

Bishop Arthur N. Tafoya celebrates Grand Junction Deanery's Rite of Election

By Ginny Revel

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE OF CATHOLIC LIFE

The Diocese of Pueblo's Bishop Arthur N. Tafoya presided at the Grand Junction Deanery's Rite of Election commemoration held this year at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, March 4, 2007, at Immaculate Heart of Mary church in Grand Junction.

Catechumens from Queen of All Saints (Crested Butte), St. Peter (Gunnison), St. Phillip (Cedaredge), St. Mary (Montrose), St. Joseph (Grand Junction) and Immaculate Heart of Mary (Grand Junction) participated, along with their god-parents. Family, friends and well-wishers were in attendance for this annual celebration of election. Candidates, accompanied by their sponsors, were also named.

In a beautiful bilingual ceremony marked by readings, music and special intercessions, each parish's Director of Faith Formation called the names of the Elect and the candidates. As they approached the ambo, they were personally greeted by the Bishop. His Excellency then requested confirmation from their godparents (or sponsors) as well as from the community, as to the Elect's readiness to receive the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist) at this upcoming Easter Vigil.

Bishop Tafoya delivered a moving homily. Speaking directly to the catechumens and candidates, he reminded them of the fact that "God chose them as His people." ("I am your God and you are



my people").

Named as God's

Elect, they

were answering His call and cooperating with His grace. God extended the loving invitation. He is the One who inspired His Chosen Ones to begin the years of study which culminated in their readiness for participation in the Rites of Initiation

The afternoon's ceremony concluded with the "Sending Forth." Bishop Tafoya signed each parish's Book of the Elect and then he graciously posed for group and individual photos with the celebrants.

Following the Rite of Election & Call to Continuing Conversion, everyone gathered in the Immaculate Heart of Mary parish's Fellowship Room. There they enjoyed a festive reception replete with delicious gourmet treats.

The Elect now have their eyes set upon the approaching Easter Vigil and their glorious entrance into full communion with the other members of the Body of Christ.



Bishop Tafoya poses with those celebrating the Rite of Election in the Grand Junction Deanery.



IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY YOUTH PRESENT LENTEN LIVING STATIONS OF THE CROSS- Andrea Rivard as Simon of Cyrene helps Kurt Peterson, portraying Jesus, carry His cross. Centurions Ben and Rick Peterson look on. Parishioners at Immaculate Heart of Mary in Grand Junction enacted the "Living Stations" as part of their Lenten devotions.

The Initiation Experience: *Beginnings Plus* (with a rural focus!)

The Initiation Experience: *Beginnings Plus* (with a rural focus) Institute offered by the Diocese of Pueblo in partnership with the North American Forum on the Catechmenate to be held June 21-24 at St. Mary Catholic Church in Montrose will be meaningful opportunity for pastors, staff persons and laity to receive training in the R.C.I.A. formation process and to learn how to fully engage themselves in the initiation experience.

The Beginnings Plus program has for many participants become an intense recommitment to their faith and the beginning of a deeper experience of scripture and community. Bishop Tafoya has encouraged all the clergy and staff persons of the Diocese to participate.

Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Grand Junction has a group of 10 participants: Father John Farley, staff persons, RCIA team members and parishioners willing to learn more about the vital role of all in this evangelizing process.

Frank Huber, director of liturgy, and Jill Mountain, director of faith formation, used bulletin announcements, posters, and most importantly personal invitations to interest folks in the Beginnings Plus experience. They held an informational meeting that further encouraged participation. Hopefully, their enthusiastic model will inspire other parishes to form teams.

Friday, April 20 is the cutoff for the early bird discounts. Group registrations can also save monies and scholarships are available. Registration information can be obtained from:

The North American Forum on the Catechmenate Institute Registration
P.O. Box 73459
Baltimore, MD 21279-0459
Ph: 202-884-9758
info@naforum.org
Web site www.naforum.org

Beginnings Plus Leadership

Sister Gael Gensler, OSF, is pastoral associate for St. Julie Billiart Parish, Tinley Park, IL. She has been involved in adult initiation for twenty-five years. Gael served on the Forum staff and is a Forum Team member.



Sister Gael Gensler, OSF.

Father Tim Fitzgerald, a priest of the Diocese of Des Moines, has helped form initiation ministers with parishes and dioceses for more than twenty years. He is director of the office of lay ecclesial ministry.



Father Tim Fitzgerald

Father Ed Koharchik, CSP, is a priest with the Congregation of St. Paul (Paulist Fathers) and currently is a campus minister at the University of Texas in Austin, TX.



Father Ed Koharchik, CSP

Nelson Bonet is Religion and Social Studies teacher for middle school at St. Stephen's Catholic School in Miramar, Florida, as well as the Middle School Coordinator.



Nelson Bonet

Nuestros jóvenes en un país de oportunidades!

GRAND JUNCTION-El día martes 13 de marzo, un grupo de 9 estudiantes del grupo juvenil hispano de la parroquia de Santa Maria de Montrose, participaron en un encuentro de estudiantes de las Iglesias Católicas de Denver. Ellos eran la única delegación de jóvenes fuera de la zona metropolitana. Durante esa actividad, alrededor de 200 estudiantes y sus familias, expresaron ante representantes de senadores y congresistas del estado, las dificultades que los estudiantes indocumentados encuentran a la hora de ingresar a la Universidad.

El costo de la educación superior para un inmigrante es hasta 5 veces más alto que para un ciudadano. Las becas son muy limitadas y la falta del número de seguro social es suficiente para quedar fuera. Si nos detenemos a ver el ingreso promedio de la mayoría de estas familias, la educación de los hijos es nada más que un sueño. En este encuentro conocimos jóvenes que ganaron alguna beca, que obtuvieron la aprobación para asistir a una universidad o jóvenes cuyos talentos garantizan brindar grandes beneficios a esta nación; sin embargo, un sistema migratorio obsoleto les trunca sus aspiraciones.

El Dream Act o acta del sueño busca superar trámites difíciles de cumplir para las familias pobres inmigrantes; por ejemplo, son requisitos vigentes el pedir que los jóvenes cumplan con dos años de universidad, servir por dos años en las Fuerzas Armadas, haber ingresado al país antes de los 16 años, o haber vivido por 5 años antes de la aprobación de la ley.

La educación es fundamental para el desarrollo de cualquier nación y no puede



Youth group at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Montrose, CO.

evaluarse desde criterios de rentabilidad. La educación es un valor humano fundamental al que toda persona tiene derecho y al que una nación rica debería asegurar para sus habitantes. El limitado acceso a la educación cuestiona las bases mismas de una sociedad que se llama así misma "tierra de oportunidades".

Parte de la campaña por una reforma migratoria comprensiva, abarca este aspecto de la legislación. En la actualidad, el Congreso estudia una propuesta de ley conocida como H.B. 1275, la cual, de ser aprobada, podría cambiar el futuro inmediato de muchos jóvenes.

Un aspecto importante para alcanzar la Reforma consiste en la participación activa de todos. Nuestra campaña los invita a escribir o preferiblemente llamar a congresistas y senadores pidiendo liderar el Dream Act. No es requisito ser residente o ciudadano para hacerlo.

Para facilitar su ayuda estamos brindando los teléfonos de algunos congresistas claves a convencer: Diana DeGette, 303 844-4988; Marilyn Musgrave, 970 663-3536; Mark Udall, 303 650-7820; Ed Perlmutter, 303 274-7944; Doug Lamborn, 719 520-0055; John Salazar, 970 245-7107; Tom Tancredo, 720-283-9772; senadores Ken Salazar, 303 455-7600 y Wayne Allard, 303 220-7414.