

## GOSPEL PEARLS

# To recognise a spiritual father

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*At that time Peter began to tell Jesus, 'What about us? We have left everything and followed you.' Jesus said, 'I tell you solemnly, there is no one who has left house, brothers, sisters, father, children or land for my sake and for the sake of the gospel who will not be repaid a hundred times over, houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and land – not without persecutions – now in this present time and, in the world to come, eternal life. 'Many who are first will be last, and the last first.' (Mark 10, 28-31)*

The apostles left everything to follow Jesus. Even today those who accept the call to the consecrated life renounce earthly goods more than those who form a family. Priests, for example, will not have children of their own, but if they live the Gospel coherently and teach the doctrine of Jesus consistently they will attract many spiritual children, infinitely more numerous than the natural children they could have had in marriage. Curiously, when a child is born it is the father who registers it at the registry office, and therefore recognises the child is his. Instead in a spiritual relationship the opposite happens: the son recognises the father, that is, he chooses the priest who inspires him with confidence to be a spiritual father to help him grow in the faith.