

Year for Priests Web site highlights international celebration

WASHINGTON – The U.S. bishops' Secretariat for Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations has set up a Web site to mark the Year for Priests, a worldwide celebration from June 19 of this year to June 19, 2010.

Pope Benedict XVI chose to begin the Year for Priests on the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a day of prayer for the sanctification of all priests. The pope also designated St. John Vianney as the universal patron of all priests on the 150th anniversary of the saint's death. The saint, who is also known as the Cure of Ars, is the patron of parish priests.

The Year for Priests Web site is www.usccb.org/yearforpriests.

The site includes the pope's message for the occasion and the announcement of the plenary indulgence in conjunction with the celebration. The site also offers specially commissioned prayers for priests and laity. The pope's messages and the prayers are available in English and Spanish.

Throughout the year, the secretariat also will use the site to publish monthly articles about the priesthood written by prominent Catholic women.

Other activities in the Year for Priests include a retreat on the national level and a gathering of priests in Rome for the celebration's culmination. Further details about the national retreat will be available on the site.