

In today's Gospel, Matthew 9:9-13 we hear the story of Matthew, one of Jesus Christ's disciples. He was a tax collector, and when he saw Christ pass, He said to him, "Follow me." Matthew did, and sitting at a table with him, the Pharisees asked why Jesus was sitting with him and other sinners. In response, He said that he came not to call the righteous, not the well, but sinners to repentance and heal those sick.

Dearest ones of God, the Church is a hospital and not a courtroom as Saint John Chrysostom said. We are not condemned from our sins, but rather we are granted remission of these sins when we follow God repenting. Throughout the Bible, we hear these words to "follow" and ones similar like "come," alerting us to move towards God, the creator of all.

Do we hear these words in our everyday life? Is it a sermon that may be given? Is it a Scripture reading? Is it a child that asks a question that makes us pause? Is it a message on a billboard as we are driving? If we hear the invitation, do we answer with a yes? God asks us to follow him, to come into His embrace with everything that burdens us, and He will give us rest. What may be stopping us from doing just this? How will we answer today and everyday?

In His name let us pray; Father, Son and Holy Spirit, to be guided and moved towards Him throughout our lives in an ongoing relationship with He who is our Living Loving God, now and always and forever and ever, amen.

"Come," says the Lord, "near my, all of you who labor and are heavy-laiden (with trials and sins), and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28)