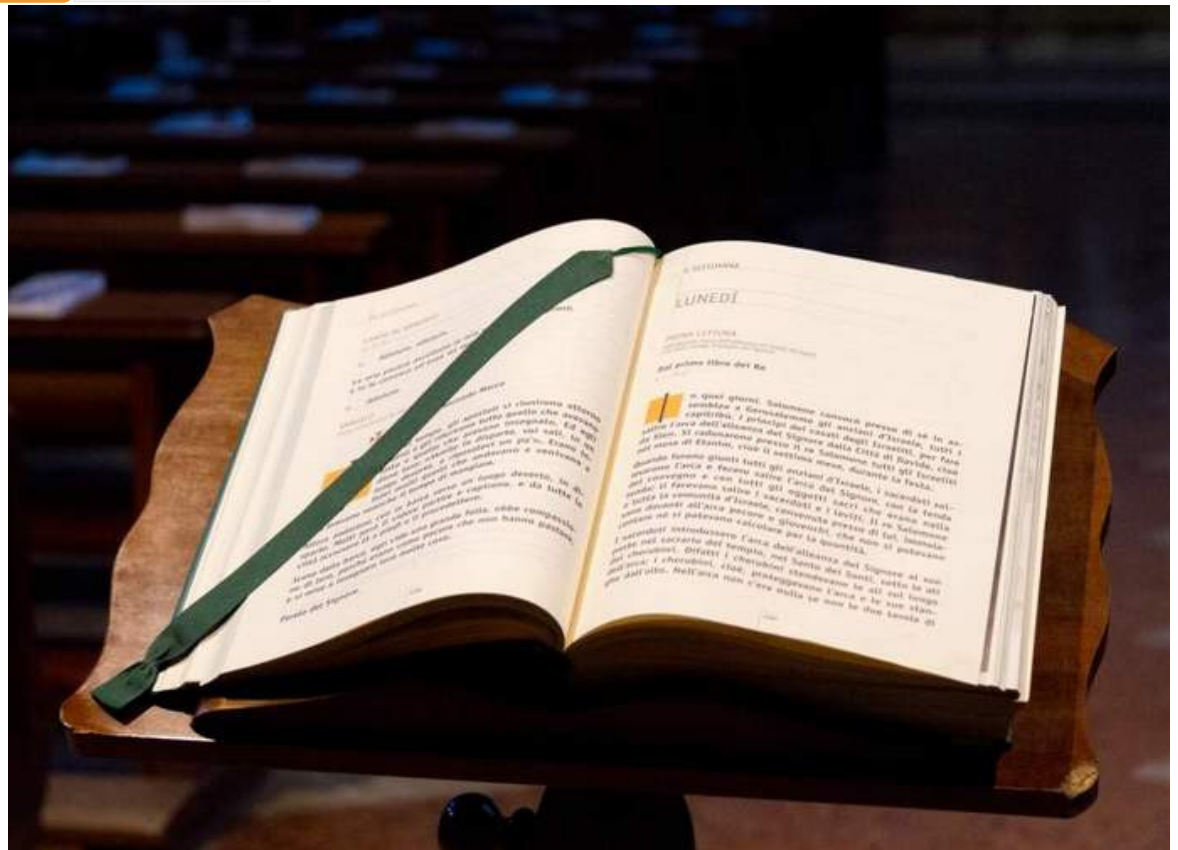


GOSPEL PEARLS

The temptation of discouragement

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Meanwhile, when a crowd of many thousands had gathered, so that they were trampling on one another, Jesus began to speak first to his disciples, saying: "Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. What you have said in the dark will be heard in the daylight, and what you have whispered in the ear in the inner rooms will be proclaimed from the roofs. "I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that can do no more. But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear him who,

after your body has been killed, has authority to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him. Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.. (Luke 12: 1-7)

Those who feel loved by Jesus are no longer afraid because they know they're never alone. On the contrary, there are those who do not feel loved because they do not have faith in the Son of God. The latter, in their solitude, begin entering hell during this earthly life. It begins with the heavy personal cross that crushes them, because Jesus cannot help them carry it. We ask in prayer that we never feel abandoned by Jesus, not even during our greatest trials, so that we never give in to the temptation of discouragement.