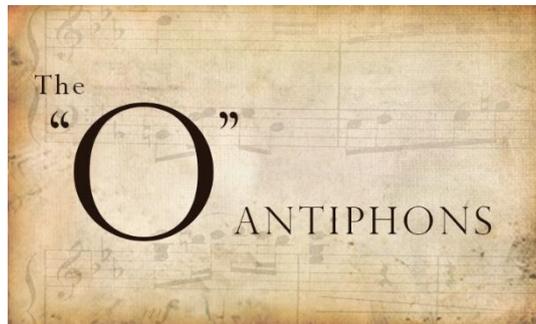


O ANTIPHONS



A feature of the Liturgy of the Hours in Advent is the singing of the Magnificat antiphon on the seven evenings before the Vigil of Christmas. They were popular especially during the Middle Ages in the Monastic Office. Intoning the antiphon was the special privilege of office holders in the community, the chant had a special distinction, and the great bell of the monastery was tolled throughout. The ritual and the meanings created the atmosphere of expectation for the Christmas feast. These antiphons are still in the Liturgy of the Hours today. They are also used in the daily Lectionary as the versicle for the Gospel Acclamation. An Advent Prayer Service can be built around the singing of the antiphons, using appropriate readings and prayers.

O Sapientia	O Wisdom
O Adonai	O Lord
O Radix Jesse	O Root of Jesse
O Clavis David	O Key of David
O Oriens	O Rising Sun
O Rex	O King
O Emmanuel	O Emmanuel

The antiphons are mosaics of scripture texts expressing a longing for salvation and liberation and express our longing for Christ's coming, praying for our salvation.

17 December: O WISDOM, you come forth from the Most High. You will the universe and hold all things together in a strong yet gentle manner. O come to teach us the way of truth.

18 December: O ADONAI and leader of Israel, you appeared to Moses in a burning bush and you gave him the law on Sinai. O come and save us with your mighty power.

19 December: O STOCK OF JESSE, you stand as a signal for the nations; kings fall silent before you whom the peoples acclaim. O come to deliver us and do not delay.

20 December: O KEY OF DAVID and sceptre of Israel, what you open no one else can close again; what you close no one can open. O come to lead the captive from prison; free those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.

21 December: O RISING SUN, you are the splendour of eternal light and the sun of justice. O come and enlighten those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death.

22 December: O KING whom all the peoples desire, you are the cornerstone which makes all one. O come and save us whom you made from clay.

23 December: O EMMANUEL, you are our king and judge, the one whom the peoples await and their Saviour. O come and save us, Lord, our God.

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