



FROM THE DESK OF FATHER JONATHAN

DECEMBER 4, 2016

As we light the second candle in the Advent Wreath this week, we move ever closer toward Christmas. It's a good time to ask ourselves, what are we doing as a family, in our homes, to prepare our hearts to receive the Baby Jesus into our lives? This is the time to make changes in our lives to make sure we can say to the Lord, "Come on in, today there is room in the Inn for you". One simple change we can make is to improve our prayer.

During the last week of Advent the Church prays what we call the "O" Antiphons, prayers we have used since at least the eighth century. They are the antiphons that accompany the *Magnificat* canticle of Evening Prayer from December 17-23. They use ancient biblical imagery drawn from the messianic hopes of the Old Testament to proclaim the coming Christ as the fulfillment not only of Old Testament hopes, but present ones as well. Their repeated use of the imperative "Come!" embodies the longing of all for the Divine Messiah. Although they are used universally on the last week of Lent, I like to pray one each day of Advent. I memorize one and repeat it throughout the day. Here they are in case you want to do the same:



December 17

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

December 18

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

December 19

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

December 20

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

December 21

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 22

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

December 23

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

God Bless,

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