

St. Anthony of Padua R.C. Church

160 Court Street, Buffalo, New York 14202

Traditionally Speaking by S. Casarotto 3/22/09

The REAL crisis

"There was a rich man who dressed in royal garments and fine linen and dined sumptuously every day... and lying at his door was a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who would gladly have eaten his fill of the scraps that fell from the rich man's table..."

(Lk. 16, 19)

This is the story Jesus told 2,000 years ago, and this is the story which is still happening today.

During the current economic crisis, the rich got richer. Again, and more than before. The New York Times reported on 1/29/09: "The income of the 400 wealthiest Americans swelled in 2006, soaring nearly 23% from the previous year, to an average of \$263 million, according to data released by the IRS." And who repealed the *Glass-Steagel Act* in 1998 allowing the credit system to run out of control? Money (or at least the hope for it) always makes strange bedfellows and the hunger for money (*auri sacra fames*) is embedded in human nature. As Italians say: "Oggi a te, domani me!" Today is your turn, tomorrow it might be mine.

Tragically, there is the other side of the story described recently (2/3/09) by Josette Sheeran, Executive Director of the World Food Program:

"At this time of worldwide economic challenges, let us not forget that the food and financial crisis hit the world's most vulnerable the hardest. Since 2007, 115 million were added to the ranks of the hungry to create a total of nearly one billion people without adequate food. That is one in six people on earth. But this is not a problem of food availability. It is a problem of distribution - and of greed, discrimination, wars and other tragedies. There is enough food on earth for every human to have adequate access to a nutritious diet. This is indeed a challenge for the human heart."

The most Holy Sacrament

One day, St. John Vianney went to his church in the village of Ars and noticed an old man kneeling, motionless, in a pew, his face staring at the altar for a long time. Eventually, the saint asked him: "My dear friend, what are you doing?" The old man replied: "I look at Him and He looks at me!" That's the highest form of Eucharistic participation: contemplation.

Instructing the newly baptized, St. John Chrysostom (+407) said "When you are before the altar where Christ reposes, you ought no longer to think that you are among men, but believe that there are troops of angels and archangels standing for you, and trembling with respect before the sovereign Master of Heaven and Earth. Therefore, when you are in church, be there in silence, fear and adoration."

O Sacrament most holy, / O Sacrament divine,

All praise and thanksgiving / Be every moment Thine!