
Centennial Beatification of the Curé of Ars

St. Jean-Baptiste-Marie Vianney Curé of Ars, born at Dardilly, near Lyons, France, on 8 May, 1786; died at Ars, 4 August, 1859; son of Matthieu Vianney and Marie Beluze.

In 1806, the curé at Ecully, M. Balley, opened a school for ecclesiastical students, and Jean-Marie was sent to him. Though he was of average intelligence and his masters never seem to have doubted his vocation, his knowledge was extremely limited, being confined to a little arithmetic, history, and geography, and he found learning, especially the study of Latin, excessively difficult. One of his fellow-students, Matthias Loras, afterwards first Bishop of Dubuque, assisted him with his Latin lessons.

But now another obstacle presented itself. Young Vianney was drawn in the conscription, the war with Spain and the urgent need of recruits having caused Napoleon to withdraw the exemption enjoyed by the ecclesiastical students in the diocese of his uncle, Cardinal Fesch. Matthieu Vianney tried unsuccessfully to procure a substitute, so his son was obliged to go. His regiment soon received marching orders. The morning of

departure, Jean-Baptiste went to church to pray, and on his return to the barracks found that his comrades had already left. He was threatened with arrest, but the recruiting captain believed his story and sent him after the troops. At nightfall he met a young man who volunteered to guide him to his fellow-soldiers, but led him to Noes, where some deserters had gathered. The mayor persuaded him to remain there, under an assumed name, as schoolmaster. After fourteen months, he was able to communicate with his family. His father was vexed to know that he was a deserter and ordered him to surrender but the matter was settled by his younger brother offering to serve in his stead and being accepted.

Jean-Baptiste now resumed his studies at Ecully. In 1812, he was sent to the seminary at Verrieres; he was so deficient in Latin as to be obliged to follow the philosophy course in French. He failed to pass the examinations for entrance to the seminary proper, but on re-examination three months later succeeded. On 13 August, 1815, he was ordained priest by Msgr. Simon, Bishop of Grenoble. His difficulties in making the preparatory studies seem to have been due to a lack

of mental suppleness in dealing with theory as distinct from practice -- a lack accounted for by the meagerness of his early schooling, the advanced age at which he began to study, the fact that he was not of more than average intelligence, and that he was far advanced in spiritual science and in the practice of virtue long before he came to study it in the abstract. He was sent to Ecully as assistant to M. Balley, who had first recognized and encouraged his vocation, who urged him to persevere when the obstacles in his way seemed insurmountable, who interceded with the examiners when he failed to pass for the higher seminary, and who was his model as well as his preceptor and patron.

In 1818, after the death of M. Balley, M. Vianney was made parish priest of Ars, a village not very far from Lyons. It was in the exercise of the functions of the parish priest in this remote French hamlet that as the "curé d'Ars" he became known throughout France and the Christian world. A few years after he went to Ars, he founded a sort of orphanage for destitute girls. It was called "The Providence" and was the model of similar institutions established later all over France. M. Vianney himself instructed the children of "The Providence" in the catechism,

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Dear Friends of the Priesthood

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Please send all articles, comments and photos to the editor, Fr. Bill Cosgrove via e-mail at frbill@optonline.com or fax to 845-227-3951.

Newsletter material from all Fraternity members is gratefully accepted!

In the Northeastern United States the month of March can be a very confusing one. At times it has the last vestiges of winter and sometimes it has the first beginnings of Spring. It seems a bit difficult at times what it's supposed to do.

So often are lives can be the same way. We know what we want to do but we also know that we can fall so short of our plans and our good intentions. At times we feel we are in Winter and other times we feel we are in Spring. At times we feel we are making real progress in our relationship with God and at other times we feel like we are going backward if we are moving at all.

Yet in the midst of it all God makes us a promise: "I am with you always, even to the ends of the earth". The truth of this promise strikes me most often when I travel for the Fraternity. I can be in a foreign country for the first time (and seemingly at the end of the world as I know it) and yet I know that God is with me. Most often I experience the Lord's presence in the lives and the examples of the priests that I am privileged to serve in my time in that country. Even with the fact that I am far away from home, there is a brotherhood that I experience, simply because I am with other priests serious about their relationship with the Lord. What a blessing to experience the Lord's presence during those times.

Where are you in your own relationship with the Lord? Do you know that the Lord is with you at all times? You may not realize how the Lord has come to you and has taken care of you. My prayer for you this Spring is that you experience the fulfillment of God's promise to you. May you experience the fullness of God's presence in your life and in your heart. God is always faithful to His promises!

So often the presence of God for me is revealed in the people that He has placed within my life. Whether it is friends who I have known for years, the parishioners that I am privileged to serve, or the priests that


I have been gifted to know from around the world, each have revealed to me in my life the love and presence of God.

The Fraternity of Priests is a wonderful instrument of God's grace in the life of so many priests around the world. The relationships that are formed and the love that is shared is a great blessing to priests in every kind of different circumstance and situation.

It is thanks to your love and generosity that we are able to serve priests in all kinds of ministry and life. Your prayers and financial support touch the lives of priests and transform them in ways that we can only imagine.

God is with us always – at every moment- in every place. May you continue to be that blessing of God to us and to so many others.

In Christ,



Fr. Timothy Graff



Fraternity Financial Report

One of the objectives for the Fraternity of Priests is to inform our donors about the ongoing financial health and details of the organization. We're providing this information to help communicate our specific need and to thank those many faithful benefactors who help make our service possible. Thank you!

Monthly Donation Budget: **\$6,300.00**

Actual Donations: **\$5,660.00**

Budget Surplus (shortage) (**\$ 640.00**)

Current as of January 31, 2004.

...continued from page 1

and these catechetical instructions came to be so popular that at last they were given every day in the church to large crowds. "The Providence" was the favourite work of the "curé d'Ars", but, although it was successful, it was closed in 1847, because the holy curé thought that he was not justified in maintaining it in the face of the opposition of many good people. Its closing was a very heavy trial to him.

But the chief labour of the Curé d'Ars was the direction of souls. He had not been long at Ars when people began coming to him from other parishes, then from distant places, then from all parts of France, and finally from other countries. As early as 1835, his bishop forbade him to attend the annual retreats of the diocesan clergy because of "the souls awaiting him yonder". During the last ten years of his life, he spent from sixteen to eighteen hours a day in the confessional. His advice was sought by bishops, priests, religious, young men and women in doubt as to their vocation, sinners, persons in all sorts of difficulties and the sick. In 1855, the number of pilgrims had reached twenty thousand a year. The most distinguished persons visited Ars for the purpose of seeing the holy curé and hearing his daily instruction. The Venerable Father Colin was ordained deacon at the same time, and was his life-long friend, while Mother Marie de la Providence founded the Helpers of the Holy Souls on his advice and with his constant encouragement. His

direction was characterized by common sense, remarkable insight, and supernatural knowledge. He would sometimes divine sins withheld in an imperfect confession. His instructions were simple in language, full of imagery drawn from daily life and country scenes, but breathing faith and that love of God which was his life principle and which he infused into his audience as much by his manner and appearance as by his words, for, at the last, his voice was almost inaudible.

The miracles recorded by his biographers are of three classes: First, the obtaining of money for his charities and food for his orphans; Secondly, supernatural knowledge of the past and future; Thirdly, healing the sick, especially children.

The greatest miracle of all was his life. He practised mortification from his early youth. And for forty years his food and sleep were insufficient, humanly speaking, to sustain life. And yet he laboured incessantly, with unflinching humility, gentleness, patience, and cheerfulness, until he was more than seventy-three years old.

On 3 October, 1874 Jean-Baptiste-Marie Vianney was proclaimed Venerable by Pius IX and on 8 January, 1905, he was enrolled among the Blessed. Pope Pius X proposed him as a model to the parochial clergy.

[Note: In 1925, Pope Pius XI canonized him. His feast is kept on 4 August.]

International Charismatic Priests' Retreat

The National Service Committee of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal invites you to join the **International Charismatic Priests' Retreat** in Ars, France, September 24-October 2, 2005.

This unique conference will mark the 150th anniversary of the beatification of the Cure d'Ars.

Spend this week close to the Holy Curé, as we celebrate "Priesthood, the love of Jesus' heart."

The Retreat will be led by Sr Briega McKenna, OSC and Fr Kevin Scallon, CM and many other speakers and celebrants.

There will also be an extension tour of Paris immediately after the retreat for those who wish to continue.

Costs for the Retreat vary depending on departure city and features selected. For more details, please contact:

The National Service Committee
www.nsc-chariscenter.org
(800) 338-2445

Note - a complete itinerary and description of all events, costs, details and additional information can be found online at:
www.unitours.com/priestretreat

Please send us your prayer intentions: _____

THANK YOU FOR PRAYING FOR A PRIEST EACH DAY!

A PRAYER FOR PRIESTS

O Jesus, Eternal High Priest, live in (name of priest), act in him, speak in and through him. Think your thoughts in his mind, love through his heart. Give him your own disposition and feelings. Teach, lead and guide him always. Correct, enlighten and expand his thoughts and behavior. Possess his soul, take over his entire personality and life. Replace him with yourself. Incline him to constant adoration and thanksgiving; pray in and through him. Let him live in you and keep him in this intimate union always.

O Mary, Immaculate Conception, Mother of Jesus and Mother of priests, pray and intercede for (.....). Amen.

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THANK YOU FOR PRAYING FOR A PRIEST EACH DAY!

April 2005						
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Rev. Robert Franco <i>Cleveland</i> 3	Rev. Tome Dunphy <i>Cleveland</i> 4	Rev. David Durkee <i>Cleveland</i> 5	Rt. Rev. Bryan Eyman <i>Cleveland</i> 6	Rev. Sean Donnelly <i>Cleveland</i> 7	Rev. James Mazanec <i>Cleveland</i> 8	Rev. Homer Blubaugh <i>Columbus</i> 9
Rev. Justin Reis <i>Columbus</i> 10	Rev. Joseph Losh <i>Columbus</i> 11	Rev. Richard Engle <i>Columbus</i> 12	Rev. James Kelly <i>Columbus</i> 13	Msgr. James Nugent <i>Columbus</i> 14	Msgr. Michael Nugent <i>Columbus</i> 15	Rev. John Oderman <i>Fargo</i> 16
Rev. Don Leiphon <i>Fargo</i> 17	Rev. Robert Laliberte <i>Fargo</i> 18	Rev. Dale Kinzler <i>Fargo</i> 19	Rev. Duaine Cote <i>Fargo</i> 20	Rev. Matt Lanz <i>Fargo</i> 21	Rev. Charles Antekeier <i>Grand Rapids</i> 22	Rev. Donald Lomasiewicz <i>Grand Rapids</i> 23
Rev. Mark Mitchell <i>Grand Rapids</i> 24	Rev. James Bozung <i>Grand Rapids</i> 25	Rev. Ayub Nasar <i>Grand Rapids</i> 26	Rev. Shamaun Beas <i>Grand Rapids</i> 27	Rev. George Fekete <i>Grand Rapids</i> 28	Rev. Michael Shea <i>Grand Rapids</i> 29	Rev. Henry Dondzila R.I.P. 30

A PRAYER FOR PRIESTS

O Jesus, Eternal High Priest, live in (*name of priest*), act in him, speak in and through him. Think your thoughts in his mind, love through his heart. Give him your own disposition and feelings. Teach, lead and guide him always. Correct, enlighten and expand his thoughts and behavior. Possess his soul, take over his entire personality and life. Replace him with yourself. Incline him to constant adoration and thanksgiving; pray in and through him. Let him live in you and keep him in this intimate union always.

O Mary, Immaculate Conception, Mother of Jesus and Mother of priests, pray and intercede for (.....). Amen.



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