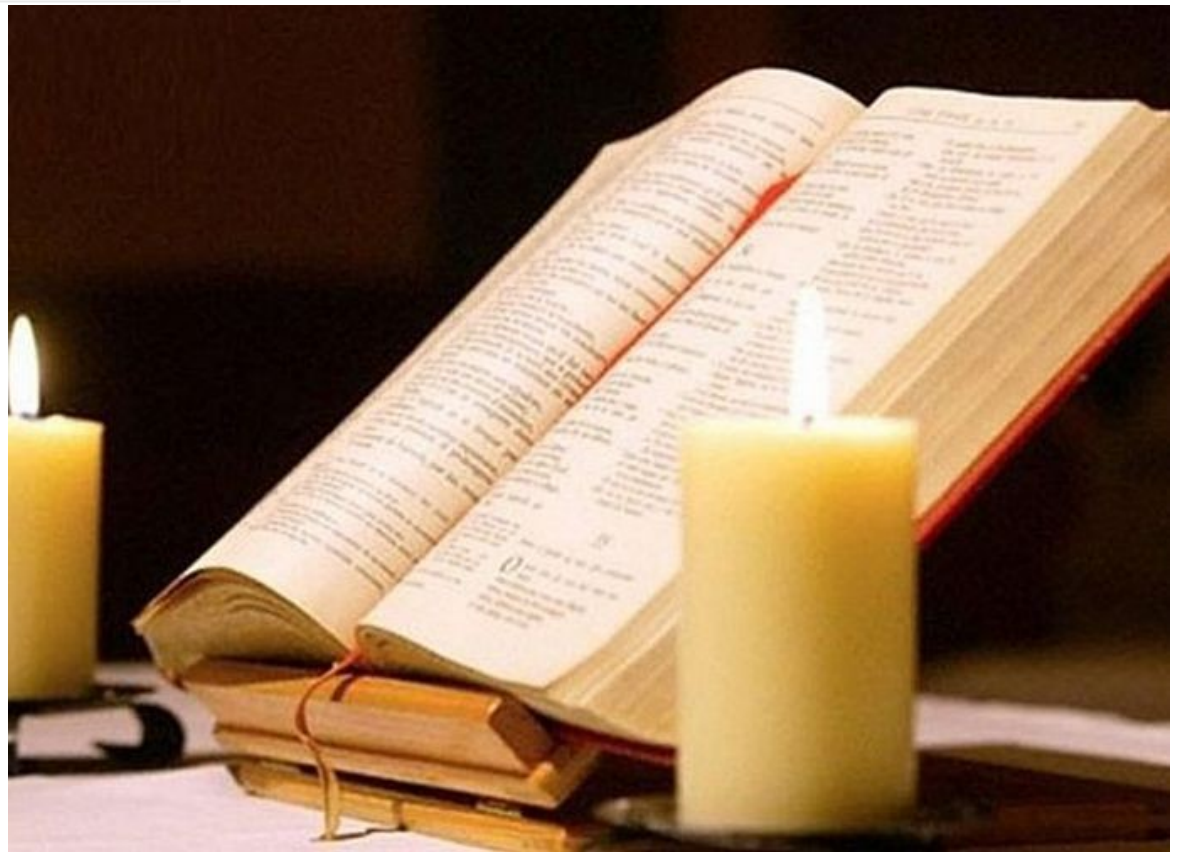


GOSPEL PEARLS

St. Catherine and places in paradise

GOSPEL PEARLS

30_10_2021



One Sabbath, when Jesus went to dine at the house of a ruler of the Pharisees, they were watching him carefully. Now he told a parable to those who were invited, when he noticed how they chose the places of honour, saying to them, "When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in a place of honour, lest someone more distinguished than you be invited by him, and he who invited you both will come and say to you, 'Give your place to this person,' and then you will begin with shame to take the lowest place. But when you are invited, go and sit in the lowest place, so that when your host comes

he may say to you, 'Friend, move up higher.' Then you will be honoured in the presence of all who sit at table with you. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted." (Luke 14: 1; 7-11)

The presumption of deserving a place in Paradise without merit, as if we were choosing a place to stay, will be a source of shame for us. This is so because those of us who are not used to recognizing our own defects and sins, will have to firstly, in the very least, be purified in purgatory to understand just how proud we were. In the life of St. Catherine, there is an interesting episode in this regard. Speaking frequently with Jesus, she was very happy when he prophesied that she would occupy a place next to Saint Agnes of Montepulciano in heaven. Agnes became a nun at the age of nine and Mother Abbess at fifteen. Like St. Catherine, she was a spiritual daughter of Blessed Raymond of Capua. May we let God choose the places we occupy on this earth and, even more so, those we will occupy in heaven. So, honestly ask yourself how much confidence do you have in Jesus or how little fervor animates your daily prayer?