foxman will speak at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday at Congregation Beth Or, Penllyn Pike and Dager Road, Spring House. The free lecture is part of a book tour for his *Never Again? The Threat of the New Anti-Semitism*. Information: 215-646-5806.

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Buddhism here and now

One of the biggest challenges for Buddhism in the United States is accessibility, says Bokin Kim, academic dean of the Won Institute in Glenside. Many find it hard to integrate spiritual ideals into daily life, Kim said, and "reform Buddhist" groups such as Korean-based Won try to help people bridge that gap.

The Glenside school is holding a free public forum today on that topic and others, such as finding common ground between native Asian Buddhists and their American counterparts. It will be held from 1 to 6 p.m. at the institute, 137 Easton Rd. Information: 215-884-8942.

A benefit for Israel

Safam, a Boston-based sextet renowned for pioneering the eclectic "Jewish American" sound, will perform in Elkins Park tomorrow to benefit Israel's emergency-medical service.

Since its founding 30 years ago, Safam has blended Hasidic, cantorial, folk and rock music. American Friends of Magen David Adom is sponsoring the concert to aid Israel's financially strapped ambulance, blood bank and disaster-relief service.

Tomorrow's event will begin at 7 p.m. at Beth Sholom Congregation, 8231 Old York Rd. Tickets are \$25, or \$18 for children younger than 13. Information: 800-626-0046.

- *Jim Remsen*

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