

GOSPEL PEARLS

Our neighbours

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And Jesus 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, instructing them, "Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of

Israel. And proclaim as you go, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' (Matthew 10: 1-7)

Each apostle, which means 'sent' in Greek, was initially sent out by Jesus to proclaim the Gospel. They were sent to preach not to the Gentiles but to the Israelites. We, too, must evangelise, starting with those whom God has placed closest to us. Sometimes it is easier to expose ourselves to those who do not know us than to those who are already part of our lives, because if we are rejected because of our faith, we will suffer less from losing those to whom we are not attached. In the evangelisation that we are all called to do as disciples of Christ, let us not neglect those near as well as far.