

Rev. Paul A. Hottinger

**All Are Welcome**    Final Advent Days    December 17—December 23    Saturday,  
December 17, 2016    8:15 AM    Gn 49:2, 8-10;    **Mt 1:1-17**    (The role of the Church is  
to welcome people into a contact with God, and then let God and God's grace and power move  
them according to its own will.)

The genealogy that is found in the Gospel of Matthew is a puzzle for many people because Matthew and Luke are very clear that Mary was the mother of Jesus and Joseph was not the father, and yet this is the genealogy of Joseph. So it's not really the genealogy of Jesus at all, except in the sense that **Joseph adopted Jesus; so it's his adopted genealogy.**

So why does Matthew put it in in the first place? Is it accurate? Well, we don't know. But no doubt what he is trying to say is that **Jesus comes into the world and he is part of a family, and that family has within it all kinds of flaws:** criminals, traders, saints, everything. It's all there, and Jesus has no problem coming in and accepting it. **So this is Matthew's way of saying all are welcome.**

Now by the way, people have criticized that concept of all are welcome saying that, well, we should say all are welcome if they are ready to repent. But you see, repentance comes from actual contact with God. **The role of the Church is to welcome people into a contact with God, and then let God and God's grace and power move them according to its own will.** It's not up to the Church to set conditions for people to respond to God. That is really what is, more or less, the idea here in the beginning of the Gospel according to Matthew.