

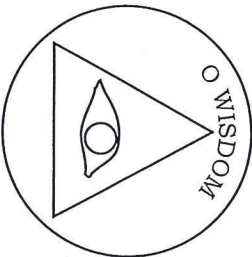
name John. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth; for he will be great before the Lord, and he shall drink no wine nor strong drink, and he

The "O" Antiphons

The "O" Antiphons, all beginning with the vocative "O", are sung or said from December 17 through 23, on the seven days before the Vigil of the Nativity. (CCC 1095-96, 2090.) The Antiphons are a collection of phrases from Biblical texts, singing of man's desire and longing for God. This longing, which has existed throughout the history of God's people from the beginning of time through Abraham, Moses and David, was fulfilled on the night when Emmanuel (God with us) was born.

The structure of the Antiphons makes them perfect for a family tradition. Some families draw the symbols of the Antiphons on circles of cardboard, felt, fabric or paper and hang them from ribbons on a banner or poster. The circles are turned to the wall, and as or after the Antiphon is sung or said, the circle is flipped to show the images. On Christmas Eve, all the images are visible.

December 17



O Wisdom, You came forth from the mouth of the Most High and reaching from beginning to end, You ordered all things mightily and sweetly. Come and teach us the way of prudence!

December 18

O Lord and Ruler of the house of Israel, You appeared to Moses in the burning bush and on Mount Sinai gave him Your Law. Come and with outstretched arm redeem us!

December 19



O Root of Jesse, You stand for an ensign of mankind; before You kings shall keep silence, and to You all nations shall have recourse. Come, save us and do not delay!

December 20

O Key of David, and Scepter of the House of Israel, You open and no man closes; You close and no man opens. Come and deliver him from the chains of prison who sits in darkness and in the shadow of death!



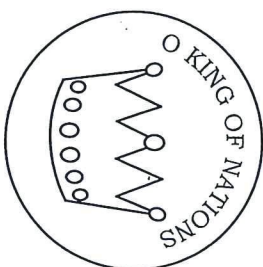
December 21



O Rising Dawn, Radiance of the Light eternal and Sun of Justice; come and enlighten those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death!

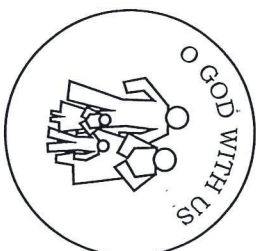
December 22

O King of Nations and Desired of All, You are the cornerstone that binds two into one. Come, and save poor man whom You fashioned out of clay!



December 23

O Emmanuel, God with us, our King and Lawgiver, the Expected of nations and their Savior; come and save us, O Lord our God!



will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. And he will turn many of the sons of Israel to the Lord

