

**Fr. Nick Dant's Homily, Saint Matthew Catholic Church, Indianapolis**

**Parish Patronal Feast of St. Matthew, Sept. 22-23, 2018**

On Nov. 15, 1957, Archbishop Paul C. Schulte announced that a new parish was to be erected on 56<sup>th</sup> Street east of Sherman Drive. Fr. Albert Diezman was named founding Pastor. On March 23, 1958, groundbreaking ceremonies were held at what is now 4100 E. 56<sup>th</sup> Street for the new parish to be known as St. Matthew. On May 4, 1958, cornerstone-laying ceremonies were held for the new St. Matthew Parish and School. On July 6, 1958, Mass was offered for the first time at St. Matthew. And on Oct. 5, 1958, Archbishop Schulte presided at the official dedication ceremony of the new St. Matthew Parish and School.

For 60 years now the Parish of St. Matthew in Indianapolis has been answering the call of Jesus to love and serve – following the example of our Patron St. Matthew. When Jesus saw Matthew sitting at his customs post collecting taxes, He said to him: “Follow me.” We are told that Matthew got up and followed Jesus, and the rest is history. Matthew was eventually called by Jesus to be one of the original 12 Apostles. The word “Apostle” is a Greek word meaning “one who is sent.” Matthew was sent forth by Jesus to proclaim the Gospel, and to call others to join with Jesus in proclaiming God’s Kingdom. So, as tradition would have it, St. Matthew went forth to help lay the foundations of the early Church, and to proclaim the Gospel by both word and pen. We, thus, consider the Apostle Matthew to be the inspiration behind the Gospel we name after him.

This weekend, in our second reading, Paul the Apostle reminds us that all of us have been called by Jesus – just as much as the Apostles have been called. Paul says: “I ... urge you to live in a manner worthy of the call you have received...” As parishioners of St. Matthew, we have no better example of how to respond to Jesus’ call than our own patron, who did not hesitate to say “yes” to Jesus.

Paul reminds us that each of us who have been baptized have been given God’s grace to fulfill our call. We have been engraced and empowered for ministry in the Body of Christ, just as Matthew was – to be of service to Jesus, the Gospel, and to each other as members of Christ’s Body. As St. Paul says, some have been given grace to be Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers and other ministers for building up of the Body of Christ. The need for us to build up the Body of Christ continues today. What Jesus said to St. Matthew at his customs post is the same call Jesus has been issuing to parishioners at St. Matthew for 60 years: “Follow Me.”

The Prophet Isaiah tells us: “How beautiful ...are the feet of him who bring glad tidings... Bearing good news, announcing salvation. Indeed, how beautiful are the feet of St. Matthew who followed Jesus and brought good news of salvation to those who so sorely needed to hear that news. For 60 years, St. Matthew Parish has walked in the footprints of those beautiful feet of St. Matthew. Jesus asks us to continue to do so for the next 60 years.