

AN ADVENT LITURGY 'O' ANTIPHONS



Our Advent Carol Liturgy is based around the ancient prayers of Advent which are known as the O Antiphons. The Antiphons have been prayed since the 5th Century but became popular during the Middle Ages. They speak of humanity's desire and longing for God, a longing which has existed throughout the history of God's people from the beginning of time through Abraham, Moses and David, fulfilled on the night when Emmanuel (God with us) was born. Each prayer begins with one of the seven titles attributed to Jesus. Wisdom (Sapientia), Lord of the House of Israel (Adonai), Root of Jesse (Radix), Key of David (Clavis), Rising Dawn (Oriens), King of the People (Rex). and God with us (Emmanuel). In Latin the initials of the titles when read backwards means: 'Tomorrow I will be with you' (Ero cras). This is clearly a reference to the approaching Feast of Christmas.

Each prayer was prayed in the evening on the days leading up to Christmas Eve.

The desire of the ages, the longing of the nations is fulfilled in the birth of Jesus. Jesus is Lord, Wisdom, Key of David, King of all nations, root of Jesse, desire of the nations, light of the world.

ERO CRAS – I will be with you tomorrow

SUGGESTED LITURGY

Hymn

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near. Wait for the Lord, keep watch, take heart.

Introduction & Opening Prayer

Blessing of Cribs

Litany of the Word *Bernadette Farrell*

Word of justice, **Alleluia,**
come to dwell here, **Maranatha!**
Word of mercy, **Alleluia,**
live among us, **Maranatha!**
Word of power, **Alleluia,**
live within us, **Maranatha!**
Word of freedom, **Alleluia,**
save your people, **Maranatha!**
Word of healing, **Alleluia,**
heal our sorrow, **Maranatha!**
Word of comfort, **Alleluia,**
bring us hope now, **Maranatha!**
Word of gladness, **Alleluia,**
fill our hearts now, **Maranatha!**
Word of wisdom, **Alleluia,**
come renew us, **Maranatha!**
Word we long for, **Alleluia,**
word we thirst for, **Maranatha!**
Key of David, **Alleluia,**
Son of Mary, **Maranatha!**
Promised Saviour, **Alleluia,**
true Messiah, **Maranatha!**
Cry of prophets, **Alleluia,**
hope of ages, **Maranatha!**
Light of nations, **Alleluia,**
light in darkness, **Maranatha!**
Risen Saviour, **Alleluia,**
Lord of glory, **Maranatha!**
You we long for, **Alleluia,**
you we thirst for, **Maranatha!**
Here among us, **Alleluia,**
living in us, **Maranatha!**

O WISDOM *Sapientia*

Jesus is the Wisdom which every person seeks

Reading Proverbs 3:13-20

Prayer

***O Wisdom, who came from the mouth of the Most High,
reaching from end to end of all creation
and ordering all things mightily:
Come and teach us the way to salvation.***

Hymn

Hark, a herald voice is calling; "Christ is nigh," it seems to say;
"Cast away the dreams of darkness, O ye children of the day."

Startled at the solemn warning, let the earthbound soul arise;
Christ her Sun, all sloth dispelling, shines up on the morning skies.

Lo, the Lamb so long expected, comes with pardon down from heav'n;
let us haste, with tears of sorrow, one and all to be forgiv'n.

So when next He comes with glory, shrouding all the earth in fear,
may He then as our defender, on the clouds of heav'n appear.

Honour, glory, praise and blessing, to the Father and the Son,
with the everlasting Spirit, while unending praises run.

O LORD *Adonai*

The Lord of holiness is made present in the person of Christ

Reading Exodus 3:1-15

Prayer

***O Come to us Lord of might
who appeared to Moses in the flame of the burning bush
and gave him the law on Mount Sinai.
Come and redeem us with outstretched arm.***

Hymn

Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in thee.

Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art:
dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.

Born thy people to deliver, born a child, and yet a king,
born to reign in us for ever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.

By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all-sufficient merit raise us to thy glorious throne.

O ROOT OF JESSE *Radix*

Rooted in the people of Israel, Jesus is a sign for all nations

Reading Isaiah 11:1-5

Prayer

Come, Jesus, root of Jesse and free your people.

***Bless your Church with the spirit of wisdom and insight,
the spirit of counsel and power.***

Come to us and give us confidence that you give us victory over the grave.

Hymn

Long ago, prophets knew Christ would come, born a Jew,
come to make all things new; bear his people's burden,
freely love and pardon.

*Ring, bells, ring, ring, ring! Sing, choirs, sing, sing, sing!
When he comes, when he comes, who will make him welcome?*

God in time, God in man, this is God's timeless plan:
He will come, as a man, born himself of woman,
God divinely human.

Mary hail! Though afraid, she believed, she obeyed.
In her womb, God is laid: till the time expected,
nurtured and protected:

Journey ends! Where afar Bethlehem shines, like a star,
stable door stands ajar. unborn Son of Mary,
Saviour, do not tarry!

O KEY OF DAVID *Clavis*

Jesus is the promised key of life

Reading Isaiah 22: 20-23

Prayer

***O Come Jesus, Key of David, come
and open wide our heavenly home.***

Come and bring forth the captive from prison.

***Pour over us the blessings of heaven
and deepen our faith that you are the key of life.***

Hymn

Hail to the Lord's anointed, great David's greater Son!
Hail in the time appointed, his reign on earth begun!
He comes to break oppression, to set the captive free;
to take away transgression and rule in equity.

He shall come down like showers upon the fruitful earth;
and love, joy, hope, like flowers, spring in His path to birth.
Before Him, on the mountains, shall peace the herald go,
and righteousness, in fountains, from hill to valley flow.

Kings shall fall down before him, and gold and incense bring;
all nations shall adore Him, his praise all people sing;
to him shall prayer unceasing and daily vows ascend;
his kingdom still increasing a kingdom without end.

O'er every foe victorious, he on his throne shall rest;
from age to age more glorious, all-blessing and all-blest.
the tide of time shall never his covenant remove;
his name shall stand forever, that name to us is love.

O RISING SUN

Oriens

Jesus is the rising sun, who brings light to all creation

Reading

Luke 1:68-79

Prayer

**O come to us, Jesus, like the rising Sun.
Bless us with eternal light;
free us from darkness and from sin.**

Hymn

The coming of our God our thoughts must now employ:
Then let us meet him on the road with songs of holy joy.

The everlasting Son was born to set us free
and he a servant's form put on, to gain our liberty.

Daughter of Sion rise to greet your infant King,
nor let your stubborn heart despise the pardon he doth bring.

In glory from his throne again will Christ descend,
and summon all that are his own to joys that never end.

Let deeds of darkness fly before the approaching morn,
for unto sin 'tis ours to die, and serve the virgin-born.

Our joyful praises sing to Christ, that set us free;
like tribute to the Father bring, and, Holy Ghost, to thee.

O KING OF NATIONS

Rex

His reign will have no end

Reading

Luke 1:26-38

Prayer

*O God of love and mercy
help us to follow the example of Mary,
always ready to do your will.*

*At the message of an angel she welcomed your eternal Son
and, filled with the light of your Spirit,
she became the temple of your Word.*

May we open our hearts to the presence of your Word today.

Hymn

The angel Gabriel, from heaven came, his wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame.
"All hail," said he, "thou lowly maiden, Mary, most highly favoured lady." Gloria!

"For know, a blessed Mother thou shalt be." All generations laud and honour thee.
Thy Son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold, most highly favoured lady." Gloria!

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head. "To me be, as it pleaseth God," she said.
"my soul shall laud and magnify his holy name!" Most highly favoured lady! Gloria!

Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ, was born in Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn;
and Christian folk throughout the world will ever say: "Most highly favoured lady!"
Gloria!

O GOD WITH US

Emmanuel

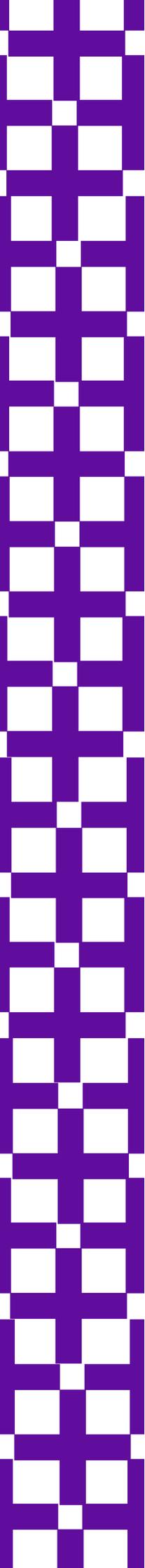
Jesus is Emmanuel: God with us

Reading

Isaiah 7:10-14

Prayer

*O Jesus, Emmanuel, our King,
our lawgiver, God with us,
the expected of the nations and our Saviour.
Come and Save us, O Lord our God,*



Hymn

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear:

Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come thou wisdom from on high, and order all things mightily;
to us the path of knowledge show, and teach us in her ways to go.

O come, O come, thou Lord of might, who to thy tribes, on Sinai's height
in ancient times, didst give the law in cloud and majesty and awe:
O come, thou Rod of Jesse, free thine own from Satan's tyranny;
from depths of hell thy people save, and give them vict'ry o'er the grave:

O come, thou key of David, come and open wide our heavenly home;
make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery.

O come, thou dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by thine advent here;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadows put to flight:

O come desire of nations bind in one the hearts of humankind;
bid every sad division cease, and be thyself our Prince of peace.

Gospel Reading John 1:1-18

Intercessions

Response Maranatha - Come, Lord Jesus

Our Father

Blessing

Hymn

Now bless the God of Israel, who comes in love and power,
who raises from the royal house deliverance in this hour.
Through holy prophets God has sworn to free us from alarm
to save us from the heavy hand of all who wish us harm.

Remembering the covenant, God rescues us from fear,
that we might serve in holiness and peace from year to year;
and you, my child, shall go before to preach, to prophesy,
that all may know the tender love, the grace of God most high.

In tender mercy, God will send the dayspring from on high,
our rising sun, the light of life for those who sit and sigh.
God comes to guide our way to peace, that death shall reign no more.
Sing praises to the Holy One! O worship and adore!

