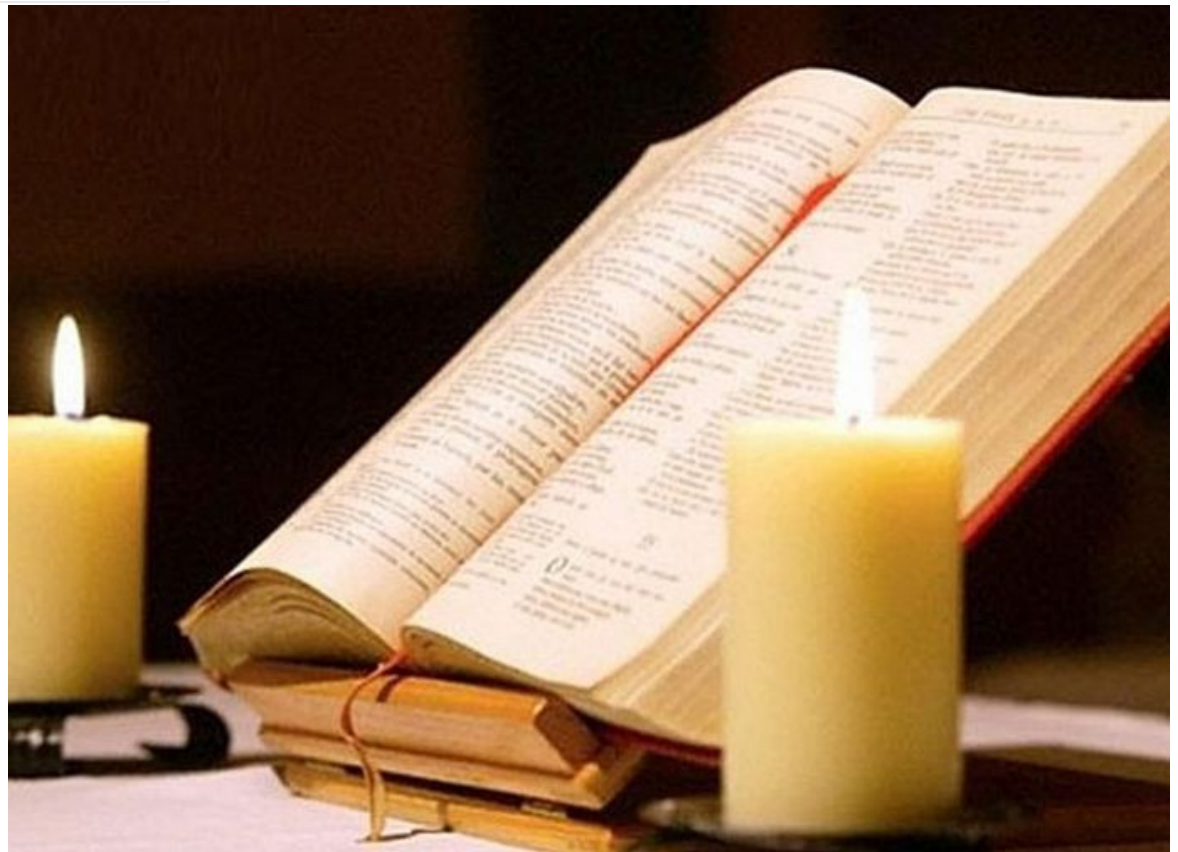


GOSPEL PEARLS

Love your neighbour, before those who are not near you

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08-07-2020



And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction. The names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. As you go, proclaim this message: 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.'" (Matthew 10: 1-7)

Jesus calls the twelve apostles and sends them ("apostle" in Greek means "sent") out to preach the gospel. Jesus commands them to start preaching to the Jews, that is, with His chosen people. It is often easier to love those who are far away than it is to love our own neighbours, since not only do we know their strengths better but also their faults. Above all, let us commit to loving those whom the Lord has placed near to us and that we do not forget them when we head off to evangelise those who are from distant lands.