

GOSPEL PEARLS

Not only flaws

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Now they had forgotten to bring bread, and they had only one loaf with them in the boat. And Jesus cautioned them, saying, "Watch out; beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod." And they began discussing with one another the fact that they had no bread. And Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why are you discussing the fact that you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened? Having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not hear? And do you not remember? When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take

up?" They said to him, "Twelve." "And the seven for the four thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?" And they said to him, "Seven." And he said to them, "Do you not yet understand?" (Mark 8: 14-21)

The baskets do not just represent bread, but they are indispensable for gathering bread and then giving it away. This is precisely what the twelve apostles and later every pastor of the Church must do: faithfully give what they have received from Jesus. The seven baskets left over from the second multiplication of the loaves symbolize the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit without which every man, deprived of such Grace, is like the blind leading the blind. Let us pray for our pastors instead of simply pointing out their flaws.