

o antiphons

Since the early church, these Antiphons have been recited preceding the Magnificat during Evening Prayer in the special period known as the Octave before Christmas, Dec. 17-23. Each one highlights a title for the Messiah taken from the prophesy of Isaiah. They can be used as a group or individual meditation on the Incarnation, and incorporated into Morning or Evening Prayer before the Gospel reading.

17 December – *O Sapientia*

O Wisdom, coming forth from the mouth of the Most High, reaching from one end to the other mightily, and sweetly ordering all things:
Come and teach us the way of prudence.
(Ecclesiasticus 24.3; Wisdom 8.1)

18 December – *O Adonai*

O Adonai, and leader of the House of Israel, who appeared to Moses in the fire of the burning bush and gave the law on Sinai:
Come and redeem us with an outstretched arm.
(Exodus 3.2, 24.12)

19 December – *O Radix Jesse*

O Root of Jesse, standing as a sign among the peoples; before you kings will shut their mouths, to you the nations will make their prayer:
Come and deliver us, and delay no longer.
(Isaiah 11.10, 45.14, 52.15; Romans 15.12)

20 December – *O Clavis David*

O Key of David and scepter of the House of Israel; you open and no one can shut; you shut and no one can open:
Come and lead the prisoners from the prison house, those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death.

21 December – *O Oriens*

O Morning Star, splendor of light eternal and sun of righteousness: Come and enlighten those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death.
(Malachi 4.2)

22 December – *O Rex Gentium*

O King of the nations, and their desire, the cornerstone making both one: Come and save the human race, which you fashioned from clay.
(Isaiah 28.16; Ephesians 2.14)

23 December – *O Emmanuel*

O Emmanuel, our king and our lawgiver, the hope of the nations and their Savior:
Come and save us, O Lord our God.
(Isaiah 7.14)