Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ according to Saint Matthew 9: 9-13.
As Jesus passed by, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the customs post. He said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed him. While he was at table in his house, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat with Jesus and his disciples. The Pharisees saw this and said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" He heard this and said, "Those who are well do not need a physician, but the sick do. Go and learn the meaning of the words, *I desire mercy, not sacrifice*. I did not come to call the righteous but sinners."

Matthew 9:9-13
Introductory Prayer:
You are true goodness and life, Lord. Closeness to you brings peace and joy. You deserve all of my trust and my love. Thank you for the gift of life, my family and above all of my faith. I'm grateful too, for the gift of the Church which you founded on the Apostles.

Petition:
Lord, help me to be simple and straightforward in my faith.

1. Simplicity Is Bliss:
The tax collectors were considered traitors of the Jewish people since they were working for the Romans, the "oppressors" of God's chosen people. The ordinary Jew would not even converse with one such as this. But Jesus says to him, "Follow me." Matthew got up and followed him immediately, no questions asked, no conditions. What beautiful simplicity! He didn't know that Christ was going to make him one of the Twelve. In a certain sense we might say that he signed a blank check and gave it to Jesus. Matthew doesn't sit down to calculate, he only accepts. He then goes a step further: He invites Jesus to his house for dinner. A Jew generally invited only his true and closest friends and relatives to dinner. It was a sign of intimacy, friendship and love. Matthew goes overboard and lays out the red carpet for Christ in his life.

2. Complicated Calculations:

In contrast to Matthew's straightforwardness, we see the Pharisees' "righteousness." Jesus' dining with a sinner like Matthew is a scandal for them. They really have to confront this Rabbi about his "shameful conduct." The problem is that they haven't understood the first thing about the Messiah. Their very point of departure is flawed. They are looking at Christ (and God) from a very rational perspective when the only valid outlook is faith and love. This happens frequently in our lives as we begin to judge events, circumstances and others without faith and charity. Before we realize it, we may have rejected and possibly even defamed our neighbor, a civil authority, or a priest or bishop. We are not looking at things from a supernatural vantage point but rather from our merely human standards.

3. Back to the Basics:
Christ puts everything back into perspective. "Those who are well do not need a physician, but the sick do. Go and learn the meaning of the words, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' I did not come to call the righteous but sinners." Once again Jesus invites us to elevate our thoughts to a supernatural plain. Why did God become man? We repeat it frequently, at least every Sunday in the Creed: "For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven.…" It is important to examine the degree to which I see and judge everything in my life through the prism of faith. A true believer, a real apostle, must form this "sixth sense" in all of his daily dealings. We form this habit through prayer, our frequent and intimate contact with God. We need to ask God for the gift of faith, which gives us a new perspective on life.

Conversation with Christ:
Lord Jesus, I want to be a simple person, one who accepts you and your demands without calculations and complications. Free me from all impediments and grant me your grace so that I might become a convinced, faithful and intrepid apostle of your kingdom, as was St Matthew.

Resolution:
In prayerful dialogue with God, I will examine at least three moments or events of my day. (This I can do even at home, in the car or waiting in line, etc.)