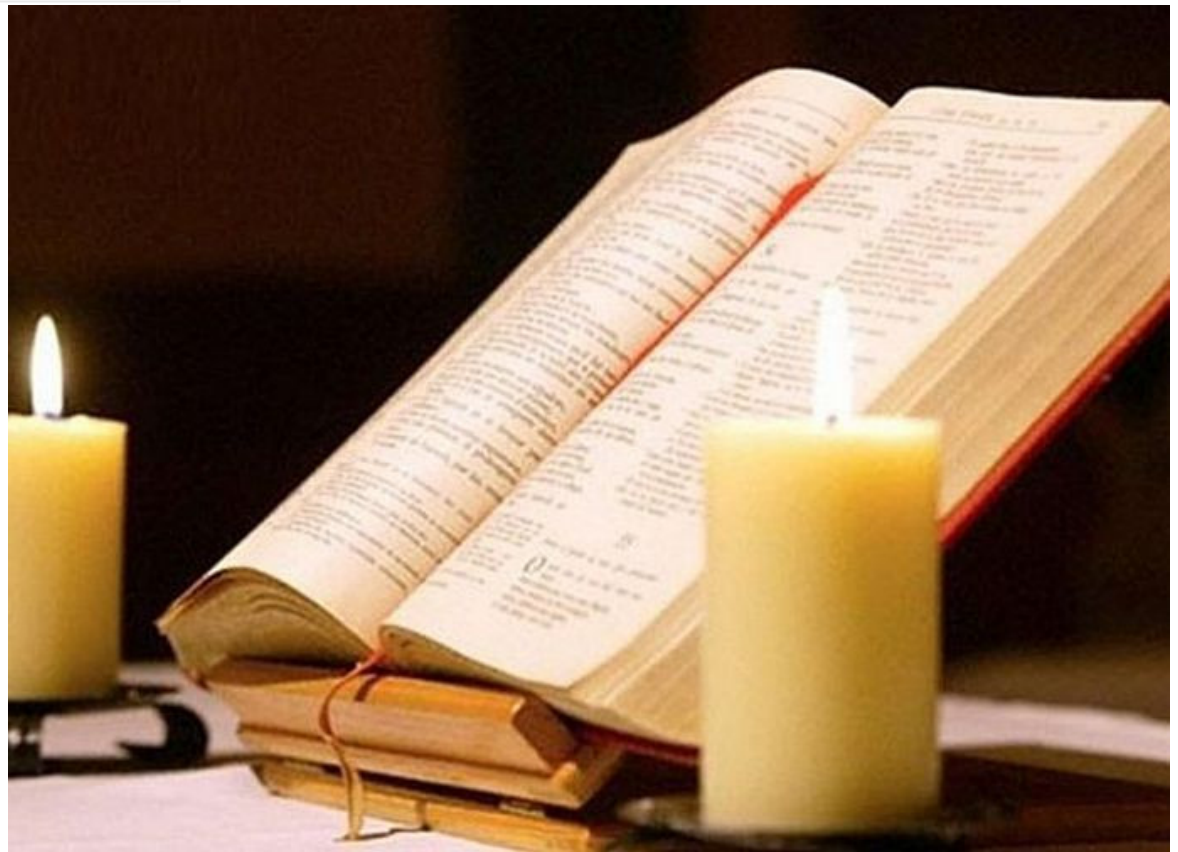


GOSPEL PEARLS

Unlimited joy

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In those days, when again a great crowd had gathered, and they had nothing to eat, he called his disciples to him and said to them, "I have compassion on the crowd, because they have been with me now three days and have nothing to eat. And if I send them away hungry to their homes, they will faint on the way. And some of them have come from far away." And his disciples answered him, "How can one feed these people with bread here in this desolate place?" And he asked them, "How many loaves do you have?" They said, "Seven." And he directed the crowd to sit down on the ground. And he took the seven loaves, and having given

thanks, he broke them and gave them to his disciples to set before the people; and they set them before the crowd. And they had a few small fish. And having blessed them, he said that these also should be set before them. And they ate and were satisfied. And they took up the broken pieces left over, seven baskets full. And there were about four thousand people. And he sent them away. And immediately he got into the boat with his disciples and went to the district of Dalmanutha. (Mark 8: 1-10)

Man is a spiritual creature. When his material needs are satisfied he is far from reaching his goal of happiness because such a desire cannot be satisfied by "limited" joy . We desire unlimited joy. Jesus, through the power of His Word, multiplies a few loaves and fishes charitably given to him while caring for people's bodies, just as His own Word had previously nourished their souls. Thus, let us try not to be preoccupied only about our material necessities, but give priority to our spiritual well-being as well. May we never neglect the Sacraments which are the effective signs of God's Grace.