Advent Reflection on the O Antiphons #3
O Radix Jesse O Root of Jesse

Latin: *O Radix Jesse, qui stas in signum populorum,*
super quem continebunt reges os suum,
quem Gentes deprecabuntur:
veni ad liberandum nos, jam noli tardare.

English: *O Root of Jesse, standing as a sign among the peoples;*
before you kings will shut their mouths,
to you the nations will make their prayer:
Come and deliver us, and delay no longer.

Isaiah had prophesied:

- "A shoot shall come out from the stock of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots." *Isaiah 11:1*
- "On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious." *Isaiah 11:10*

The antiphon and the two Isaiah texts recall Jesse the Father of King David, the last of the important pre-Davidic figures of the Old Testament. This antiphon brings to our mind that Jesus did not just appear unconnected but his “true Man” nature is rooted in a family, a community, a people and a history; a lineage. Jesus is born into a heritage that was foretold would bring forth a son who would be the Messiah (confirmed by Micah) This Messiah will be of David’s line and all nations will have reference to him.

Thoughts to ponder as we prepare for Christmas:

How do I fully appreciate the Jewish roots of my Christian heritage? How have I understood Jesus as King? How do I respect other people’s heritage be it Jewish, Black, Latinex, White, Asian, Swana, Native American? Do I hold my own heritage as superior to others? Do I cut myself off from my heritage? How can I endeavor to offer my branch of my own heritage as a branch of peace? How can I share the riches of my heritage and faith with others respectfully?