



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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St. John Vianney Relic to be displayed at the Basilica of St. Michael the Archangel

Pensacola, FL — The Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee is pleased to announce the incorrupt heart of St. John Vianney, patron saint of priests, will be available for veneration at the Basilica of St. Michael the Archangel, 21 N. Palafox St., Pensacola, FL from Monday, December 3 to Tuesday, December 4, 2018. The theme of the visit will focus on purification in the wake of recent controversies surrounding sexual abuse by clergy in the Church.

St. John Vianney's relic will arrive during the entrance procession of the Basilica at 12:10 p.m. for Mass on December 3. The full schedule of activities, hours for veneration by the faithful during the days of December 3-4 can be found at www.stmichael.ptdiocese.org or www.ptdiocese.org.

The Supreme Council of the Knights of Columbus is sponsoring the pilgrimage which will be displayed in various dioceses in the U.S. through June 2019. The tour was announced by Knights of Columbus Supreme Knight Carl Anderson in a letter to the Knights of Columbus chaplains and members that focused on clergy sex abuse and proposed Vianney as a model of priestly love and service.

“The Knights of Columbus — laymen, priests and chaplains together — will have an important role to play in rebuilding the Church,” Anderson said. “We must commit the Knights of Columbus to work for repentance, reform and rebuilding of the Church.”

Anderson underscored in his letter that St. John Vianney is the example needed to help the Church to rebuild. “The possibility of a tour was offered to us by the Shrine at Ars some months before the recent scandal,” he said. “We now welcome as providential this opportunity to invoke the intercession of the patron of parish priests, whose holiness and integrity is a singular model for clergy.”

About St. John Vianney

St. John Vianney popularly known as the Curé of Ars, is revered as a model of priestly generosity, purity and prayerfulness. Born in France in 1786, he grew up in a time of open hostility to the Church in the wake of the French Revolution when the faith was attacked, churches destroyed, and the clergy martyred. Assigned to lead the parish in the small farming community of Ars. Father Vianney excelled at both prayer and work.

He was famous for hearing confessions for up to 18 hours a day as people from across Europe and beyond came to see him. His notoriety throughout the Catholic world grew even after his death in 1859 and he continues to inspire a quest for holiness by both priests and the laity. His incorrupt heart — a major relic — normally resides at the shrine named for him in Ars.

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