Jesus is alive in Mexico. That’s not a tabloid headline; it’s a fact of everyday reality visible in churches, cemeteries, homes, shops, and Robert Lewis’ new photographic series, Divine Humility. While completing a long-term study of the changing consumer environment in Mexico, Lewis, Professor of Art at the University of Memphis, escaped from a bustling street market into a quiet church, and while resting he witnessed a man in intimate conversation with a battered figure of Christ. He realized that for the man this figure was far more than a church-worn representation of a divinity; it was a caring, compassionate, and helpful mentor and friend.

Lewis began to photograph Jesus figures in churches throughout Mexico, and, along the way, he started to visit cemeteries where people maintain family graves and crypts. Unlike European and North American cemeteries where angels and effigies are immobilized in marble as if for eternity, the Jesus icons are often made of cement or similarly frangible material. Exposure to the elements and seasons leaves its pitiless trace on the statues, and homely patches and touch-ups provide their own marks of time. Painted, decorated for holidays, surrounded by memorabilia of the dear departed, and bits of contemporary consumer culture, these images are active participants in the continuous lives and afterlives of Mexicans.

As part of Guilford College’s observance of Religious Emphasis Week, the artist, Robert Lewis, will give a slide lecture discussing his inspiration and approach to the subject of the exhibition. The lecture will be held Wednesday, January 24, at 7:00 p.m. in The Leak Room of Duke Memorial Hall (adjacent to Hege Library). It will be followed by a reception for the artist in the Art Gallery. Both events are free and the public is cordially invited.

This exhibition has been organized by The Ewing Gallery at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, and the Art Museum at the University of Memphis. An illustrated color catalogue with an essay by Salvatore Scalora, Director of the William Benton Museum of Art, University of Connecticut, and contributing editor of *Home*.

*Altars of Mexico: Photographs by Dana Salvo* (University of New Mexico Press, 1997), accompanies the exhibition.