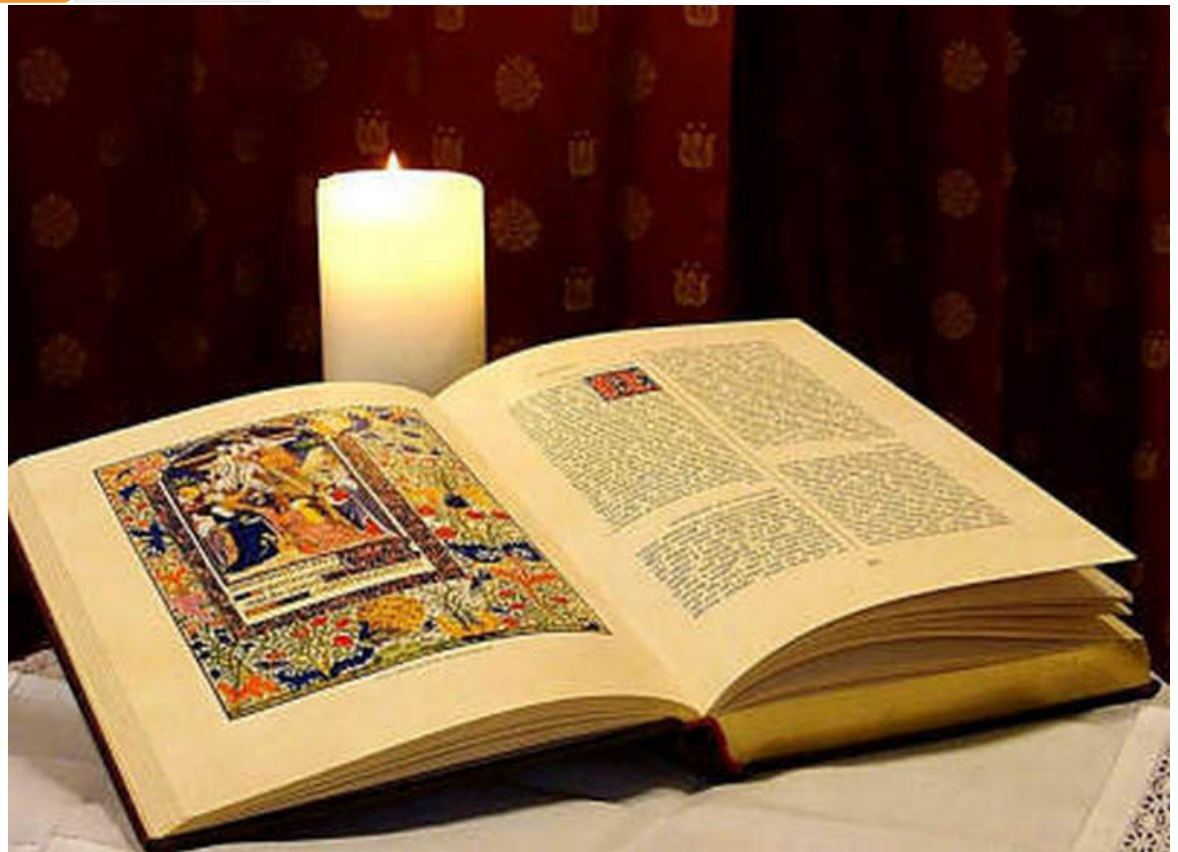


GOSPEL PEARLS

Intelligence and will

SCHEGGE DI VANGELO

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But standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home. After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), "I thirst." A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished," and

he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. Since it was the day of Preparation, and so that the bodies would not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken and that they might be taken away. So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who had been crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water. (John 19: 25-34)

The only creatures that can oppose God's loving Will are those endowed with intelligence and will, that is, angels and people. Angels already made their final choice, either to remain faithful or to rebel against God's Will and, thus, some of them became demons. Men and women make choices throughout their lives, too. But to empower us to love, Jesus entrusted humanity to the care of His Mother, especially those who want to remain faithful to Him, just like he did with St. John as recounted in today's Gospel.