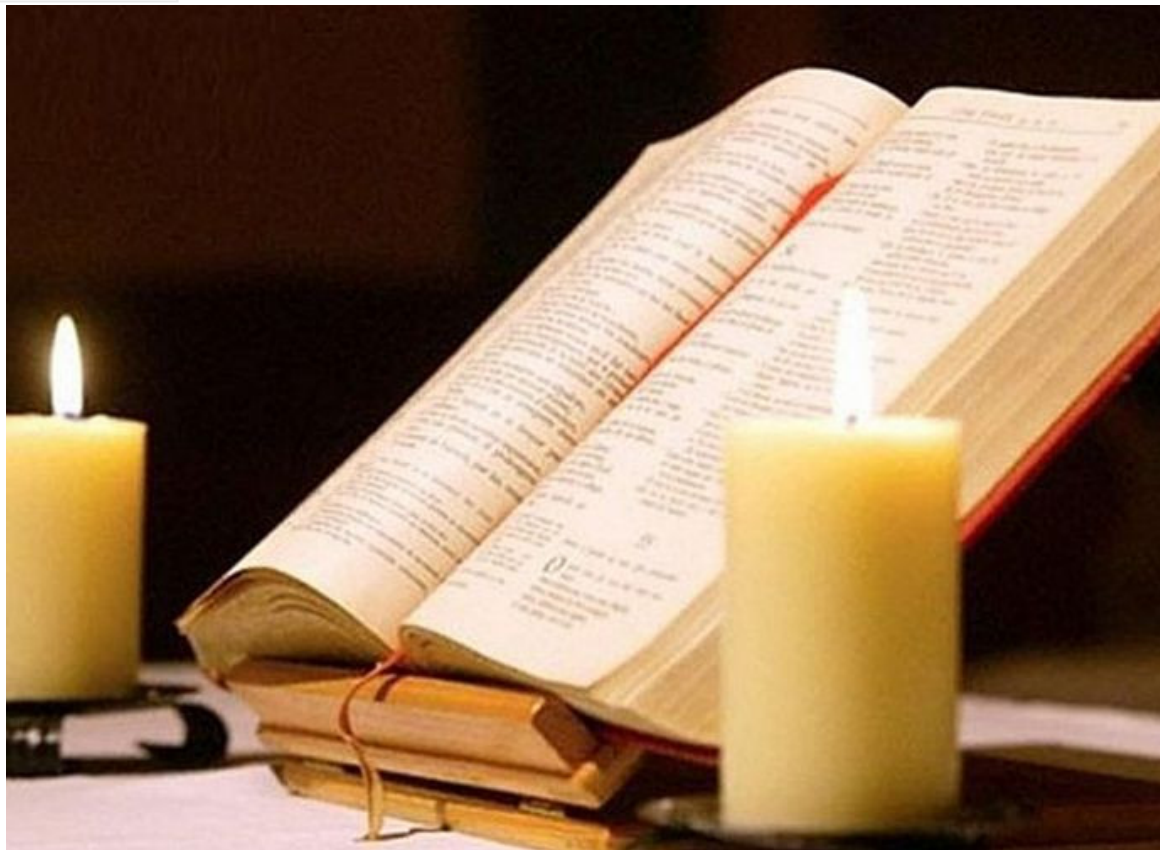


GOSPEL PEARLS

Christians are no fools

GOSPEL PEARLS

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Jesus said to his disciples: "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. Give to the one who begs from you, and do not refuse the one who would borrow from you. (Matthew 5: 38-42)

By saying that we must "turn the other cheek" Jesus does not teach Christians to be passive and always accept evil in silence. For example, when the soldier hit Christ's cheek during at his trial before the Sanhedrin, he did not offer them his other cheek. Rather, he reacted energetically by stating his innocence to the soldier, indeed asking him why he had just beaten him and for what harm he had to be punished. Obviously, the soldier had nothing to say in return. So Jesus forcefully demonstrated his innocence without turning his other cheek: he responded to evil with the good of truth and without adding to the violence already incurred upon him. Let us ask ourselves when we have felt intense anger whether we have wanted to exact revenge as "eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth", and thus wanting to respond to evil with evil.