
17 Wednesday

WEDNESDAY, 17th DECEMBER

Genesis 49: 2, 8-10

Ps 71

Matt. 1: 1-17

Each weekday from today up to Christmas, this final week of Advent-time, has its own special Mass texts and prayers. In particular, the Communion Antiphon for each day focuses on the coming of Christ as the fulfillment of biblical promises and expectations of the Messiah. In a different way, the scripture readings each day prepare us to recognise the coming Christ. So, today, we listen to the very first words of the very first book of the "Good News", the Gospel. Or do we listen? Even in church, perhaps these very first words of the gospel may not be read out properly, for it's just a long boring list of names, the "family tree" of Jesus, and most of the names don't mean much to us and we can't even pronounce them correctly. But these men and women are not only Jesus' human ancestors, but mine too. The list of them traces the history of God dealing with His chosen ones, and they are part of my history. Among them are famous people, important and good people, great sinners and disreputable people, strangers and outsiders. Jesus' human ancestry is very human indeed: and among His followers (and in my own heart too) there's all the variety of human goodness and weakness, saintliness and sinfulness. People long for a saviour, as Jesus' ancestors did. They looked for a Messiah. With Christian people this week, I long and pray for His coming again, as we celebrate His birth among us. May I learn to understand what His coming has meant, what it means today, as I proclaim with the church: "The Desired of all the nations is coming, and the house of the Lord will be filled with his glory".

Wordcount: 291