

Saint Matthew
(Apostle and Evangelist)
21 September



About Saint Matthew

Saint Matthew (who was also known as Levi), was born in Capernaum and was working as a tax collector for the Romans in Capernaum in Galilee when Jesus called him to be one of the Twelve Apostles (Luke 5:27-28). He is the author of the first of the four Gospels. The Gospel according to Saint Matthew has a twofold purpose: firstly, to announce that Jesus is the eternal King of all creation; and secondly, to encourage people to be faithful to Christ in the face of doubt, particularly in times of persecution.

We do not have a great deal of information about Saint Matthew other than he invited Jesus to his home to dine with the social outcasts of the day (Matthew 9:9-13) and that he preached the **Gospel after Jesus' Resurrection**.

How does the life About Saint Matthew apply to our lives today?

Throughout the course of history, tax collectors have never been liked by most people. Let us face it, we would prefer to spend our money on personal enjoyment than hand it to the government. For Saint Matthew though, there was a double blow, because he was also a tax collector for the Romans. So those people he was collecting taxes from were hit twice. Firstly, the taxes for the Romans, but then tax collectors like Saint Matthew took their cut as well (that was how tax collectors earned their living). Yet, Saint Matthew recognized that there must be more to living in this world than money, for he responded to the call of Jesus to follow Him. It was immediately after he heard this call that he invited Jesus to his house for dinner. It seems to me Saint Matthew struck while the iron was hot. The story of Matthew ought to serve as a reminder to us all to never put off doing a good deed. Also, like Matthew, we need to take risks. If we are too cautious, always thinking about what might go wrong, we will definitely miss out on what could have gone right. Like Saint Matthew, may we hear the call to follow Christ daily, invite Jesus into our lives and invite others to follow Him. No one is perfect. Like Saint Matthew, we too are sinners and very much in need of God's mercy, which we shall receive in abundance if we are open to doing so.

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Collect

O God, who with untold mercy
were pleased to choose as an Apostle
Saint Matthew, the tax collector,
grant that, sustained by his example and intercession,
we may merit to hold firm in following you.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Gospel

Matthew 9:9-13

It is not the healthy who need the doctor, but the sick

As Jesus was walking on,
he saw a man named Matthew sitting by the customs house,
and he said to him,

'Follow me.' And he got up and followed him.

While he was at dinner in the house it happened that a number of tax collectors and sinners came
to sit at the table with Jesus and his disciples.

When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples,

'Why does your master eat with tax collectors and sinners?'

When he heard this he replied,

'It is not the healthy who need the doctor, but the sick.

Go and learn the meaning of the words:

What I want is mercy, not sacrifice.

And indeed I did not come to call the virtuous, but sinners.'

Antiphon

I did not come to call the just, but sinners, says the Lord.

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Hymn for the Feast of Saint Matthew

“I did not come to call the virtuous,
but came for sinners”, said the Lord.
“Those_ in good_ health do not need healing,
the sick shall be_ healed, by my Word.”

“I do not need your empty worship,
instead let mercy e'er be shown;
for in this way my Word you'll live out,
and you will make my Gospel known.”

O Lord, you called this man, Saint Matthew,
to follow You and leave behind
every last coin of tax collected
with them to Your Word he was blind.

O Lord, you call us, like Saint Matthew,
to follow You and leave behind
things that bind us to our desires
and to the sinners e'er be kind.

St Clement 98.98

Other Music Suggestion

O Father, I Know I can count on your mercy

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