

## **Faith – Face to Face**

Throughout the annals of medical history the belief in the doctor and the treatment have always been of paramount importance. The doctor believed in the treatment, the patient believed in the doctor, the person got better. In many cases the individual actually started to feel better after he/she made the appointment and unfortunately had no symptoms of the “worse cold they ever had”, to show the doctor when they arrived at his office.

Medical research shows that people actually start to feel better once they make the phone call, that physiological placebo along with the time and the actions of our mind and body have robbed us of the opportunity to show off our “cold of a lifetime.”

As soon as the medical field started to question certain treatments, as in the case of cobra venom for chest pains, results for patients in a highly (up until then) successful programs, started to decrease. If the doctors questioned the results, so did the patients.

In the field of religion, when the clergy doubts, the faithful doubt. When the Religious believe, the faithful believe. This was tremendously evident in the “Tilma of Tepeyac Tour” presented to the faithful and curious by the Apostolate for Holy Relics in 2003.

In every city that I was privileged to visit I noticed a commonality. When the Ordinary of the Diocese approved and participated in the opening and closing Mass the faithful were tremendously moved. It appeared to be a trickle down effect, when the Cardinal, Archbishop, or Bishop publicly showed his approval and support the religious in the Diocese felt more open to show and practice their faith.

The most obvious of all was an overall feeling of participation. The religious and the laity were participating in a religious ceremony; all believed they were showing the rightful dignity to the Mother of God and St. Juan Diego.

Personally, I have never been the type of person to anticipate miracles and/or look for the miraculous that is just not my charisma. That said, I did witness a tremendous amount of simple and pure love and devotion expressed in the faces of the children to their Mother. A woman in Texas stood in line for hours, when she got in position to personally venerate the relic she did so very simply, the sign of the cross, a prayer, and a nod. As she turned to walk away, her eyes were full of tears and they started to run down the front of her face. She patiently waited and just as quietly walked away, emotionally moved. She believes.

A seventy three year old retired religious sister approached me a 1:15 AM and told me that she came into the

Church at 7:00AM, she walked in with bad legs and now believed that she was healed. She asked me if it was possible that the relic healed her. I reminded the Sister that in the Bible we are told that it is the faith of the individual that heals. Sister believed.

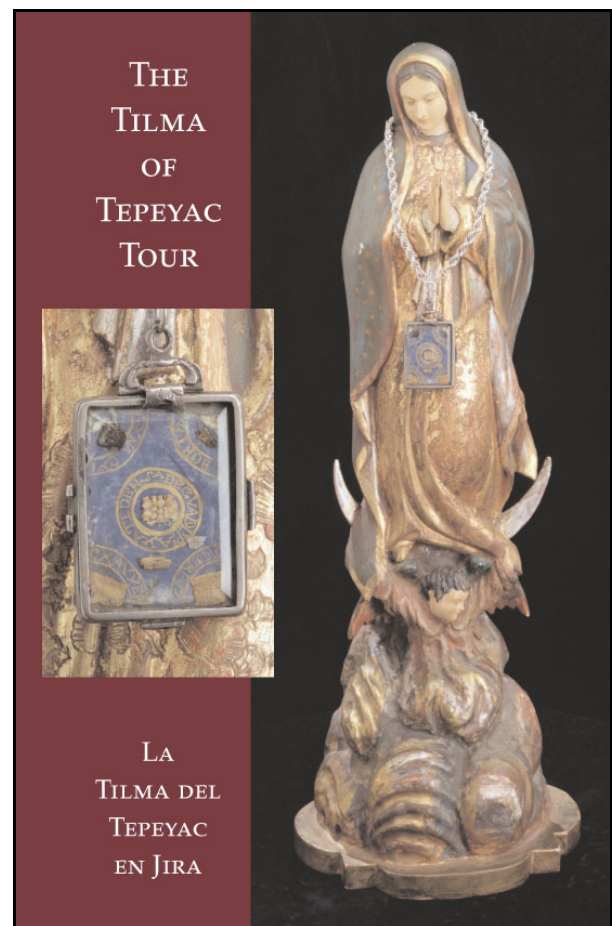
I witnessed faith, face to face. I hope that the “Tilma of Tepeyac Tour” of 2003 created nationwide atmosphere of renewed devotion and religious participation among the clergy and laity. I personally witnessed a renaissance within the Catholic Church brought on by the faithful in union with the communion of saints.



Father Sam blesses and anoints the faithful.



The San Antonio faithful waited for hours to venerate the relic.



Tilma of Tepeyac Tour brochure