

Joseph Vigil ordained to the priesthood December 15, 06

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responded, "present" and stood before the altar.

"Christ works in the priesthood, through holy orders," Bishop Tafoya said. "He acts through your acts. The Church is alive, and I encourage you not to ever settle in or be tired in your work. Rather be diligent and faithful in your ministry."

The candidate knelt and swore his obedience to the bishop and, following the investiture with stole and chasuble by his parents, which again brought thunderous applause from the congregation, the candidate received the anointing of the hands. Then, Father Vigil took his place on the altar to concelebrate the Mass.

At the end of Mass Bishop Tafoya asked the family members of the new priest to stand and be recognized. Bishop Tafoya addressed Joseph's father Ramon (92) and mother Aurora (88) directly as he said, "We know that it was your upbringing that set this man on the way to priesthood."

Father Vigil completed formation and graduated with a Master's of Divinity Degree from Sacred Heart School of Theology in Hales Corner, Wisconsin.

Following Mass, a reception was held at the Catholic Pastoral Center. There, family and friends waited patiently in line to get one of the first blessings by the new priest.

Father Joseph Vigil will begin his ministry in the Diocese of Pueblo at the San Juan Catholic Community in Monte Vista in January 19, 2007.



Clockwise: Transitional Deacon Joseph Vigil lays prostrate before the altar. The family of Joseph Vigil, including his parents Ramon Jose and Aurora Leyva, and his four brothers and two sisters traveled to attend his ordination and were present in the front rows. Father Vigil bestows his first blessing as a priest on Bishop Arthur Tafoya then extended his blessing to his immediate family gathered. As the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart erupted in applause, Bishop Tafoya introduced newly ordained Father Vigil giving him a congratulatory hug. Photos by APS



Vatican officials say they found St. Paul's tomb in Roman basilica

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- After years of archaeological work, Vatican officials announced they have identified the tomb of St. Paul beneath the Rome basilica dedicated to the apostle.

Authorities said Dec. 11 that a roughly cut marble sarcophagus was found beneath a historic inscription that reads: "Paul Apostle Martyr." The tomb lies several feet below the main altar of the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls.

Only one end of the sarcophagus has been opened to view, and the rest is buried beneath building material. If Pope Benedict XVI gives permission, the experts may attempt to open the sarcophagus and find out whether the saint's relics are inside.

"We can be certain that this is the tomb of St. Paul," Cardinal Andrea Cordero Lanza di Montezemolo, archpriest of the basilica, told a press conference.

"No one ever had any doubt that the basilica was built on the site of the tomb. Now we can see it, through a small window we have created," the cardinal said.

He said Vatican experts attempted to X-ray the tomb to view the contents, but it did not work because of the thick marble walls of the sarcophagus.

An "internal exploration" of the sarcophagus would pose technical problems but probably will be attempted, the cardinal said. He said it was certain that the tomb had remained sealed since it was placed there in the fourth century.

"The Basilica of St. John Lateran says they have the heads of Sts. Peter and Paul. I don't know how they can, since this tomb has never been opened," the cardinal said.

Giorgio Filippi, Vatican archaeologist who carried out the studies on the tomb area, said that, archaeologically speaking, it did not matter whether relics of St. Paul were discovered inside the sarcophagus or not.



Left: A roughly cut marble sarcophagus is seen through an opening under the altar of the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls. The sarcophagus was discovered beneath an inscription that reads "Paul Apostle Martyr." Below: Cardinal Andrea di Montezemolo, archpriest of the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls, shows a photo of the tomb of St. Paul at a Vatican press conference Dec. 11.

He said positive identification of the tomb was made using historical and scientific methods, independent of the presence of relics.

Experts believe the marble sarcophagus was put in place during the reconstruction of the basilica in 390. The church was remodeled several times afterward and almost completely destroyed by fire in 1823.

One of the more important archaeological finds, Filippi said, was that the sarcophagus had a funnel-shaped hole in the top -- later closed with mortar -- through which the faithful could stick pieces of cloth to make secondary relics.

That was a significant sign that the tomb was revered from the beginning as that of St. Paul of Tarsus.

Tradition holds St. Paul was martyred by beheading in the first century and that his body was buried in a cemetery along the Via Ostiense, where the basilica was built.

Filippi began studying the basilica in 1993, and in 2002 he made the first close examination that led to the sarcophagus.



Advent Verpers Service honors parishes and Catholic organizations volunteers

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the background, but without them the local Catholic Church would suffer," said Bishop Tafoya.

Parish bulletins invited everyone to attend the service, noting, "Many of you probably don't even know our nominee, because they go about their ministry in a very quiet and unassuming manner."

"It is appropriate to present these awards during Advent, a time of waiting for fulfillment, joy and gratitude for Jesus' first coming," said Bishop Tafoya, adding, "These people are Christ's presence to us today through their ministries which we celebrate today as we renew our longing for Christ's final coming."

Bishop Tafoya once again honored individuals and

couples who have voluntarily helped in the life of their parishes. Recipients of the Bishop Tafoya Service Award were: Robert and Rose Marie Trujillo of Christ the King, Pueblo; Adela Quintana of St. Ignatius, Ignacio; Edna Martinez of Sacred Heart, Alamosa; Verla Corsi of Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Pueblo; Ernest and Judy Madrid of St. Leander, Pueblo; Pauline Webb of Shrine of St. Therese, Pueblo; Ken and Pat Vandeburgh of St. Aloysius, Rye; Greg and Shirley Thompson of St. Joseph, Monte Vista; Elsie Tresso of Holy Family, Pueblo; Pepe and Maria Pacheco of St. Mary - Montrose; Violet Piccoli of Sacred Heart, Durango; Elizabeth Reyes of Our Lady of Lourdes, Beulah; Aurora Alvarez of St. Francis Xavier, Pueblo; Mary Ellen

Portillos of St. Francis Xavier, Pueblo; Weoma Vagher of St. Frances of Rome, Bristol; Terry Toller of St. Mary, Walsenburg; Mike Bartolo of St. Peter, Rocky Ford; Marilyn Marinelli of St. Peter, Rocky Ford; Bessie Montoya of Immaculate Heart of Mary, Pagosa Springs; Manuel Sandoval of St. Pius X, Pueblo; Brian Smith of St. Paul the Apostle, Pueblo West; Arturo Vargas of St. Joseph, Grand Junction; Shirley Espinoza of Holy Trinity, Trinidad; Donna and Brittany Delleff of St. Michael, Delta; Cindi Warner of St. Michael, Delta; Bemice Krasovec of St. Mary, Pueblo; William Merhar of St. Patrick, Pueblo; Rose Maurillo of Our Lady of the Assumption, Pueblo; Ginger and Pat Duffy of Immaculate Heart of Mary, Grand Junction; Mary Kluss of St. Columba, Durango.

