THE GENEALOGY OF JESUS CHRIST

Scripture Text - Matthew 1: 1-17

Rationale for Studying the Gospel of Matthew
1. According to the Church’s Lectionary, the Gospel of Matthew is proclaimed during Year A.
2. To establish a conversation between the message of Matthew’s Gospel and the Jamaican Context.

Introduction
In Matthew 1:1, the author references his work as a “book” which suggests that he is writing a textbook or manual for church leaders in a narrative form.

The Genealogy
In “…the genealogy of Jesus Christ” (Matt. 1:1), Jesus Christ is the central figure. Jesus is Greek for Joshua – “saviour” or “God saves” while Christ is the Greek of messiah which means anointed.

The “. . .Son of David, the son of Abraham” (Matt.1:1) refers to the end time successor of King David – the restorer of Israel as God’s people, free and sovereign. It is significant to note that Matthew alone emphasizes Jesus as the Royal Christ.

THE DIVISION OF THE GENEALOGY

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3 Parts - Each with 14 Generations

PART 1
Ruth 4:18 - 22
1 Chronicles 1: 34 - 2:15
(the names of Rahab and Ruth are added)

PART 2
1 Chronicles 3: 1 – 16;
(The exile - 2 Kings 24:14;
Jer. 27:20)

PART 3
Three names: Ezra 3:2;
Haggai 2:2;
1 Chronicles 3:16 – 19
Others from oral tradition
The monotony and flow of the genealogy is broken up by:

a. David’s title (verse 6)
b. Reference to the exile (verse 11)
c. And mention of the five women

**THE FIVE WOMEN**

- **Tamar**
  - Genesis 38
- **Mary**
- **Rahab**
  - Joshua 2
- **Bathsheba**
  - Wife of Uriah
  - 2 Samuel 11:1-27
- **Ruth**

Reflection question: **What is it that these women have in common?**

**Paradoxes of the Genealogy**
The genealogy is traced through Joseph only to have the pattern broken at the end by saying, “Of her was born Jesus. . .” (Matthew 1:16)

This broken pattern is a feature of the Gospel which mirrors the broken patterns in Jamaica’s religious history. It is significant to note that there is the tendency in our history to embrace the message of Christianity and reject the social injustices. Notice that the rebellions of our past are led by Christians – Baptist Deacons, Anglican Layman, etc. This is further emphasized in a statement I made in my homily delivered at the 150th Anniversary of St. Joseph’s Catholic Church on October 16, 2016, “For this and no other fundamental reason the Church exists, the parish of St. Joseph’s exists – to transform the nation’s painful and wounded history into a salvation history. Without this awareness and participation in our salvation history, the Church is like a tree without roots.”

Rev. Fr. Donald Chambers
SPP Lenten Bible Study Series 2017
Reflection Questions:

1. Imagine that you are a Jewish or Gentile convert to Christianity and you heard the genealogy of Jesus Christ proclaimed, what would have been your thoughts and feelings?
2. To whom do you believe the genealogy of Jesus speaks to deeply today in Jamaica?
3. What Good News do you hear from this genealogy for Jamaica today?