

YEAR FOR PRIESTS

Our Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI has declared a special “Year for Priests” from June 19, 2009 to June 19, 2010. He said the special year is designed to strengthen the “missionary identity” of all Catholic priests. Without the priestly ministry, there would be no Eucharist, no mission and even no church.

The Holy Father has proclaimed St. John Vianney Patron saint of all the world’s priests. This year is the 150th anniversary of the death of the saint, who is also commonly known as “the Curé of Ars.”

The Pope will open the year of celebration on the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus by presiding at Vespers in St. Peter’s Basilica. The relics of St. John Vianney will be brought for the occasion.

A plenary indulgence has been offered for priests and the faithful on the occasion of the Year for Priests.

During the year, the US Conference of Catholic Bishops will publish monthly articles by renowned women of faith about priests.

An International Priests' Retreat will be held in Ars, France, sponsored by the Congregation for Clergy from September 27 to October 3, 2009

There will be an international gathering of Priests with the Holy Father in St. Peter's Square on June 19, 2010 at the closing of the Year for Priests.

The Papal Announcement, the Decree for Plenary Indulgence and more information can be found at the US Bishops’ web site www.usccb.org/yearforpriests which will provide more news as the year progresses.

Please remember to keep our holy priests in your prayers, especially during this celebration of the Year for Priests. The People’s Prayer for Priests can be found on the back of this notice.

Please Pray for Priests

Dear Lord,

we pray that the Blessed Mother
wrap her mantle around your priests
and through her intercession
strengthen them for their ministry.

We pray that Mary will guide your priests
to follow her own words,

“Do whatever He tells you” (Jn 2:5).

May your priests have the heart of St. Joseph,
Mary’s most chaste spouse.

May the Blessed Mother’s own pierced heart
inspire them to embrace
all who suffer at the foot of the cross.

May your priests be holy,
filled with the fire of your love
seeking nothing but your greater glory
and the salvation of souls.

Amen.

Saint John Vianney, pray for us.