

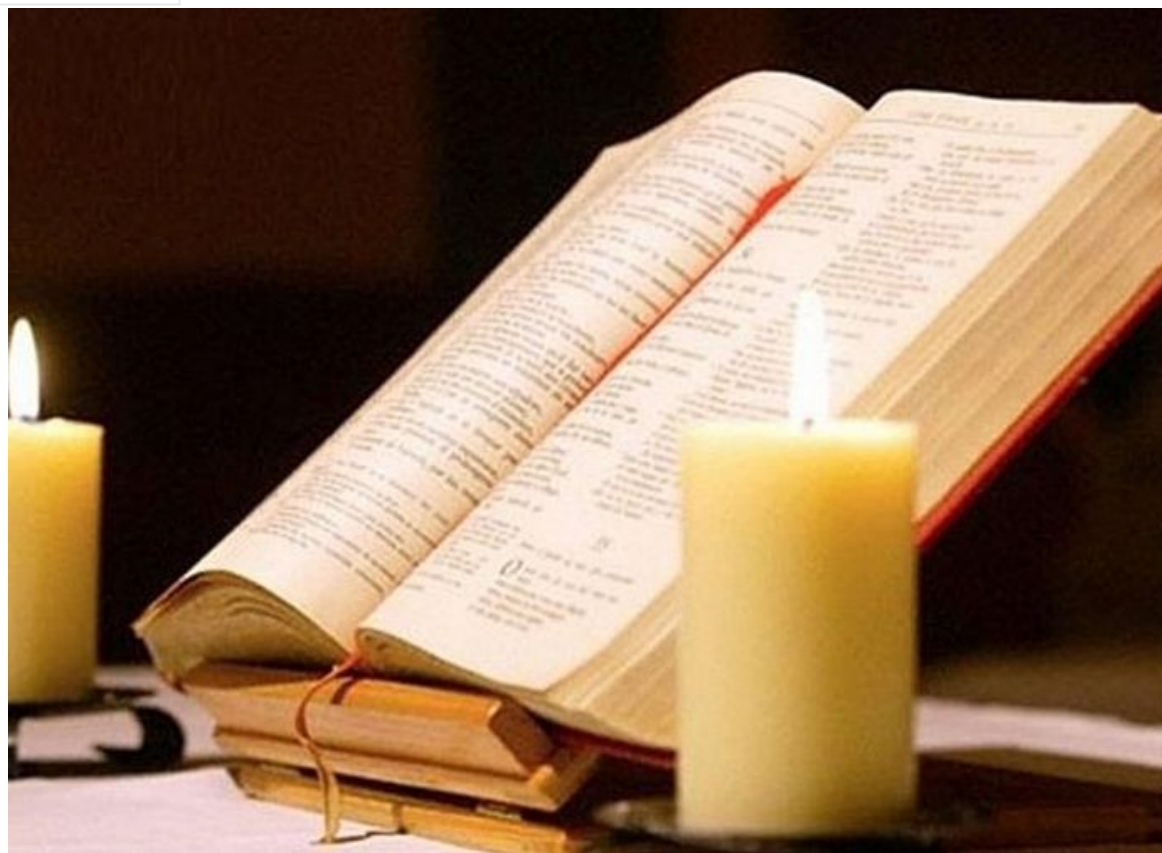
**GOSPEL PEARLS**

## Demonic possession

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**GOSPEL PEARLS**

08\_10\_2021



*But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the prince of demons," while others, to test him, kept seeking from him a sign from heaven. But he, knowing their thoughts, said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and a divided household falls. And if Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say that I cast out demons by Beelzebul. And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. When a strong man, fully*

*armed, guards his own palace, his goods are safe; but when one stronger than he attacks him and overcomes him, he takes away his armour in which he trusted and divides his spoil. Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters. When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and finding none it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when it comes, it finds the house swept and put in order. Then it goes and brings seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and dwell there. And the last state of that person is worse than the first." (Luke 11: 15-26)*

Demonic possession can also occur without the possessed person being at fault. Sometimes, however, this is not so. It can happen because of our lack of prudence used towards satanic practices or because we have constant disregard of commandments that open us up to Satan's influence. Independently of demonic possessions, we must above all be very careful not to persevere in sin for this is the devil's favourite way of separating us from God and of causing us tremendous suffering now and in life after death.