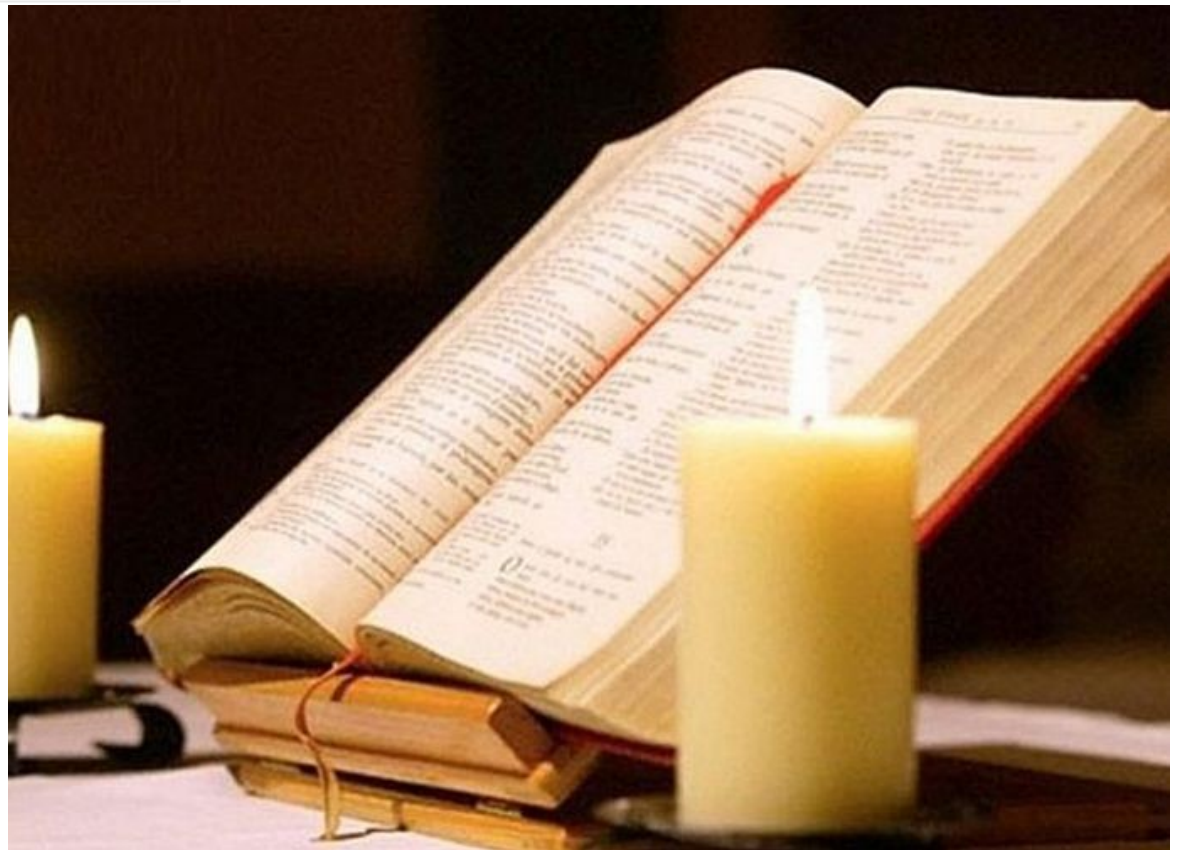


GOSPEL PEARLS

Matrimony and God's will

GOSPEL PEARLS

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The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. He went in and said to her, 'Rejoice, so highly favoured! The Lord is with you.' She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this greeting could mean, but the angel said to her, 'Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favour. Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David; he will rule over the House of

Jacob for ever and his reign will have no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'But how can this come about, since I am a virgin?' 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you' the angel answered 'and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God. Know this too: your kinswoman Elizabeth has, in her old age, herself conceived a son, and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month, for nothing is impossible to God.' 'I am the handmaid of the Lord,' said Mary 'let what you have said be done to me.' And the angel left her. (Luke 1, 26-38)

The virgin Mary is blessed, in the first place because she is the mother of Jesus. This gift is given to her, who totally entrusted herself to the will of God without knowing where it would lead her. Maria was already married to Joseph, but according to the customs of the time she had not yet gone to live with him. Both of them had made a vow of permanent virginity. This is why St. Joseph is defined as "her most chaste spouse". Mary, loved Joseph so much, that she worries when the angel reveals to her that she will become a mother, because she does not know how to reconcile her promises to Joseph with this event. She is then reassured by the archangel that she will become pregnant without human intervention. Thus, Mary joyfully accepts God's will. Do you, joyfully accept God's will or complain to Him of being in the valley of tears, as if He had not suffered excruciating pain during the Passion and death on the cross for you?