



O ANTIPHONS



LITURGY BYTES *by Michele Hall*



O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

As we sing during the Advent season the hymn "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel," we are joining with Christians across the globe who have waited for Jesus' coming. The dominant theme with the O Antiphons is one of hoping and waiting for Jesus to come. The importance of the O Antiphons is each one highlights a little for the Messiah. How do they help us get ready for Christmas?

The simple word "O" emphasizes the sense of desire, even awe, that surrounds all these prayers. We are expressing a longing in our hearts. Secondly, the O Antiphons highlight different titles for the Messiah and open eyes to who Jesus is. Finally, each antiphon concludes with a plea for Jesus to do powerful work in our lives when he does come. Actually, they are based on Isaiah's prophecies and here they are:

O Wisdom, O Lord, O Root of Jesse, O Key of David, O Rising Sun, O King of the Nations, and O Emmanuel. You can find these titles in the book of Isaiah in numerous chapters.

These antiphons are mentioned as early as the 6th century AD and were used in celebrations in Rome by the 8th century. Sometimes they are called the Greater Antiphons and are recited at Vespers, one each evening between December 17th and December 23rd. These titles also give voice to the Israelites longing for the Messiah, as well as our longing for Jesus both at Christmas and at the Second Coming.

So, as we all are dashing around trying to shop, write Christmas cards, decorate the house, etc., we all need to remember that no matter what happens, the first and most important thing for us is that we have Jesus in our hearts as we sing "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"!

Have a blessed and calm week ahead!



Advent Wreath Weekly Prayer & Blessing for Your Home

This year, why not give some meaning to your Advent wreath to deepen your family's understanding and appreciation for this beautiful Advent season? Set aside a time when the family is together to pray and light the candle for the appropriate week. It is a wonderful way to engage in something prayerful with those you love.

Fourth Week of Advent: December 22, 2024

Light the three purple candles and the pink candle.

Pray: Dear Jesus, may the light of your love always shine in our hearts. As Christmas draws closer, we marvel at your great love for us. Let your love transform every aspect of our lives and touch everyone we encounter. Our hearts are open to you, Jesus. Amen.