

St. Anthony of Padua R.C. Church

160 Court Street, Buffalo, New York

TRADITIONAL SPEAKING *by S. Casarotto, CS 10/12/08*

“THE BIBLE DAY AND NIGHT” is the project promoted by RAI (Italian Broadcasting Corporation) which involved this past week almost 1,200 people from 50 nations in reading the whole Bible in the Roman Basilica of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem. The project highlighted the theme of the Special Synod of Bishops “The word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church” which is taking place in Rome until October 26. The Pope was the first reader, starting from the Book of Genesis. He pointed out that as “nations once rich in faith and vocations are losing their own identity under the negative and destructive influence of a certain modern culture, it is important to bring the Word of God in the homes.” Among the first Italian readers were a former Italian Prime Minister, an architect, an actor, a fashion designer, a university professor and a married couple. Participating in the synod are 253 bishops: Africa, 51; America, 62; Asia, 39; Europe, 90 and Oceania, 9. In addition there are many experts, auditors and delegates from other Christian denominations and other special guests. Pray for its success.

LATIN? WHY NOT?

Encyclicals and other official church documents to be included in the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* (Holy See Digest) are written in Latin. Bishops' appointments are still written in Latin on papyrus and so are letters of congratulations from the Pope. Appeals to the *Signatura Apostolica* (Supreme Court) of the Church are also heard in Latin. Contrary to common belief, Pope Paul VI insisted on greater use of Latin within the Vatican and Pope Benedict XVI reminds us that more Latin and Gregorian chant be used also in the revised mass. In Italy, all students, except those attending technical schools, must study four hours of Latin every week until they are 18. Why ditch the language of one of the greatest civilizations and the official language of the Western Catholic Church for 2,000 years? Jews did not give up Hebrew and Eastern Churches did not give up ancient Greek. The Maronites even kept some Aramaic, the language of Jesus and his first disciples. Perhaps the best reason for learning Latin is to do so in order to learn better English which draws more than 60% of its vocabulary from the language of truly multicultural Romans. The word “digest” itself derives from the Latin “*De [re] gesta*” or “About what has been accomplished.” The people who should be most interested in learning Latin are the faithful who prefer the older liturgy of the Latin Church, particularly priests, altar servers and choirs. It is amazing to see how, in order to be “diverse and inclusive”, some people go to great lengths to have readings and songs in foreign languages but woe to mention Latin! Priests and faithful who prefer the revised Ordo should also study Latin to understand it and celebrate it better. By the way, there are web sites and blogs in Latin, and even radio stations broadcasting in Latin! *Ergo, latine loqueris? Cur non? Vale!*