

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT



Rejoice! Rejoice!

God of all Names,
you are our hope and guide on the path
to holiness.
O Wisdom, come and lead us to the path
of truth.
O Lord of Lords, come and teach
us reverence.
O Root of Jesse, come and show us the way
of salvation.

O Key of David, come and open for us
heaven's door.
O Radiant Dawn, come and point us to your
healing light.
O King of Nations, come and shower us with
mercy and grace.
O Emmanuel, come into our hearts and
make us one with you.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Sunday, December 17, 2023

O Come, O Come



Today's readings: Isaiah 61:1–2a, 10–11; Luke 1:46–48, 49–50, 53–54; 1 Thessalonians 5:16–24; John 1:6–8, 19–28. Infused with a spirit of joy, the Scriptures remind us to ready ourselves with hope and gratitude.

The “O” Antiphons offer a beautiful way to heighten our attention to Christ’s coming in this last week of Advent. Based on Isaiah’s prophecies, the antiphons echo ancient titles given to the long-awaited messiah.

Daily reflection on the “O” Antiphons helps us prepare the manger of our hearts to welcome the infant. The Christ

child is Wisdom itself; he is our Lord; he descends from the Root of Jesse; he is the Radiant Dawn, the King of Nations, he is truly Emmanuel, God-with-us.

With today’s antiphon, we recall that the prophet Isaiah ascribed the quality of wisdom to the messiah, saying, “Wonderful is his counsel and great his wisdom” (Isaiah 28:29). This prophecy is fulfilled in Jesus, the incarnation of divine wisdom, transmitted through the power of his words, and poured out in his daily living with us.



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, December 18

O Adonai (Lord)

The Hebrew people used the title *Adonai* as a substitute for the unutterable name of God. Today's "O" Antiphon calls us to attention and reminds us that when we invoke the name of the Lord, we should do so with the utmost reverence. Today's readings: *Jeremiah 23:5–8; Psalm 72: 1–2, 12–13, 18–19; Matthew 1:18–25.*

Tuesday, December 19

O Root of Jesse

Today's prophetic invocation for Jesus hearkens to the source of his human ancestry: "A shoot shall sprout from the stump of Jesse, / and from his roots a bud shall blossom" (Isaiah 11:1). Jesse was the father of King David and is designated as the first person in the genealogy of Jesus. From the Root of Jesse, comes a branch, Jesus, from whom we graft life. *Today's readings: Judges 13:2–7, 24–25a; Psalm 71:3–4a, 5–6ab, 16–17; Luke 1:5–25.*

Wednesday, December 20

O Key of David

The genealogy of Jesus locates him in the line of King David. The prophet Isaiah foretells, "I will place the key of the House of David on his shoulder" (Isaiah 22:22). Thus, Jesus carries the power to liberate us from sin with the exquisite grace of forgiveness and to open the doors for all those asleep in the underworld. Jesus, the key to the kingdom of God, shows us the way to salvation. *Today's readings: Isaiah 7:10–14; Psalm 24:1–2, 3–4ab, 5–6; Luke 1:26–38.*

Thursday, December 21

O Radiant Dawn

Today's "O" Antiphon stems from the celebrated prophecy "The people who walked in darkness / have seen a great light; / Upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom / a light has shone" (Isaiah 9:1). In praying "O Radiant Dawn," we call for Jesus, the light, to break through the darkness of our lives like the dawn transforming the night sky. Christians often plan to line their sidewalks and front entryways with lights on Christmas Eve as a testimony of their joy at the arrival of the Light of the world. *Today's readings: Songs 2:8–14 or Zephaniah 3:14–18a; Psalm 33:2–3, 11–12, 20–21; Luke 1:39–45.*

Friday, December 22

O King of Nations

The Hebrew people eagerly awaited a messiah to relieve them from oppression and restore justice to the land. In her canticle in the Gospel of Luke, Mary paints a picture of their savior as one who will "scatter the proud in their conceit, cast down the mighty from their thrones, fill the hungry with good things" (Luke 1:51–53). Even though the prophet Isaiah foretold that this longed for "King of Nations" would come as a child, no one could imagine the messiah entering the world as a homeless infant. Jesus upended expectations forevermore. *Today's readings: 1 Samuel 1:24–28; 1 Samuel 2:1, 4–5, 6–7, 8abcd; Luke 1:46–56.*

Saturday, December 23

O Emmanuel

As we turn the page from Advent to Christmas, we invoke our final "O" Antiphon, calling the child Jesus *Emmanuel*, which means "God-with-us." Herein meld the most unlikely truths: the infant born in a manger is truly God dwelling among us. The infant, completely dependent upon the care and protection of his parents, is indeed the Savior of the world. *Today's readings: Malachi 3:1–4, 23–24; Psalm 25:4–5ab, 8–9, 10, 14; Luke 1:57–66.*

