



The O Antiphons

An Ancient Advent Litany

As a preparation for this time of prayer it may be helpful to view the Prayer for the Season animation.

Seven candles may be lit during this time of prayer. One for each of the antiphons.

Introduction

The *O Antiphons* are part of the Advent tradition of the Church and are sung on the days leading up to Christmas. They express the deep longing in the human heart for God to save us. Each antiphon depicts an image of Christ from the Hebrew Scriptures. Let us pray together:

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| Leader | O Wisdom,
O holy Word of God,
you govern all creation with your strong yet tender care:
O come and show your people the way to salvation. |
| All sing | <i>O come, O wisdom from on high,
Who orders all things mightily;
To us the path of knowledge show,
And teach us in her ways to go.</i>

<i>Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you O Israel.</i> |
| Leader | O Lord of Ancient Israel,
who showed yourself to Moses in the burning bush,
who gave him the holy law on Sinai mountain:
O come, stretch out your mighty hand to set us free. |
| All sing | <i>O come, O come, great Lord of might,
Who to your tribes on Sinai's height
In ancient times once gave the law,
In cloud, and majesty, and awe.</i>

<i>Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you O Israel.</i> |
| Leader | O Flower of Jesse's Stem,
you have been raised up as a sign for all peoples;
kings stand silent in your presence;
the nations bow down in worship before you:
O come, let nothing keep you from coming to our aid. |
| All sing | <i>O come, O Rod of Jesse's stem,
From every foe deliver them
That trust your mighty power to save,
And give them victory o'er the grave.</i>

<i>Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you O Israel.</i> |





- Leader** **O Key of David,**
O royal power of Israel controlling at your will the gate of heaven:
O Come, break down the prison walls of death for those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death;
and lead your captive people into freedom.
- All sing** *O come, O key of David, come,
And open wide our heavenly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery.*

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you O Israel.
- Leader** **O Rising Sun,**
splendour of eternal light, sun of justice:
O come, shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death.
- All sing** *O come, O Dayspring from on high,
And cheer us by your drawing nigh;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadow put to flight.*

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you O Israel.
- Leader** **O King of All the Nations,**
the only joy of every human heart,
you are the keystone of the arch, binding two halves into one:
O come and save humankind whom you fashioned out of clay.
- All sing** *O come, Desire of nations, bind
In one the hearts of humankind;
O bid our sad divisions cease,
And be for us our King of Peace.*

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you O Israel.
- Leader** **O Emmanuel, God-with-us,**
our king and lawgiver, desire of the nations and saviour:
O come and set us free, Lord, our God.
- All sing** *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 you O Israel.
- Leader** May the God of peace make you perfect and holy; and may you all be kept safe and blameless, spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. God has called you and will not fail you. (1 Thess 5:24)
- All** Thanks be to God.

Text: *Veni, Veni Emmanuel*; Latin 9th C; tr. By John M. Neale, 1818–1866.
Accompaniment by Richard Proulx available in *Gather Australia*, No. 285