



St Matthew was born at Capernaum in Galilee. He was a tax collector. As a tax collector he would have been literate in Aramaic and Greek. He wrote his gospel in the Hebrew language, and tradition has it that he preached the faith in the East.

First Reading: (Eph 4:1-7, 11-13) I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all lowliness and meekness, with patience, forbearing one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all. But grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Ps 18:2-5

R. / Their span extends through all the earth.

Gospel: (Mt 9:9-13) As Jesus passed, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax office; and he said to him, "Follow me." And he rose and followed him. And as he sat at table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Jesus and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" But when he heard it, he said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.' For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners."

REFLECTION

An apostle is an ambassador of Jesus, to represent his mind and to proclaim his mission. That demands freedom from the cares and worries of family, friends and relatives. It does not mean a rejection of the family but a proper sense of priority. We are all one family, with one vision, one goal. We, as baptised persons, share in the same mission of Christ.

When we follow Jesus, our whole perspective even regarding our family relationships changes. We are privileged family members of Jesus because we obey his word. Jesus explains it, pointing to his disciples: "My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and put it into practice" (Lk 8:21). **We constitute but one family of God's children. That is the beauty of our faith and the result of belonging to God's family. That is our honour, that is our privilege.**