

Dear Friends of St John Vianney and St Patrick

I have just offered Mass for everyone in our parish as we celebrate today the feast of one of our patrons, St John Vianney.

Grandparents' Day Mass at SJV would have occurred today, 4<sup>th</sup> August. I look forward to a day that I can celebrate Mass with you all again.

St John Vianney was assigned to an impoverished and remote village near Lyons in south eastern France because, so it was judged, the village would not place too many demands on his limited abilities.

By default, the bishop's judgment was a stroke of brilliance. He was unaware of the great capacity for love of the newly appointed pastor. John Vianney was equally close to God and to his parishioners. His gentle urging to lead a Christian way of life and his insight and compassion in the ministry of Confession resulted in his becoming the 'virtual' parish priest of tens of thousands who flocked to the little parish of Ars.

This year, his feast day coincides with the restricted lifestyle that is needed at present. In the words of Pope Francis, (the COVID period) "reminds us that we have forgotten and neglected some of the important things in life and makes us reflect on what is truly important and necessary and what is less important or only apparently so."

I wish you blessings of perseverance, wisdom, patience spiced with joy and faith in God's care. May everyone in your home stay safe and in good health. St John Vianney, pray for us.

Family life is busy at any time. Now, I expect, your work commitments and your guidance of your children's education leave you little spare time.

That precious hour permitted for exercise might also be a chance for a prayerful minute in the open air. Prayer with God can strengthen our resolve and provide us with guideposts to follow when we are faced with difficult days. Most of all, we can pray to not let fear and anger push our love for each other out of our hearts.

*Fr Michael*