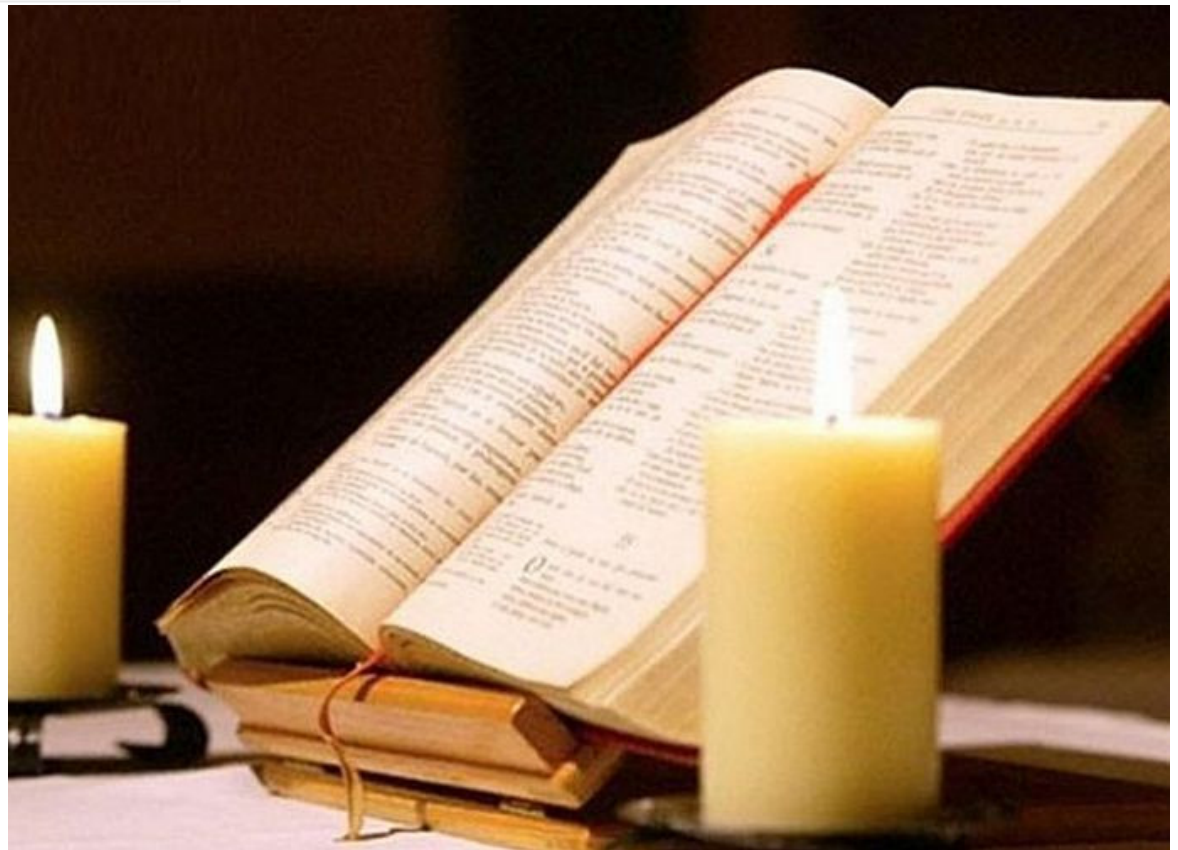


GOSPEL PEARLS

The intellectual

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And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked Jesus, "Which commandment is the most important of all?" Jesus answered, "The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." And the scribe said to him, "You are right, Teacher. You have truly said that he is one, and there is no other besides

him. And to love him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbour as oneself, is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." And when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." And after that no one dared to ask him any more questions. (Mark 12: 28-34)

When questioned by a scribe, the intellectual of the time, Jesus points out the most important commandment is to love God. Indeed, God who by creating us out of His love and loving us first, gives each of us a personal mission in this life. It is only by loving God that we can truly love ourselves and thus, in turn, we are able to love our neighbour by looking after and encouraging him, as we each follow the path entrusted to us by God. Today we must commit ourselves to helping anyone we encounter seek Jesus in their actual lives, not merely in abstract ideas and superficial discussions.