

Commentary on the Gospel for Fri, Jul 5th 2024

The one who looked at you

How Matthew felt about the man who passed by and looked at him remains unknown to us. Nevertheless, he sensed that this new teacher regarded him in a unique way compared to others. He was often branded a sinner for joining hands with foreign powers.

Matthew might have realised that this teacher doesn't judge you as others do, and without judgment, he is not here to attack you, and without assault, there's no need to defend yourself. He was surprised by the distinctiveness of that look.

Could you imagine Jesus' thoughts regarding the man sitting at the tax office as He passed by? We cannot be certain. However, we do know that, similar to his interaction with the rich young man, "he looked at him affectionately." An affectionate look allows us to see the heart. Jesus wanted to see in the tax collector the potential that God had in mind for him, rather than the negative portrayal.

And how would Matthew have felt when the man who walked by and glanced at him lovingly told him, "Come with me"? His life was forever altered on that day. Letting go of the past, "he rose and followed him." God can make all things and all lives new at all times and in all situations.

Do we reflect the character of Jesus in our attitude of tolerance and trust toward others? Matthew was not only welcomed by Jesus but also made one of his apostles. Matthew responded perfectly. May we too, allow ourselves be looked at by Him, wherever we are. Let us remember that we are all valued and included in His affectionate gaze.

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