

Dear parishioners,

As I write these words, we commemorate the feast day (August 4th) of Saint John Vianney, the patron of all priests. Living in the first half of the 1800s, he certainly was an example of heroic virtue as he ministered in challenging times within society, dealing with many personal and pastoral struggles, but always with a focus on the mercy and saving presence of Jesus Christ the Eternal High Priest.

As I was preparing for the celebration of Mass on his feast day, my own thoughts flashed back to the great Jubilee Year 2000. It was in mid-August of that year that I officially entered priestly formation for the Archdiocese of Hartford. That is now 20 years ago! So many emotions and experiences come to my mind and heart.

Those early days of August, two decades ago, were definitely a time of intense experience of the Holy Spirit for me. I could really feel God's grace working as I made the final preparations (both internal and external) for entering the seminary. What a wonderful patron to turn to in Saint John Vianney. He was so dedicated to his vocation of service and the sacraments. He is a great example of pastoral zeal for souls. All priests are called to follow Jesus the Good Shepard.

These days are truly marked by worry and concern, for so many reasons. So much seems to change, but what does not change is God's truth and God's love for us. The sacraments, especially Holy Eucharist and Reconciliation, become yet again the strong pillars of grace that we need in our lives. Together, we stay close to Jesus.

As always, thank you for your prayers and support.

All the way – to God's embrace.

Sincerely, Father Lavorgna