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Relic From Guadalupe Tilma to Tour U.S. From May through December

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LOS ANGELES, MAY 23, 2003 (Zenit.org) A tour is scheduled to bring a small piece of St. Juan Diego's "tilma" - the cloth that holds the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe -- to nearly 20 U.S. dioceses.

The six-month "Tilma of Tepeyac Tour" is being organized by the Apostolate for Holy Relics (AHR) and co-sponsored by the Knights of Columbus. Family Rosary is also providing rosaries for the event.

The tour will open May 30 in Denver's Immaculate Conception Cathedral, and will end Dec. 7 at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York.

The relic, on loan from the Los Angeles Archdiocese and likely the only one in the United States, is a small piece of the tilma that was detached and sent to the archbishop of Los Angeles in 1941 by Archbishop Luis Mart'nez of Mexico City.

Juan Diego was canonized last July 31 in the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, in Mexico City. Over 5 million people attended the ceremony.

"The tour will promote devotion to the Mother of God, especially through devotion to the rosary in this year proclaimed by the Pope to be the Year of the Rosary," said Andrew Walther, national tour coordinator.

"We also hope that people will take the faith and devotion of St. Juan Diego as a model for their own lives," he added.

AHR president Thomas Serafin said the tour "will be a wonderful historical and cultural event bringing together the curious and the faithful."

AHR aims to educate the public about the saints, sponsoring devotion to and veneration of the saints, and preserving pieces of Catholic heritage.

Details of the tilma tour are at <http://www.relictour.org>.

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