Juan Diego and the Miracle of Roses

Ages 4 to 9 · About 10 minutes to read aloud · Feast day December 9 (Our Lady of Guadalupe, December 12)

Virtue: Humility

The story in a nutshell

A little boy called Talking Eagle grows up with the uncle who loves him, and is baptized Juan Diego. One cold December morning, Our Lady appears to him on a rocky hill and asks for a church. When the bishop wants a sign, she fills Juan Diego's tilma with roses that bloom in winter, and when he opens it, her picture is on the cloth. Today we call the "little nobody" she chose Saint Juan Diego.

Before reading

- Look at the cover. What is the man carrying in his cloak? *Listen for: Roses.*
- Have you ever had to do something that felt too big for you?

While reading

- On the hill: who did the beautiful lady say she was? *Listen for: Mary, the Mother of God.*
- When the bishop wasn't sure: what did Juan Diego call himself? What did Our Lady answer? *Listen for: "A little nobody." "I have chosen you."*
- What did the bishop ask for? *Listen for: A sign, so he would know it was true.*

After reading

- Where did Juan Diego find the roses? Why was that amazing? *Listen for: On a bare, rocky hilltop, in the middle of winter.*
- What was on the tilma when he opened it? *Listen for: A beautiful picture of Our Lady.*
- Our Lady said, "Am I not here, I who am your mother?" When could you remember that? *Listen for: When you feel worried or afraid.*
- *Older children:* Juan Diego felt like a little nobody, but Our Lady chose him. What does that tell us? *Listen for: God loves the small and humble, and can do great things through anyone.*

Words to explain

- **tilma**: a cloak, worn knotted at one shoulder
- **bishop**: a leader of the Church who cares for many priests and parishes
- **Talking Eagle**: what his name meant in his own language, before he was baptized
- **Our Lady of Guadalupe**: the name we give Mary as she came to Juan Diego

Be a Little Saint this week

The book ends with three challenges. Choose one to try together, or send all three home:

1. Help an older person in your family, like a grandparent, just like Juan Diego helped his uncle.
2. When you think you can't do something good, like saying sorry or tidying up, try your best anyway, just like Juan Diego did when he went back to the bishop.
3. Say a Hail Mary to Our Lady, your mother in heaven, and tell her about your day.

Pray together

Dear God, thank you for loving little ones like us. When something feels too big for us, help us to say yes and try, just like Saint Juan Diego did. And thank you for giving us Mary, our mother in heaven, who is always close to us. Amen.

A note for the leader

"A little nobody." Juan Diego says it about himself; Our Lady's answer is the heart of the story: "I have chosen you." If a child says they feel like a nobody, tell them God knows and loves them by name. **His sick uncle** gets well; if a child has someone ill at home, pray for that person together, without promising the same ending.

Go further

Our free **Juan Diego's tilma** has a fold-up tilma card that opens to show Our Lady, roses to color for every yes, and a Hail Mary card. More ideas for the feast day are at littlesaintsbighearts.com/saint-juan-diego-feast-day, and every free printable is at littlesaintsbighearts.com/printables.

Juan Diego and the Miracle of Roses by Joseph Glazier. Free to copy for your class or program.