

**Sunday 19 September 2021,
St Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist**



Collect for this week:

O almighty God,
whose blessed Son called Matthew the tax-collector
to be an apostle and evangelist:
give us grace to forsake the selfish pursuit of gain
and the possessive love of riches
that we may follow in the way of your Son Jesus Christ,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Readings for this week:

Proverbs 3:13-18; Psalm 119:65-72; 2 Corinthians 4:1-6; Matthew 9:9-13

According to the Gospel that takes his name, Matthew was a tax-collector. Mark and Luke mention a tax-collector called Levi, who is generally assumed to be the same person. This was an occupation that was despised by many members of the Jewish community, who saw it as a betrayal to the occupying Roman forces, profiting out of their own people's subjugation. However, Jesus was not swayed by outward appearance. He sat down and ate with Matthew and his friends despite the scandal this would cause. Matthew had heard Jesus's call and followed it. That was enough for Jesus – this tax-collector had obeyed God's voice, was forgiven and was received as one of the core team. Eusebius writes that Matthew preached the Gospel to his own people, but little else is known about him, except that he was martyred.

Almighty God,
who on the day of Pentecost
sent your Holy Spirit to the apostles
with the wind from heaven and in tongues of flame,
filling them with joy and boldness to preach the gospel:
by the power of the same Spirit
strengthen us to witness to your truth
and to draw everyone to the fire of your love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Readings next week:

Genesis 28:10-17; Psalm 103:19-22; Revelation 12:7-12; John 1:47-51
Feast of St Michael and All Angels