

WHAT IS SPIRITUAL ADOPTION?

Spiritual Adoption blesses the lives of unborn children; especially those at risk of abortion. *Spiritual Adoption* is an age-appropriate family-friendly initiative based on an idea by Archbishop Fulton Sheen which is accomplished through intercessory prayer.

Spiritual Adoption has three goals:

- **Encourage** prayer for parents who are expecting a child; that they will respond to God's grace and welcome their child into life.
- **Educate** adults and children about the development of the pre-born child.
- **Provide** mothers in need with a 'baby shower' of donated baby gifts, or simply celebrate with a 'birthday party' at the conclusion of the program.

Who can participate?

- Church members, students, prayer groups and anyone who is concerned about the unborn, and who is willing to pray "*that they might have life and have it to the full.*" (John 10:10)
- As faithful Catholics we know how truly precious the gift of human life is. For this reason, St. Patrick Respect Life Ministry is sponsoring Spiritual Adoption that can be enjoyed by all members of our family whether it is in our parishes, in our schools, or in our homes.

Who benefits from Spiritual Adoption?

- Everyone! While it is not always possible to see the effects of prayer, we know through Scripture that God wants us to pray, and we know by faith that He answers all prayers. The educational aspect of the program is beneficial to people of all ages, including children.

How does it work?

- Each participant or family signs up to participate in Spiritual Adoption. By signing up, each participant or family pledges to pray once a day for nine months for an unborn child.
- You can sign up by filling out a pledge card and returning it to the box located in the Narthex. You may also sign up online via the parish website or using the QR Code.
- Upon signing up, each participant or family will receive a Spiritual Adoption Packet from the Respect Life Ministry sent via email/Flocknote with information and prayer materials.
- Each month the participant will receive a thank you note from the baby that will include information regarding the baby's development, a word for reflection, and a reminder to recite the daily Spiritual Adoption prayer.
- Each participant or family will receive a "Certificate of Spiritual Adoption" via email/Flocknote.
- In May, a celebration will be held with gifts donated to local pregnancy centers.

When does Spiritual Adoption begin?

- Spiritual Adoption begins in September (the first weekend after Labor Day); however, you may sign up anytime during the nine months from October to May.

St. Patrick Parish
Spiritual Adoption Daily Prayer

Eternal Father, Source of Life,

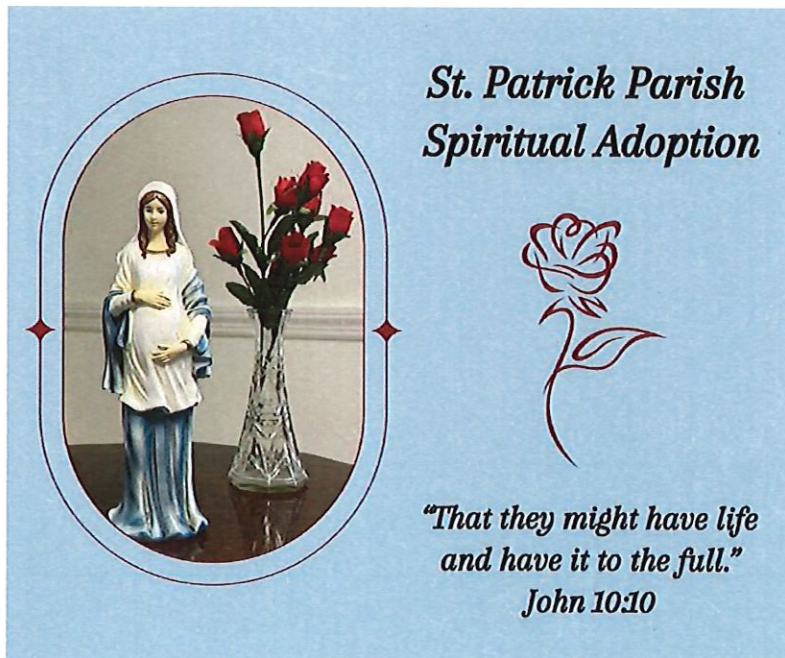
*Open our hearts to see and desire the beauty
of your plan for life and love.*

*Grant us great trust in your mercy and inspire our prayer
to protect and care for the most vulnerable; especially:*

Baby's Name:

Strengthen us in the hope that nothing is impossible.

We ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen.





My baby's name is:

SPIRITUAL ADOPTION WORDS OF REFLECTION

L	O	O	K	T	X	W	Z
D	Y	H	E	A	R	G	B
D	A	D	D	S	E	E	E
H	E	A	R	T	V	P	A
Z	S	L	E	E	P	R	L
J	O	Y	A	V	Z	A	I
M	K	O	M	O	M	Y	V
E	Z	U	D	A	N	C	E

See if you can find these words:

Joy Heart Dream Sleep Look
Dance See Taste Hear Be Alive
You Mom Dad Pray Me



Juan Diego's Miraculous Tilma



St. Juan Diego was an Aztec convert from Mexico who lived in the 1500s. Mary appeared to him and asked for a church to be built on the site where she visited him. As a sign of her request, beautiful roses appeared on the hill even though it was December. Juan gathered them up in his tilma (cloak) to take to the local bishop. When he opened the tilma to reveal the roses, an image of Mary, now known as Our Lady of Guadalupe, was miraculously imprinted on the fabric. This miracle led to the conversion of thousands.

Our Lady of Guadalupe, now one of the most popular Marian images, is Patroness of the Americas.

✦ The natural material the tilma was made from would normally last less than 30 years. Juan Diego's tilma is intact almost 500 years later.

✦ The Blessed Virgin Mary appeared as a young Aztec woman. Her clothing, posture, and symbols would have been understood by the people.

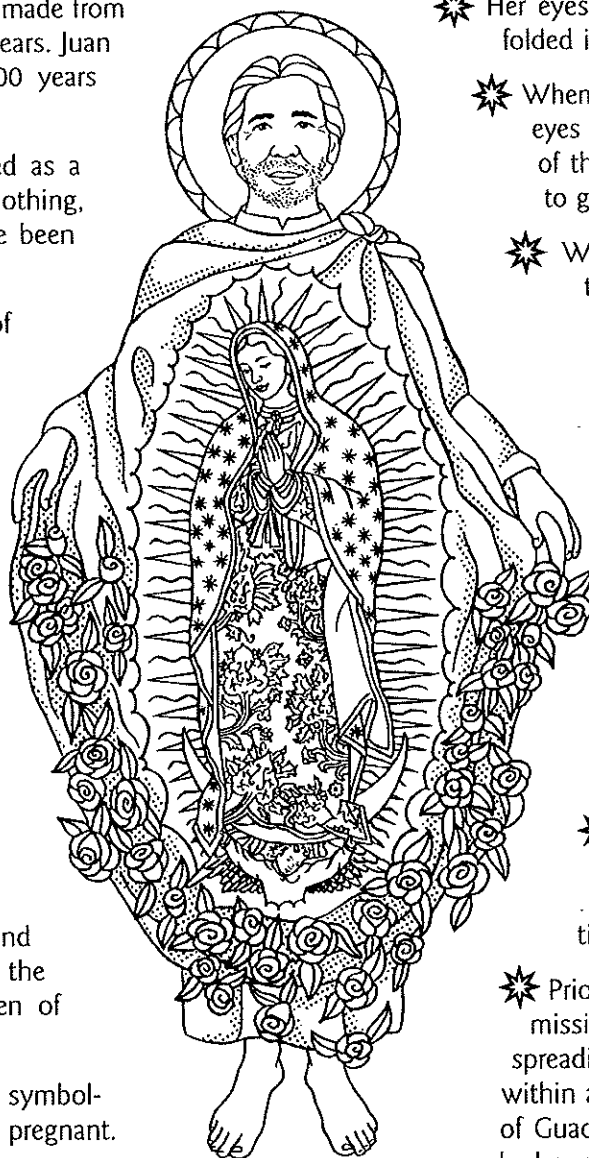
✦ She is surrounded by the rays of the sun, with the moon under her feet, and stars on her mantle. These symbols can be found in the Woman described in Revelation 12.

✦ Both the sun and the moon were worshiped as Aztec gods. This image shows that Jesus Christ, the Son of Mary, is the one true God.

✦ The stars on her mantle are actually arranged in the shape of the constellations that were in the sky on December 12, 1531, the day of her appearance.

✦ The colors of her clothing (blue and rosy pink) represented royalty to the Aztec people. Mary is the Queen of Heaven.

✦ The black band around her waist symbolized that an Aztec woman was pregnant. Mary is the Mother of Jesus.



✦ Her eyes are looking down and her hands are folded in prayer, showing her humility.

✦ When looked at under a microscope, Mary's eyes are lifelike and actually show a reflection of the moment Juan Diego opened his tilma to give the roses to the bishop.

✦ When measured, the temperature of the tilma is always 98.6 degrees — the temperature of the human body.

✦ There are no brushstrokes within the image. No pigment, paint, or other explanation for the image can be detected on the tilma.

✦ Not only was it miraculous that roses were growing in the winter, but the roses that Juan Diego took to the bishop were native to Castile, Spain — where the bishop was from and an additional sign to him of the miraculous event.

✦ Acid was accidentally spilled on the tilma in 1785, and a bomb was set off under the tilma in 1921. Both times the tilma remained undamaged.

✦ Prior to the apparition, the Spanish missionaries had not made much progress spreading Christianity in North America. But within a decade of the Apparition of Our Lady of Guadalupe, an estimated 10 million Aztecs had converted to Catholicism.

Celebrating St. Juan Diego and Our Lady of Guadalupe

FEAST DAYS: DECEMBER 9 & DECEMBER 12

- Enjoy traditional Mexican food for dinner
- Decorate your home with roses (you can use real flowers or draw your own pictures of roses)
- Listen to a recording of a traditional Catholic prayer in Spanish
- Read more about the stories of the apparitions to Juan Diego
- Do more research about the tilma and the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe

