

Day seven: 12.12.08

### THE 12TH OF DECEMBER!

This is the day the Lord has made. Five million people were in and out of the Plaza these days including us privileged few, We were in our bus and on our way to the Plaza already packed with tourists and Mexicans of different origins. Everyone, it seemed, had a drum. There was dancing and singing and, well, a cacophony of sounds. Many had slept the night in the Plaza and the evidence was all around us. The Cathedral was packed with attendees at the latest Mass which apparently goes on non stop throughout the night and day. Raul suggested that, if we wanted to get a seat, we be ready to “plow” our way into the Church as the incumbents made their way towards the exit. Roses in hand we readied ourselves and as the exodus began we commenced our advance. It was a matter of everyone for themselves to find a seat. The Mass of the Roses would not start for another two hours but if we ever wanted to sit down, now was the time to find a place among the multitude.

At noon the Cardinal and a posse of Priests, (Father Mike included) made their way through the crowd to the Altar and the Mass began. All of this time, of course, the drums kept beating and the various tribes continued their dances in the Plaza. The whole side of the Church was open to the Plaza and thus we were surrounded by organized chaos. The choir sang above the melee, the preachers preached and the Cardinal did his thing. Two hours later it was all over and the flowers were still with us. It was a matter of pushing against the outgoing tide to arrive at the side of the church and add the flowers to the mounds covering the ledges, and down to the floor itself. If it was Roses the Lady wanted, it was Roses the lady got! By the thousands; beautiful Roses of all shades and colors.

Gathering us chicks together at last, Raul was able to lead us out of the deafening crowd to our waiting bus and back to our Hotel of “blessed Silence!” The rest of the afternoon was ours. So were many unexplored sites of this wonderful city but they had to go unvisited for the most part.