

St. Anthony of Padua R.C. Church

160 Court Street, Buffalo, New York 14202

TRADITIONALLY SPEAKING by S. Casarotto, CS 5/3/09

PRAYER in the SQUARE

On Thursday, May 7, 2009, from noon to 1pm, people across the country in gather to pray for leadership in government: Federal, State, Local, Military, Church, Family, Education, Business and Media.

About 34 million Americans now consider themselves unaffiliated with any religion, up from 14 million in 1990. In New York State, Catholics make up 37 % of the population, down from 38% in 2001 and 44% in 1990. At the same time, the Catholic population in the country has increased to 57 million, up from 50 million in 2001, mostly due to the increase of the Catholic population in Texas and California and immigration.

Across America there is growing concern about the spiritual health of our nation. A day seldom passes without some indication of a breakdown in moral standards among the clergy, the politicians, the business people, the schools and the families. Important principles are being neglected - biblical principles that blessed our nation at its birth and kept us strong for 200 years. This must be a matter of concern, but especially a matter for prayer and action. Salvation will not come from Washington, the G8, NATO or the UN. The biggest threat to civilization is a godless society and it is not enough to print on the greenback "In God we trust".

God said: *"If My people, who are called by My name, will humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land"* (2 Chronicles 7:14). We too need to pray so that we may understand what God says and do it as individuals and as a society.

St. Paul wrote to Timothy: *"I urge first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men. For kings and all who are authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."* (1 Tim. 2:1-4)

These words are echoed in the solemn Good Friday liturgy.

IMMIGRATION

The Lord said: *"I was a foreigner and you welcomed Me!" - but, "He does not understand our customs, just as we don't understand his. We say he is foolish because he does know our ways, and perhaps he says we are foolish because we do not know his. Let him go home."* (Chinua Achebe)