

**Fr. Nick Dant's Homily, Saint Matthew Catholic Church, Indianapolis**  
**The Feast of St. Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist, Apostle and Evangelist, Parish Patronal Feast,**  
**Sept. 19-20, 2020**

The prophet Isaiah proclaims: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings glad tidings, announcing peace, bearing good news..." Isaiah sums up wonderfully Matthew's life as apostle and evangelist. Jesus called Matthew and sent him forth to proclaim the Good News of Salvation. The word apostle, a Greek word, literally means "one who is sent." In our tradition we also claim Matthew to be the inspiration behind what has become our first book of the New Testament, the Gospel of Matthew. Our word "Gospel" has roots in the Greek word "Evangelion" meaning "good news" or "good message." Indeed, how blessed are the feet of Matthew who said "yes" to the call of Jesus and went forth as apostle and evangelist, announcing salvation to all the ends of the earth.

Celebrating the feast of any apostle gives us an opportunity to reflect upon the call of Jesus in our own lives –specifically, how does Jesus send me forth as an apostle of the Good News; how do I respond to Jesus' call in my life?

The Gospel of Matthew tells us that Jesus came upon a man named Matthew. He was sitting at his customs post just doing his job – collecting taxes. Right away, we realize that Matthew is not in good standing with his fellow Jews, for he earned his living by being a tax collector for the hated Roman Empire. Nonetheless, Jesus says to him: "Follow Me." Amazingly, we are told, Matthew got up right then and there and followed Jesus. It is clear that Matthew did not waver in responding to the call of Jesus.

You and I are also called, by virtue of our Baptism, to follow Jesus and to proclaim and to live the Good News of Salvation. Because of our Baptism we are called for ministry in the Church – to build up the Body of Christ. St. Paul reminds us that we are called, and we all are sent forth. Paul says: "Grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift." Then Paul names some ministries Jesus calls us to; his list not being exhaustive. We are told Jesus sends forth some as apostles, others as prophets, others as evangelists, others as pastors and teachers. The message is clear! Jesus calls us all and sends us forth for Building up the Body of Christ. "Follow me," Jesus says! How do I respond? Like Matthew, without hesitation, or do I have a false humility and think I am too much of a sinner for Jesus to really make use of me! But there is Good News here: Matthew's Gospel tells us Jesus says, "I did not come to call the righteous but sinners." None of us is righteous, we are all sinners. Sinners are all Jesus has to work with. Matthew was a sinner; nonetheless, Jesus called Matthew, and Matthew said "yes!" Through Matthew, because he got up from the tax collector's table, Jesus accomplished great things in building up the Church – the Body of Christ. Through our "yeses" to the call of Jesus, Jesus will continue to do great things in building up the Church.