# Weekdays of Advent: December 17th

**Gospel text (*Mt* 1:1-17):** The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham became the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers (...), Jesse the father of David the king (...). After the Babylonian exile (...), Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary. Of her was born Jesus who is called the Messiah. Thus the total number of generations from Abraham to David is fourteen generations; from David to the Babylonian exile, fourteen generations; from the Babylonian exile to the Messiah, fourteen generations.

## *The genealogy of Jesus Christ: from Abraham up to all people*

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*(Città del Vaticano, Vatican)*

Today, the genealogy of Jesus according to Matthew (with a clear theological and symbolic structure) tries to outline an answer to Pilate's question: "Where are you from?" (Jn 19:8). For Matthew there are two final names to understand the "from where" of Jesus Christ: Abraham and David.

With Abraham, - after the Tower of Babel and the dispersion of mankind-, the story of the promise begins. Abraham refers in advance to what is about to come. He is a pilgrim to the promised land... All his life points forward, it is a dynamic of walking the path of what has to come. To Abraham the promise relates primarily to his lineage, but it goes further: "And all the nations of the earth are to find blessing in him" (Gn 18:18).

-Since the beginning of the singular story that presents the genealogy, the tension to totality is present: "Make disciples of all nations" (Mt 28:19). The universality of Jesus' Mission is included in His "from where".

## *Jesus Christ's genealogy: in Jesus the promise to David of an eternal Kingdom is fulfilled*

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Today, we perceive that the genealogy of Jesus Christ is completely structured around the figure of David, the king to whom the promise of an eternal kingdom had been given. It is constructed in three sets of fourteen generations: at first rising from Abraham to David, then descending (the dynasty almost disappears) from Solomon to the Babylonian captivity, and then rising again (setting it back) to Jesus, to whom the promise comes to fulfillment: Jesus is the King who is to last forever (although with a different

style).

The genealogy ends with a woman, Mary, who truly marks a new beginning and relativizes the entire genealogy. Throughout the generations, we find the formula: "Abraham was the father of Isaac..." But at the end, there is something quite different: In Jesus' case there is no reference to fatherhood, instead we read: "Jacob was the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born,”

—Mary is a new beginning. Her child does not originate from any man: He was conceived through the Holy Spirit.