

# St. Anthony of Padua R.C. Church

160 Court Street, Buffalo, New York 14202

## Traditionally Speaking *by S. Casarotto, cs* 6/7/09

### Better than Thou

Even a limited knowledge of ancient Greek and Roman history reminds us of the depravity of pagan morality. Nothing was left to the imagination and was legally permissible in homes, public baths, brothels, etc. After 4 centuries of Christianity, St. John Chrysostom, in his Commentary on St. Paul's Letters to the Corinthians, described some abominable stag parties of his day to prove that Christianity has better standards of morality and greater respect for women.

God destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah because of rampant homosexuality (Gen. 19). St. Paul condemned the Romans for their homosexual depravity (Rom. 1, 24-27). St. Jude said: "*Sodom, Gomorrah, and the sexual promiscuity and practiced unnatural vice, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire*" (Jude 7). The following words of St. Paul, often omitted when this section of the letter is read at Mass (the reading usually stops at verse 25), are worthy of quotation:

*"Therefore, God handed them over to degrading passions. Their females exchanged natural relations for unnatural, and the males likewise gave up natural relations with females and burned with lust for one another. Males did shameful things with males and thus received in their own persons the due penalty for their perversity"* (Rom. 26-27). Is the quotation of this passage omitted because it is too explicit or because it is politically incorrect?

However, there are 10 and not only the 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Commandments. In the story of Susanne (Dan. 15, 24), the two old men who ogled her as she bathed and calumniated her because she did not accede to their lustful desires, incurred the wrath of God and the severe punishment of king Solomon. In the Gospel, Jesus showed no mercy for the men who caught the woman committing adultery (Jn. 7, 53) and for any kind of Pharisee. Their self-righteousness made them worse than the sinner they were condemning. Jesus told them: "*Publicans and prostitutes will go before you in the Kingdom of heaven*" (Mt. 21, 31). These are harsh words pronounced by the One who said "*I am the Truth.*"

St. John Chrysostom admonished the early Christians about their obsession with sexuality when he told them: "*Do not confess to me only of fornication, nor of those things that are manifest among all humans, but bring up also your secret calumnies, evil talks and all such things.*"

There is always some new Cato from the right and the left who mercilessly censors his neighbor, forgetting that the Lord said "*Do no judge and you will not be judged, for the measure with which you measure will be measured back to you*" (Lk. 6, 28). He also warned us: "*Take the beam off you eye before you try to remove the splinter from your brother's eye.*" (Mt. 7, 5).