

# 'O' Antiphons: God's Presence — A Mystery Being Unfolded

## 'O' Antiphons

The Season of Advent is to evoke a sense of wide-eyed wonderment centered around the mystery of God's divine plan of revelation and intervention in the history of mankind. This mystery unfolds in the hearts and lives of those filled with wonder and awe of God, those seeking the promised fulfillment.

Our growing in the practice of our awareness of the presence of God is benefited by the ancient prayers of the Church, established from our study of the Old Testament. The 'O' Antiphons lead us to our celebration of Christmas, not a Santa Claus holiday, but a celebration of "God with us," Jesus Christ who is the fulfillment of God's revelation and intervention.

IF we believe (and as Catholics we do believe) that Jesus is the fulfillment of these teachings, then their fulfillment continues in the world — and most importantly — in the lives of those who believe and continue to seek the presence of God in every aspect of life and in all of creation.

Jesus is the divine revelation of God, the fullness of God's giving of self for our sake. There is no other to come. As with scripture, this thought must take shape in our lived-out expression of faith, and our own rootedness in the presence of God.

One antiphon is prayed and reflected upon each day. The antiphon can be substituted for our more general, "Thank you for your presence with us today, Lord." Instead, we speak in a specific way, such as "O Lord, your Wisdom is marvelous to behold in our lives."

Scripture reading is essential, but does not require an enormous time consumption. Allow God to touch your creative side so you may see, in the lived reality, what is for us the figurative language of the bible.

## MONDAY, DECEMBER 17

### O Wisdom

*Jesus is the fulfillment of all wisdom found in the Old Testament. He brings all things into oneness through himself, the one through whom all things were created. Jesus is God's ultimate Word of Wisdom.*

*A reading from the book of Sirach (24:1-3)*

Wisdom will praise herself, and will glory in the midst of her people. In the assembly of the Most High she will open her mouth, and in the presence of his host she will

glory (saying): "I came forth from the mouth of the Most High, and covered the earth like a mist."

*HYMN:*

O Come, o wisdom from on high,  
Who orders all things mightily,  
To us the path of knowledge show;  
And teach us in her ways to go,  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to you, O Israel.



**TUESDAY,  
DECEMBER 18**

### O Adonai (O Lord)

*The first creed of the Church was, "Jesus Christ is Lord." It is this Lord who establishes everything out of nothing, and who can as easily remove all things with a simple breathe from his mouth. But his is to establish a kingdom with*

*his very word, changing forever how love brings forth completion of all law.*

*A reading from the book of Exodus (19:18-19)*

Mount Sinai was covered with smoke, because the Lord descended on it in fire. The smoke billowed up from it like smoke from a furnace, the whole mountain trembled violently, and the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder. Then Moses spoke and the voice of God answered him.

*HYMN:* O Come, O come, thou Lord of might,  
Who to your tribes on Sinai's height  
In ancient times once gave the law,  
In cloud and majesty and awe.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel

## WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 19

### O Stock (Root) of Jesse

*Jesus is the root that gave life to Jesse, and therefore the kingdom of David. Jesus also falls in the line of succession of David, bringing the two natures, human and divine, into oneness. Forgiveness, love and life bear the abundant fruit of righteousness.*

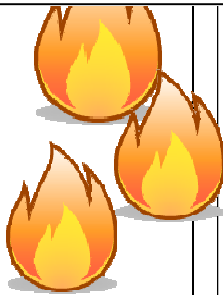
*A reading from the prophet Isaiah (11:1-10)*

A shoot shall come up from the stump of Jesse; from

# GOD FIRST

Year Two, Part 16

*The Prayer of Awareness*



his roots a Branch will bear fruit...In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the people; the nation will rally to him, and his place of rest will be glorious.

*HYMN:* O come, O Rod of Jesse's stem,  
From every foe deliver them  
That trust thy mighty power to save,  
And give them vict'ry o'er the grave  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to you, O Israel

## THURSDAY, DECEMBER 20

### O Key of David

*Jesus is the Key to Heaven. He holds all things as his own. Yet, he shares these blessings with the Church as we remember his words to Peter, "I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven..." (Mt. 16:19) His teaching and his example are ways to eternal life.*

*A reading from the book of the Prophet Isaiah (22:22)*

"I will place on his shoulder the key to the house of David...what he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open."

*HYMN:* O COME, O Key of David, come  
And open wide our heavenly home.  
Make safe the way that leads on high  
And close the path to misery.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to you, O Israel.

## FRIDAY, DECEMBER 21

### O Dayspring

*Jesus is the one, according to the prophet Malachi, to be the sun of righteousness that will rise with healing in its wings. Jesus is the light as we celebrate again at the Easter Vigil, that never sets. Radiant splendor belongs to our God.*

*A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah (9:2)*

The people who walk in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death, a light has shone. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.

*HYMN:* O come, O Dayspring from on High,  
And cheer us by your drawing night;  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
And death's dark shadow put to flight.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to you, O Israel.

## SATURDAY, DECEMBER 22

### O King of Nations

This kingdom, and the rule of this king will be unlike any other. It will stand forever, have life forever. Jesus, the eternal king reigns in all things, and draws all things to himself. Unlike kings who have only small remembrances, Jesus leaves — and sustains — his life for ever.



*A reading from the book of Isaiah (28:16)*

So this is what the Sovereign Lord says, "See I pay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation; the one who trusts in him will never be dismayed." In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

*HYMN:* O come, desire of nations, bind  
In one of the hearts of all mankind;  
O bid our sad divisions cease,  
And be for us our King of peace.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to you, O Israel.

## SUNDAY, DECEMBER 23

### O Emmanuel

*Jesus is Emmanuel — God with us. Practice the presence of God. Practice Jesus walking with you. Practice the promise of God fulfilled and being fulfilled in your life.*

*A reading from the book of Isaiah (7:14)*

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The young woman will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Emmanuel.

*HYMN:* O come, O come, Emanuel,  
And ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here  
Until the Son of God appear.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to you, O Israel.

