



December Domestic Church Project



The *Old Testament Book of the Prophet Isaiah* records the Word of God shared with People of Israel between six and seven hundred years before the birth of Jesus. The Prophet tells God's people that the Messiah to come will be One sent by God to save Israel and lead it into a renewed relationship of love with God. Isaiah speaks of the Messiah in poetic terms, proclaiming his coming with different titles that reveal how the people will know him and reflect his holiness and mission. Isaiah calls him Wisdom, Lord, Rising Sun, King and "God with us".

For nearly 2,000 years, the Catholic Church has understood these Old Testament references to point to Jesus. For nearly as long, the Church has included them in its prayer for the final week of the *Advent* season leading up to our celebration of our Lord's Nativity (Christmas). Starting on December 17th each year, we are invited to pray the "O Antiphons", so called because each one begins with the exclamation 'O'.



For our *December Domestic Church Project* you and your family are invited to include these special prayers in your preparations for the birth of Jesus. Each day, from December 17th to December 23rd, place the appropriate ornament on your Christmas tree and pray the antiphon together. End your prayer by singing the refrain of the Advent hymn *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*. You can print, cut out and color the ornament from the attached sheets (or use the ornaments that are already colored in). You may even want to create a special tree just for these ornaments and light the candles of your *Advent wreath*.

Take a picture of you and your family hanging the ornaments on your tree and email it to us so we can share in your celebration.. Our prayer is that adding this small activity to your family Christmas preparations will bring you greater joy and deeper understanding of who Jesus is for us and why he chose to be born among us.

"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given...and his name will be called 'Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Father Forever, Prince of Peace'." (Isaiah 9:6)

The O Antiphons

December 17th

O Wisdom of our God Most High,
guiding creation with power and love:
come to teach us the path of knowledge!

December 18th

O Leader of the House of Israel,
giver of the Law to Moses on Sinai:
come to rescue us with your mighty power!

December 19th

O Root of Jesse's stem,
sign of God's love for all his people:
come to save us without delay!

December 20th

O Key of David,
opening the gates of God's eternal Kingdom:
come and free the prisoners of darkness!

December 21st

O Radiant Dawn,
splendor of eternal light, sun of justice:
come and shine on those who dwell in darkness and in the
shadow of death.

December 22nd

O King of all nations and keystone of the Church:
come and save man, whom you formed from the dust!

December 23rd

O Emmanuel, our King and Giver of Law:
come to save us, Lord our God!

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Refrain:

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

[Dec. 17] O come, O Wisdom from on high,
Who orderest all things mightily;
To us the path of knowledge show,
And teach us in her ways to go. [Refrain]

[Dec. 18] 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.
[Refrain]

[Dec. 19] O come, O Rod of Jesse's stem,
From ev'ry foe deliver them
That trust your mighty pow'r to save,
And give them vict'ry o'er the grave. [Refrain]

[Dec. 20] O come, O Key of David, come,
And open wide our heav'n home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery. [Refrain]

[Dec. 21] O come, Thou Dayspring from on high,
And cheer us by thy drawing nigh;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadow put to flight. [Refrain]

[Dec. 22] O come, Desire of nations, bind
In one the hearts of mankind;
Bid all our sad divisions cease,
And be Thyself our King of Peace.. [Refrain]

[Dec. 23] O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here,
Until the Son of God appear. [Refrain]















