

PLENARY INDULGENCE FOR THE YEAR OF PRIESTS

VATICAN CITY, 12 MAY 2009 (VIS) - According to a decree made public today and signed by Cardinal James Francis Stafford and Bishop Gianfranco Girotti, O.F.M. Conv., respectively penitentiary major and regent of the Apostolic Penitentiary, Benedict XVI will grant priests and faithful Plenary Indulgence for the occasion of the Year for Priests, which is due to run from 19 June 2009 to 19 June 2010 and has been called in honour of St. Jean Marie Vianney.

The period will begin with the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, "a day of priestly sanctification", says the text, when the Pope will celebrate Vespers before the relics of the saint, brought to Rome for the occasion by the bishop of the French diocese of Belley-Ars. The Year will end in St. Peter's Square, in the presence of priests from all over the world "who will renew their faithfulness to Christ and their bonds of fraternity".

The means to obtain the Plenary Indulgence are as follows:

(A) All truly penitent priests who, on any day, devotedly pray Lauds or Vespers before the Blessed Sacrament exposed to public adoration or in the tabernacle, and ... offer themselves with a ready and generous heart for the celebration of the Sacraments, especially the Sacrament of Penance, will be granted Plenary Indulgence, which they can also apply to their deceased confreres, if in accordance with current norms they take Sacramental Confession and the Eucharist and pray in accordance with the intentions of the Supreme Pontiff. Priests are furthermore granted Partial Indulgence, also applicable to deceased confreres, every time they devotedly recite the prayers duly approved to lead a saintly life and to carry out the duties entrusted to them.

(B) All truly penitent Christian faithful who, in church or oratory, devotedly attend Holy Mass and offer prayers to Jesus Christ, supreme and eternal Priest, for the priests of the Church, or perform any good work to sanctify and mould them to His Heart, are granted Plenary Indulgence, on the condition that they have expiated their sins through Sacramental Confession and prayed in accordance with the intentions of the Supreme Pontiff. This may be done on the opening and closing days of the Year of Priests, on the 150th anniversary of the death of St. Jean Marie Vianney, on the first Thursday of the month, or on any other day established by the ordinaries of particular places for the good of the faithful.

The elderly, the sick and all those who for any legitimate reason are unable to leave their homes, may still obtain Plenary Indulgence if, with the soul completely removed from attachment to any form of sin and with the intention of observing, as soon as they can, the usual three conditions, "on the days concerned, they pray for the sanctification of priests and offer their sickness and suffering to God through Mary,

Queen of the Apostles".

Partial Indulgence is offered to all faithful each time they pray five Our Father, Ave Maria and Gloria Patri, or any other duly approved prayer "in honour of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, to ask that priests maintain purity and sanctity of life".

PENT/DECREE INDULGENCES/...VIS 090512 (540)