

BISHOP'S LETTER:
What if?

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

There are many times throughout the course of our lives when we wonder what if...What if I had been a few minutes later or earlier, would I have avoided that accident? What if I had left those words unsaid, would I still have a friend? What if I had continued dating that person, would my life be different?

This month we recall the infamous Supreme Court decision of January 22, 1973 *Roe vs. Wade*, which made abortion legal in the United States. Each year there are 1.31 million abortions in the U.S., the highest among all developed countries. 48% of women seeking abortion have had at least one previous abortion.

Of all the babies that have been aborted, what if one of them might have discovered a cure for cancer, or worked to bring about world peace or eradicated poverty or somehow changed our world for the better.

Last month we celebrated the birth of Our Lord. What if Mary had said no, I don't want to carry this child? There would be no Christmas, no resurrection, no salvation, no Church – the Body of Christ.

God tells us that even the tiniest embryo is the subject of His care. "You formed my inmost being; you knit me in my mother's womb. I praise you, so wonderfully you made me; wonderful are your works." (Psalm 139:13- 14) "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you. Before you were born I set you apart." Jeremiah 1:5

On January 23, 2007 at noon at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, I will celebrate a Mass of Atonement. I invite you to participate either in person or in prayer as we pray for an end to this evil.

Together let us defend the sanctity of all human life so that we will no longer have to wonder what if....

May God shower you with His choicest blessings during this New Year.

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Arthur N. Tafoya
Bishop of Pueblo



Photo by Avelis Photography

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JANUARY 3, 2007



Joseph Vigil was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Arthur N. Tafoya on December 15, 2006 at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Pueblo, CO.

Joseph Vigil ordained to the priesthood December 15, 06

PUEBLO- The Cathedral of the Sacred Heart was filled to capacity for the ordination of Transitional Deacon Vigil to the priesthood on December 15 at 7 p.m.

Ordaining prelate was Bishop Arthur N. Tafoya. The celebration of ordination rites included readings in English and Spanish and sacred music provided by the Cathedral Choir under the direction of Deborah Rendon.

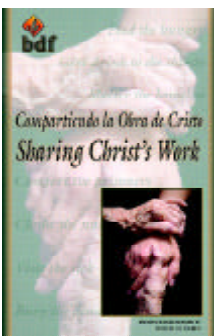
His immediate family sat in the front rows, including his parents, four brothers, and two sisters. Over 30 diocesan priests, seven deacons, and guests including nine priests, two deacons, two sisters and many religious. Twelve classmates attended from the Sacred Heart School of Theology, Hales Corners, WI. Other priests, Brothers and Sisters attended from Wisconsin, Iowa, Wyoming, New Mexico, Kansas, and Minnesota. Penitentes of Abiqui, NM also attended. (The Penitentes kept prayer life going in early New Mexico and Southern Colorado when there were no priests.)

The newly ordained priest brings a wealth of experience to his ministries, making the choice to join the priesthood after spending many years in other careers. Father Vigil worked in various ministries from AIDS to working with youth affected with the Black Tar Heroin issue, as well as, teaching the Social Sciences at the University of New Mexico and training at the Pacific Institute of Community Organizing, PICO. He also spent 13 years as a member of the Benedictine Monastic community at Holy Cross Abbey in Cañon City.

A study by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has cited a trend that the average age of a man entering the priesthood is 37.

As the name of the candidate was called out, he
VIGIL CONTINUED ON PAGE 3.

Sharing Christ's Work- Compartiendo la Obra de Cristo



PUEBLO- Bishop Tafoya has designated February 4, 2007 as the official "kickoff" date for the 2007 Bishop's Diocesan Fund Appeal. The theme for the 2007 BDF campaign is "Compartiendo la Obra de Cristo – Sharing Christ's Work". This year marks the 41st time that our Bishop has asked for support from the churches throughout the diocese.

It is through sharing that the Diocese of Pueblo will continue to advance the Pastoral Plan and the mission of the Church. This undertaking can only be accomplished as a direct result of a successful BDF campaign.

Every parish is encouraged to form a BDF Committee. The Diocese of Pueblo will be hosting deanery dinner meetings throughout the month of January to distribute resource materials and encourage parish community to meet and exceed their 2007 BDF Goal. Members of the BDF Committee are invited to attend these gatherings to receive, review, and properly record the BDF pledge information. Please contact your parish office to inquire the date and time for these meetings.

"Compartiendo la Obra de Cristo-Sharing Christ's Work", 2007 BDF, offers many opportunities for volunteers to become active participant in the success of the 2007 Bishop's Diocesan Fund Annual Appeal. Please consider sharing your gifts by volunteering.

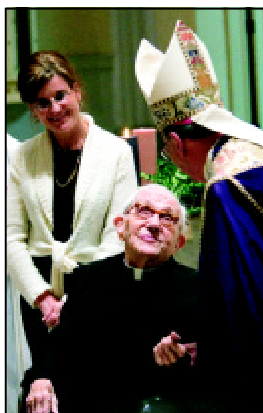
For more information about the BDF campaign or information on other programs and ministries, contact your local parish.

Advent Vespers Service honors parish, agency volunteers

PUEBLO- At a Vespers Service on the First Sunday of Advent, December 3, held at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Pueblo, Bishop Arthur Tafoya presented the annual Service Awards for the parishes in the diocese.

In an emotional moment, Bishop Tafoya also presented Bishop Charles A. Buswell the De Becker Medal on behalf of the American College in Louvain, Belgium. Bishop Buswell attended the American College of the Immaculate Conception as a seminarian and it is his Alma Mater.

The medal is named after Msgr Jules De Becker, the most distinguished and longest serving rector of the college. The citation by Very Rev. Kevin A. Codd, Rector, reads in part.... "Bishop Buswell has remained a loving son of Louvain and a dedicated alumnus of the American College for the past sixty-seven years since he completed his studies here. He has been a regular visitor over the years, knowing the place as a second home and sharing with the seminarians the wisdom of his years of service to the Church. We wish to express our gratitude to him for a lifetime of loving service & pastoral care. On behalf of all of us associated with the American College, our students, staff, alumni, and benefactors, I am honored to present to Bishop Charles



Bishop Charles Buswell, seated, is congratulated on his award by Bishop Arthur Tafoya.

A. Buswell, on the occasion of the opening celebration of the 150th anniversary of the foundation of the American College of the Immaculate Conception in Louvain, the De Becker Medal."

He presented St. Therese medallions to nearly 50 parish nominees from across the diocese. St. Therese is the patron saint of the diocese. The 4 p.m. service was a celebration of the presentation of the special service medallions.

"It is important to do something to recognize people for their ministries," Bishop Tafoya said. "I am proud to honor these persons for the manner and way in which they have gone about their ministries for their parishes."

All the parishes of the Diocese of Pueblo were asked to choose someone for this special honor. Nominees were from varied ministries, representing the richness and diversity of parish life.

"Often these people due their work quietly and in

SERVICE AWARDS CONTINUED ON PAGE 3.

2006 TOPNEWS

STORIES

1. ISLAM
Muslims-Catholic tensions continue with riots; a papal con man that was viewed negatively and the pope's Muslim her visit to Turkey; a country with a Muslim majority.
2. IMMIGRATION
3. IRAQ
4. CHURCH FINANCES
5. 'THE DA VINCI CODE'

NEWSMAKERS

1. POPE BENEDICT XVI
During his first full year as the leader of the Catholic Church, the pope issued his first encyclical, traveled to various countries and named 15 new cardinals.
2. PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH
3. BISHOP WILLIAM S. SKYLLSTAD
4. ST. MOTHER THEODORE GUERIN
5. JUSTICE SAMUEL ALITO JR.

