

**GOSPEL PEARLS**

## Ordinary evil action

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*John said to Jesus, "Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us." But Jesus said, "Do not stop him, for no one who does a mighty work in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. For the one who is not against us is for us. For truly, I say to you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ will by no means lose his reward. "Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him if a great millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea. And if your hand causes you to*

*sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than with two hands to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame than with two feet to be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into hell, 'where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.'* (Mark 9: 38-43.45.47-48)

Possession is certainly the most striking and frightening manifestation of the devil. Even so, it is not the most dangerous for us. Ordinary evil action, that is, the temptations which all men experience, should frighten us much more, spiritually speaking. Whether or not we give in to temptation, depends solely on us and on how much we allow ourselves to be helped by God's Grace. Sinning and not repenting can lead us straight to hell. So let us listen humbly to this harsh warning from Jesus without thinking that our consciences are so clean. Tonight, let's make a good examination of conscience. Let's reflect on our entire week in order to understand when we have been faithful to Jesus and when we have not fulfilled our utmost duty to Him.