

## St Jean-Baptiste-Marie Vianney



**J**EAN-Baptiste-Marie Vianney (8 May 1786 – 4 August 1859) was born at Dardilly, some eight miles north-west of Lyons in France. He had great difficulties in studying for the Priesthood but was ordained in 1815 and became the Parish Priest of Ars three years later.

The people soon noticed that he prayed with great recollection and celebrated Mass with deep devotion. They noticed too, his mortified way of life, his love for

the poor and the sick, his mild words to everyone. Very soon he had won the hearts of all. A man who ran a dubious business that was the occasion of sin for many answered his humble objection by saying, "But a person must live," St. John Mary replied with much concern, "True, but one must also die."

By means of frequent instructions, he taught his parishioners about the faith and how to live it virtuously. He also spoke about vice and its tragic consequences.

Known popularly as the "Curé of Ars" (Parish Priest of the town of Ars) he became famous as a confessor with up to 20,000 people annually flocking from all over France to attend his Mass and be reconciled to God by his ministry. He spent 16 to 18 hours each day in the confessional.

He tried a number of times to leave all this and live a simple, quiet, contemplative life, but his bishop and the people would not agree to it and he remained in his parish.

Nevertheless, a quieter and more contemplative life continued to call him. He spoke of it to Pere Leonard, a ven-

erable Capuchin of the Convent of Les Broteaux, of Lyons. He expressed a desire to join the Capuchin Order, but the discerning Capuchin friar told him that he would do more good remaining in his parish. The Curé persisted, and Pere Leonard told him about the Third Order of St. Francis and gave him the rule to read. Shortly after this he joined the Third Order of St. Francis. The incident, which took place in 1848, was enough to cause concern in the village. A rumour went around that he was going to become a Capuchin.

However, although the Curé of Ars became a Secular Franciscan (as they are called today) he remained in his parish and continued to work a 20-hour day in which he passed the greater part in hearing confessions. He rose about one in the morning and walked the thirty metres from his presbytery to the church. There he rang the angelus bell, thereby announcing to all that he was ready to hear confession.

He did this until he celebrated Mass at seven; after his thanksgiving he returned to the confessional, and spent the greater part of the day there. He emerged at eleven to give instruction in the faith to the people in the church and then went for his dinner which took about a quarter of an hour.

After a visit to people who were sick he went back to the confessional. He came out again in the evening for night prayers. Then he retired to the presbytery and shut himself up in his room for about three hours. Perhaps living such a life style was the great miracle of Ars.

The Curé of Ars lived like that until he was 73 years old, then completely worn out, by his austere life and work, he collapsed on the 31st May and died peacefully on August 4th 1859. His feast is celebrated on that day. St. Jean Vianney's incorrupt body is entombed above the main altar in the Basilica at Ars, France.

Saint John Vianney is the patron saint of parish priests. In honour of the 150th anniversary of Vianney's death, Pope Benedict XVI declared a year for priests, running from the feast of the Sacred Heart 2009-2010.

## Year of the Priests

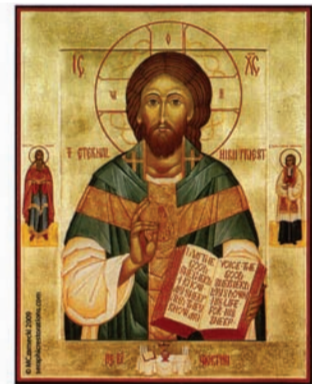
### Prayer for Our Priests

Heavenly Father,  
Grant that our priests be strengthened and healed by the power of the Eucharist they celebrate. May the Word they proclaim give them courage and wisdom.

We pray that all those whom they seek to serve may see in then the love and care of Jesus, our Eternal High Priest, who is Lord for ever and ever . Amen

Mary, Mother of the Church look tenderly upon your sons, our priests. Joseph, patron of the Universal Church pray for us all.

Please pray for vocations to the priesthood.



YEAR FOR PRIESTS  
19TH JUNE 2009 - 19TH JUNE 2010

## Media Watch News

**T**HE BBC is considering banning swearing on TV! The BBC has announced a review of its editorial guidelines and has taken the unprecedented step of putting them out to public consultation before they are confirmed.

Under these new proposals offensive language used after the 9pm watershed would be increasingly 'bleeped out' and this could eventually lead to the strongest language being censored until 10pm. The use of the most offensive swear words would have to be approved by a BBC 'output controller', and the Corporation would have to strengthen warnings about content so viewers are not taken by surprise. This move is part of a wide-ranging overhaul of editorial guidelines as a direct result of all the complaints made last year following the offensive calls by Jonathan Ross and Russell Brand to Fawcety Towers actor Andrew Sachs.

Thank you to everyone who complained last year, here is proof positive that the BBC is finally listening to our concerns.

When the story was announced this week lots of journalists rang the mediawatch-uk office for a comment and I was interviewed on several regional radio stations and on BBC Radio 5 Live - you can hear what I had to say here: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/console/b00n2tp4> (this subject is discussed approx 1hr 35 minutes into the programme). Insomniacs amongst you will also be able to catch me talking to George Galloway about this issue on Saturday evening at 11.15pm on Talksport Radio on 1089/1053 AM.

### Action Point

We need to keep the pressure up and let the BBC know our thoughts on this review.

mediawatch-uk will be responding but it would be really helpful if you would respond too, we've already seen that notice is taken of numbers! This can be done easily by completing the online survey at the BBC Trust's website:

[www.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/index.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/index.shtml)

### BBC Trust Review

The BBC Trust - the governing body of the BBC - has launched its review into BBC One, BBC Two, BBC Four and the BBC Red Button and we are invited to tell them what we think of them.

It is the responsibility of the BBC Trust to get the best out of the BBC for license fee payers. We have high expectations of the BBC - trusting it to make great programmes; to maintain the highest standards of distinctive, independent broadcasting; to offer everyone something they will love; and to do things that others can't or won't attempt.

The review will examine how well BBC One, BBC Two, BBC Four and the Red Button are performing, and whether any changes should be made to the services. We will be responding to this review but would really value your input so that we can truly speak on your behalf. The consultation period will end on 18 December 2009 - but we would ideally, like to get our response in to them by the beginning of December. You can also let the BBC have your opinion as an individual and if you would like to do this you'll be able to find an online form at [www.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust](http://www.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust).

If you wish to send your comments direct to Media Watch the address is 3 Willow House, Kennington Road, Ashford, Kent TN24 0NR or you can email them at [info@mediawatchuk.org](mailto:info@mediawatchuk.org)

## The Fourth Wise Man

Three wise men came to Bethlehem, following a star.

Their names, we're told, were Melchior, Caspar and Balthazar.

One brought a gift of frankincense, the others myrrh and gold;

They came to greet the newborn King, the Gospel story told.

They gave their gifts to Jesus, in the manger where he lay;

His mother offered coffee, but they said they couldn't stay.

They got back on their camels - near the stable they'd been tied

And as they headed off back east, Mary softly sighed;

"I really don't need perfume, thought myrrh of course is tops.

And gold is always useful, though we're nowhere near the shops.

And frankincense is lovely - but a stable's not the place,

I hope they're not the wisest men in all the human race.

It was very good of them to come from such a far off land

After all that time on camels - It's a wonder they could stand!

But bringing Jesus gifts of myrrh and frankincense and gold,

It's just not very practical - he's only 10 days old."

Next afternoon a man appeared outside the stable gate,

He said he was the fourth wise

man - and sorry he was late.

"I've brought some things I thought you'd need - it's just a little gift",

A quick inspection of this bag gave Mary's heart a lift.

A frozen casserole was there and a stuffed and fluffy toy,

Some baby clothes in pastel blue - he'd guessed it was boy!

"The thought of washing nappies, Mary cried, need not unnerve us.

For here's a six month voucher for a nappy washing service!"

She turned to thank the stranger, but the stranger wasn't there;

He'd slipped away and vanished in the chilly winter air.

But on the gate he'd left a note, quite simple but profound-

Don't write this in the Gospel please - I'd never live it down!

So don't forget the fourth wise man - the wisest of the lot,

He brought the really useful gifts the other three forgot.

If thoughts of gold and frankincense and myrrh don't leave you glum

It's because you're prob'ly not a young and first time mum!

Dermot Horgan

Sent by Tina Pearce, Nothampton

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