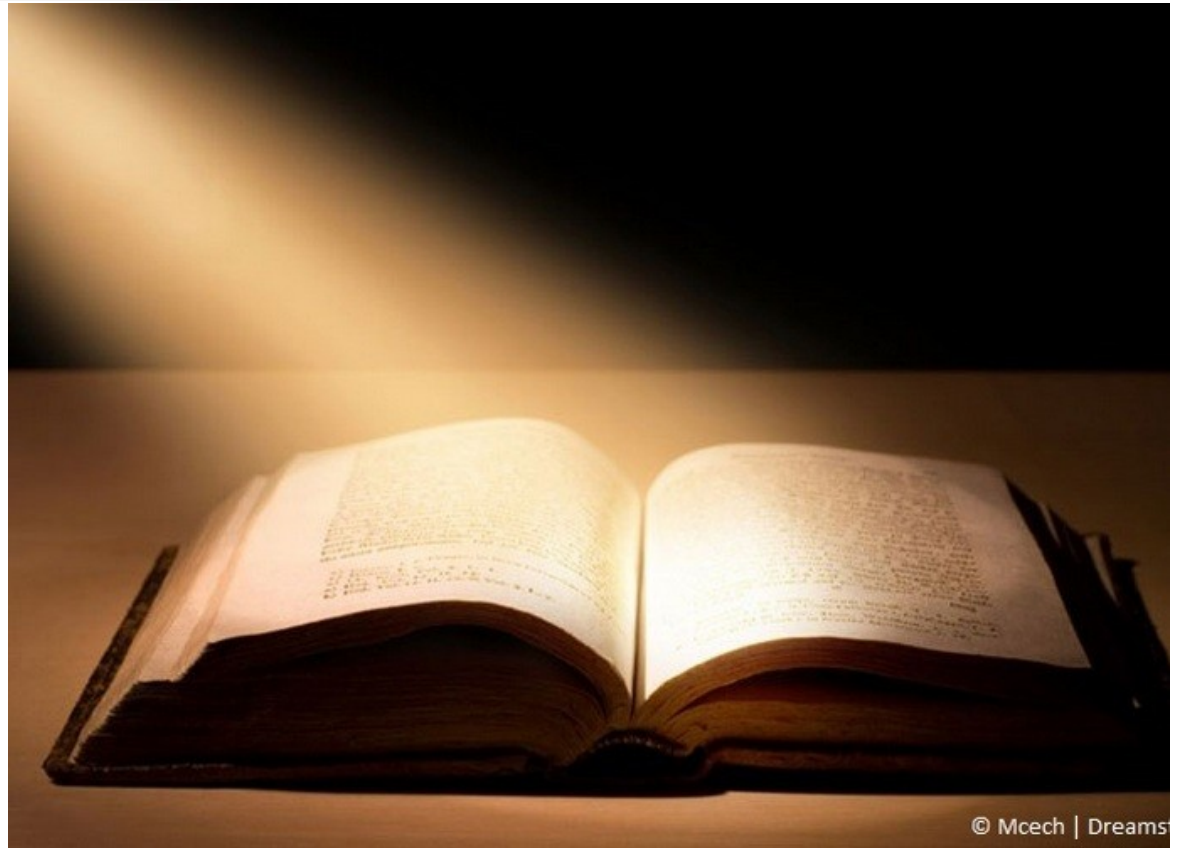


GOSPEL PEARLS

Churchmen faithful to Jesus

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28_10_2021



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In these days, Jesus went out to the mountain to pray, and all night he continued in prayer to God. And when day came, he called his disciples and chose from them twelve, whom he named apostles: Simon, whom he named Peter, and Andrew his brother, and James and John, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon who was called the Zealot, and Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor. And he came down with them and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the

seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. And those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. And all the crowd sought to touch him, for power came out from him and healed them all. (Luke 6: 12-19)

During His Passion, Judas betrayed Jesus and Peter denied him. The other apostles, with the exception of John, all fled. It seems strange that the very first pastors of the Church, those men who were personally called by Jesus, experienced these insecurities. The history of the Church, however, continued with the resurrection of Jesus from the dead and with the gift of the Holy Spirit that gave the apostles the extraordinary courage that would lead them to victoriously face martyrdom. This should teach us that the defections of some men from the Church should not worry us because there are other pastors who are resisting heroically and silently despite the strong pressures they face. Moreover, there are also simple faithful who are maintaining the true faith for the one true Church of Jesus Christ, the Roman Catholic Church with the pope at its head and considered as such by all its cardinals. Do you ever get caught up in discouragement or do you have total confidence in Jesus who will never fail to support his Church and its faithful?