

RELIC

ST. JOHN MARY VIANNEY

- ❖ Born to a farm family on May 6, 1786, St. Vianney's youth was spent teaching other children their prayers and catechism.
- ❖ St. John Mary Vianney was ordained a priest in 1815 at the age of 29. It took this long for him to be ordained because he had little education, was not a very good student, and his Latin was terrible.
- ❖ Three years later he was made parish priest of Ars, a remote French hamlet, where attendance at Mass was very lax.
- ❖ He began visiting his parishioners, especially the sick and poor, spent days in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, did penance for his parishioners, and leading his people by example. His reputation as a confessor and director of souls made him known throughout the Christian world.
- ❖ He had gifts of discernment of spirit, prophecy, hidden knowledge and of working miracles/
- ❖ His life was one of extreme mortification. Accustomed to the most austerities, beleaguered by swarms of penitents, and besieged by the devil, this great mystic manifested a imperturbable patience.
- ❖ He was tormented by evil spirits, especially when he tried to get his 2-3 hours of sleep each night.
- ❖ He was a wonder worker loved by the crowds, but he retained a childlike simplicity, and he remains to this day the living image of the priest after the heart of Christ.
- ❖ He heard confessions of people from all over the world for sixteen hours each day. His life was filled with works of charity and love. It is recorded that even the staunchest of sinners were converted by his mere word.
- ❖ By 1855 there were 20,000 pilgrims each year coming to this small French village near Lyon.
- ❖ He died August 4, 1859 at age of 73 of natural causes, after spending over 40 years as a parish priest in the same church. This is why he has become the patron saint of parish priests. He is interred in the Basilica of Ars.
- ❖ His canonization took place on May 31, 1925 by Pope Pius XI.