

September 21st: Feast of Saint Matthew, Apostle and evangelist

Gospel text (Mt 9:9-13): As Jesus passed by, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the customs post. He said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed him.



Illustration: Pili Piñero

Today we celebrate the holiness of a former "tax collector". Jesus welcomes into the group of His close friends a man who, according to the notion of that time in Israel, was considered a public sinner for collecting taxes in the service of the Roman Empire. Matthew's decision therefore has a lot of value: he gave up a "comfortable" and "safe" position to become a true public servant as an apostle of God.

- "I desire mercy, not sacrifice": Jesus does not exclude anyone from His friendship!