

## GOSPEL PEARLS

# A major obstacle

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*“Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former. You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel. “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean. (Mt 23: 23-26)*

Hypocrisy is one of the most important obstacles to the salvation of souls. Hypocrites, in fact, believe that they have no debts to God only because they formally observe the precepts of devotion. They think they have a good conscience, so that they can judge others (and judge them negatively). Yet, the essence of God's law is love, first of all for God and secondly for our neighbor. Without respecting this commandment given by Jesus we will never be good Christians. Let us ask ourselves if we, too, have ever fallen into the kind of hypocrisy which Jesus despised.