August 4

Jean-Baptiste Marie Vianney (1786-1859) priest

Jean-Baptiste Marie Vianney died on this day in 1859 in Ars, France.
Born in 1786 in Dardilly, near Lyons, Jean-Marie Vianney had to wait until the age of seventeen to learn to read and write because of the chaos of the French Revolution. He was not a brilliant student, but the difficulties he encountered became an occasion for him to undertake an extremely personal spiritual journey.
Vianney spent a number of years attempting to pass the exam required for entrance to the priesthood. He was finally ordained and devoted the rest of his life to caring for the parish of Ars, where he was sent in 1818. Aware that his education was very limited, he understood that he would succeed in the ministry that had been entrusted to him only if he allowed God to be the one to instruct him in what to announce to his parishoners. He cultivated an intense life of prayer, spending long hours in silent adoration and finding the strength to overcome obstacles such as a strong tendency to depression and discouragement, due in part to his voluntary malnourishment.
With gentleness and convinction, Vianney encouraged his parishoners to renew their lives through dialogue with the Lord and participation in the sacraments. He was welcoming and attentive to the needs of the very poor, and he worked to give abandoned young women and others access to an education, despite strong objections from many of his parishoners and superiors.
His fame was such that by the end of his life, several thousand people visited him each year to receive the sacrament of penitence or to ask for a word from the man who had come to be known simply as the "Curé d'Ars."

BIBLICAL READINGS
Ez 3:16-21; Mt 9:35-10:1

THE CHURCHES REMEMBER...

ANGLICANS:
Jean-Baptiste Marie Vianney, Curé d'Ars, spiritual guide

WESTERN CATHOLICS:
Jean-Baptiste Marie Vianney, priest (Roman and Ambrosian calendars)

COPTS AND ETHIOPIANS (28 abib/hamle):
Mary Magdalene (Coptic Church)
Philip of Dabra Libanos (d. 1348), monk (Ethiopian Church)

LUTHERANS:
Jean-Baptiste Marie Vianney, spiritual father in France

MARONITES:
Dominic (d. 1221), confessor

ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS AND GREEK CATHOLICS:
The 7 holy youths of Ephesus (3rd cent.)

WEST SYRIAN ORTHODOX:
Isaiah of Edessa (7th cent.), bishop