

**“Blooming Youth” – A Day of Reflection at Stratherrick  
Saturday 5 March 2016**

**The Merciful Jesus: The Call to Discipleship**

The call of the young tax-collector:

“Jesus went out again to the lakeside, and the whole crowd came to him, and he went on teaching them. As he walked along, he saw Levi, the son of Alphaeus, sitting in the office where he collected the customs duties. He said to him, ‘Follow me!’ He rose and followed him.” (Mark 2: 13-14)

The call of the young wealthy man:

“As Jesus was going along the road, a man came running to him and threw himself at his feet and asked him, ‘Good teacher, what am I to do to inherit eternal life?’ Jesus said to him ... You know the commandments. You must not kill, you must not commit adultery, you must not steal, you must not bear false witness, you must not defraud anyone, you must honour your father and mother.’ He said to him, ‘Teacher, I have kept all these from my youth.’ When Jesus looked at him he loved him, and he said to him, ‘You still lack one thing. Go, sell all that you have, and give it to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven. And come! Follow me!’ But the young man was grieved at this saying, and he went away sad, because he had many possessions.”

“Dear young friends, Jesus is calling you to be a disciple with a mission! What is the Lord saying to us? Three simple ideas: Go, do not be afraid, and serve... Do not be afraid to say ‘yes’ to Jesus. Do not be afraid to be generous with Christ, to bear witness to his Gospel... Bringing the Gospel is bringing God’s power to pluck up and break down evil and violence, to destroy and overthrow barriers of selfishness, intolerance and hatred, so as to build a new world. Dear young friends, Jesus Christ is counting on you! The Church is counting on you! The Pope is counting on you! May Mary, Mother of Jesus and our Mother, always accompany you with her tenderness: ‘Go and make disciples of all nations’. Amen.” (Pope Francis, Homily at Holy Mass for the 28<sup>th</sup> World Youth Day, Rio de Janeiro, 28 July 2013)



**Caravaggio, *The Calling of St Matthew* (1599-1600)  
Contarelli Chapel, San Luigi dei Francesi, Rome**

### **Questions for Reflection and Discussion**

Imagine that Jesus enters the customs office of *your* life, and makes the same invitation to you: "Follow me"..

1.  
How do you feel when you hear these words?  
How do you feel when you see Jesus looking at you with mercy and compassion?  
What is your response?

2.  
Do you ever feel like the rich young man, who goes away sad?  
Is there anything that prevents you from following Jesus? What is it?

3.  
What one thing would you like to say to Jesus?  
Spend some time in prayer, and open your heart to him, and speak to him as a loving friend.