I have been always a bit skeptical about commercials. I remember buying a pair of Air Jordans many years ago, but my leaping ability never really improved. I still could not reach the Paschal Candle to light it. I once bought a book that guaranteed a person to lose weight while sleeping. Perhaps, I did not sleep enough to make this promise come true, or perhaps it failed since I tended to use a Snickers bar as my nightcap. I bought a book that promised to vastly improve my memory, but I cannot remember where I left it.

I must say though that I find the Ancestry.com commercial very entertaining. I loved the commercial where a fellow was learning Swedish and shopping at IKEA because he believed his family came from Sweden. It turned out that he was German, so he started drinking dark beer and driving a Mercedes Benz. I was hooked and decided I must take the take.

Although I am not advertising for them, I find my results rather interesting and quite believable. I found out that I had 98.5 % DNA of an Irish person. I was relieved to read this since both of my parents were born in Ireland. Another 1.3 percent of my DNA comes from Spain, probably seven or eight generations ago. My parents are both from County Clare, Ireland and there is place on the West Coast of Clare called Spanish Point where some remnant of sailors from a shattered Spanish Armada washed up there in 1588. My father, an Irishman, had dark skin, which I wish I had inherited since I find myself making frequent visits to the dermatologist due to my fair skin. I am now proud of my newly discovered Spanish heritage, but I must confess I only got mediocre grades in my high school Spanish classes. I am also happy to report .02% of my DNA comes from Italy, thus helping me understood my addiction to pizza and my admiration for Mike Piazza.

Today, as we celebrate the 4th Sunday of Advent, it is difficult to focus on the themes of Advent such as hope, preparation, and reconciliation with Christmas being only three days away. Our Gospel begins with this sentence: This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about. When his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph,

but before they lived together, she was found with child through the Holy Spirit. Our readings today are speaking to us about the ancestry of Jesus. The prophet Isaiah tells us this about Jesus: Listen*, O house of David! Is it not enough for you to weary people, must you also weary my God? Therefore the Lord himself will give you this sign: the virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall name him Emmanuel.* Jesus will be born from the tribe of David, the great anointed King of the Jews. Jesus, adopted by St. Joseph who is from the House of David makes this point clear. An adopted son takes the lineage of his adopting father. In that simple sentence, we see that Jesus is the long awaited Messiah born of virgin and of the house of David. We hear this prophecy further highlighted in our second Reading from St. Paul:  descended from David according to the flesh, Jesus is established as Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness. Jesus Christ, is fully human and fully divine. He is the Son of God and the Son of Man. He is like us in all things but sin. He will know hunger, love, pain, and joy. He will delight in the lilies of the field, and cry out from the cross in fear of being abandoned. And he will walk on water, multiply loves, cure the sick and rise from the dead on the third day. He is connected to all humanity and the second person of the Blessed Trinity.

The Catholic Church is very reluctant to approve miracles and puts any claim of the miraculous through vigorous testing since people have made false claims about extraordinary events. I recall a seeing video about a consecrated Eucharist host that was found in 1996 in a church in Argentina. It appeared to look like a piece of flesh. After a time, the local bishops, including our present Holy Father Francis, had a little piece of this host analyzed by scientists who did not know from where this piece of apparent flesh had come from. The doctors and scientists reported that it was AP positive blood, and it appeared to be heart cells from a mid-Eastern man who had suffered severe physical pain. But the DNA was like none they had ever seen before. It human qualities from a mother, but they could not understand the other aspects of the DNA since they had never been seen before. Even more interesting to me was that they compared the results to another existing miraculous host from an eighth century miracle in Lanciano, Italy, and found similar results. If you are interested in this, google *Eucharistic miracle of Argentina*. Jesus being fully human and fully divine, shared a DNA with us. *The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. He is like us in all things but sin.*

At last to make a long sermon short as we Irish like to say, whatever your nationality, your religion, whether you rich or poor, a native born American or an immigrant, we share the common bond of humanity given to us by our Father through his Son Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus born of the Mary and fathered by Joseph of the house of David, who comes to us from the Father through the power of the Holy Spirit, is called by the prophet Emmanuel- a word which means God with us. Today, we come and embrace another miracle. We will receive the body and blood of Christ, Emmanuel, God with us.