



December 17 - 'O Wisdom'

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

Prudence is the ability to exercise sound judgment in practical matters. During the holiday season, when we tend to overeat, overspend, and overdo, prudence is a wise course of action. Reflect today upon the prudent choices you can make as you prepare for Christmas. What 'sound judgments' will help you celebrate this time of year in a spirit of peace and holiness?



December 18 - 'O Adonai'

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

"Adonai" is an ancient term for the God of Israel, the God whom Moses saw in the midst of a burning bush. Light a candle today and reflect upon its warmth. Consider the bright light that God brought into your life this past year. Offer a prayer of gratitude for the ways you have experienced God's presence in both the joyful and the challenging times of the past twelve months.





December 19 - 'O Root of Jesse'

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

The "root of Jesse" is a reference to Jesus' lineage, which stretches back to King David and his father, Jesse. Jesus, the Messiah, represents new hope, a new shoot budding from "the stump of Jesse's tree" (Isaiah 11:1). Consider how Jesus is hope for you and for the world. Offer a prayer for people who feel hopeless. Carry them in your heart as you move through your day.



December 20 - 'O Key of David'

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

We usually don't picture a key when thinking of Jesus and yet this antiphon speaks of his invitation into freedom. Consider the kind of deliverance you want and need. Perhaps it is freedom from anxiety, busyness, fear, or grief. Write it on a piece of paper and carry it with you today, mindful of Jesus' expansive love. At the end of the day, discard it. Experience the freedom that comes from giving it into the hands of Christ.





December 21 - 'O Rising Dawn'

"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"

In the northern hemisphere, this day marks the winter solstice - a time when the days start to lengthen and nighttime diminishes. Dawn is a significant time of day, one that suggests fresh, new beginnings, and the promise of hope. Arise early today and spend a few minutes outside. Offer a prayer of gratitude for the light of day.

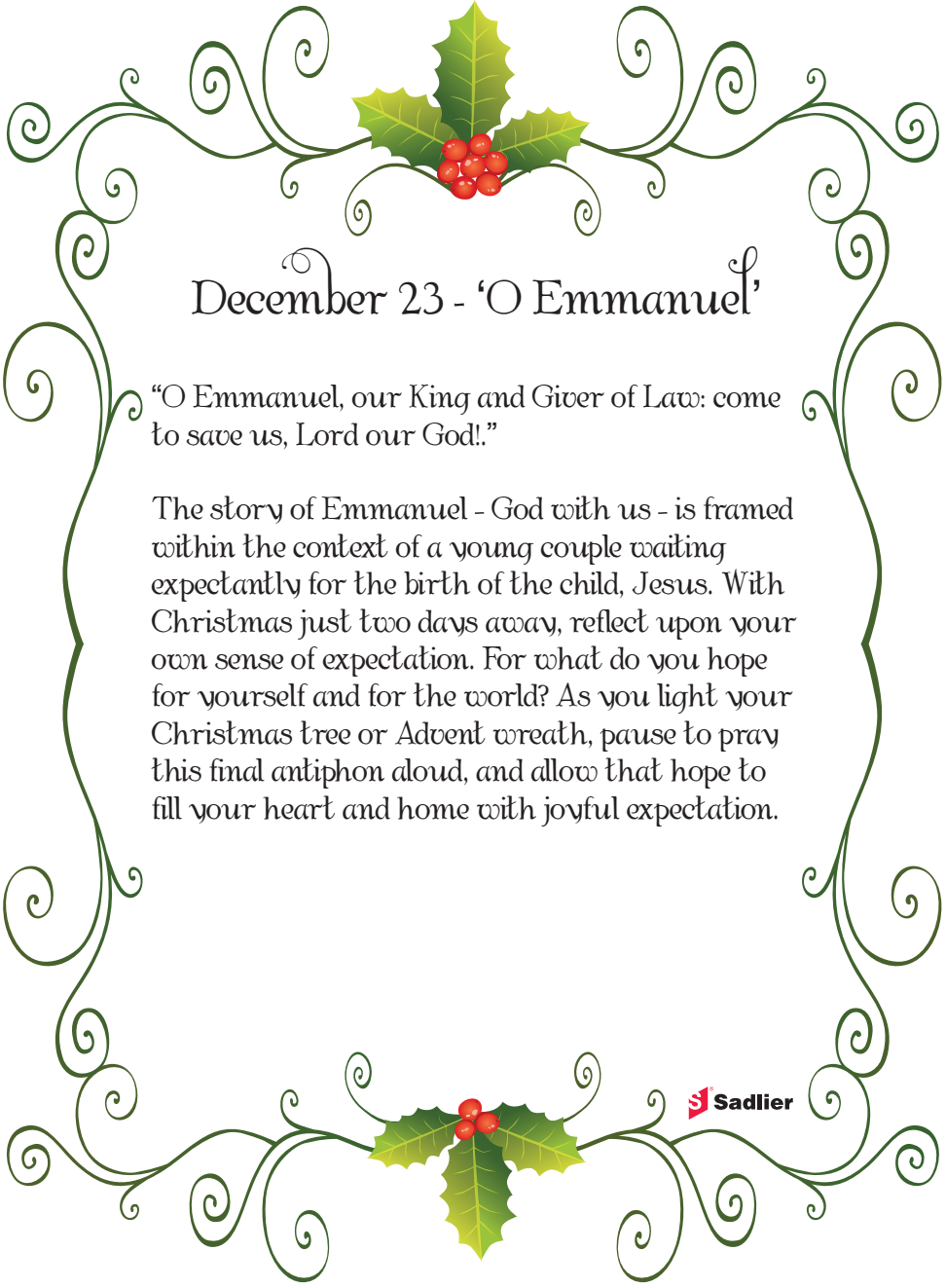


December 22 - 'O King of Nations'

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

In his letter to the Ephesians, Saint Paul described Jesus Christ as one who "is our peace" (Ephesians 2:14), who breaks down the barriers that keep us apart. As "King of all the nations", Christ is the one to whom we turn for unity and reconciliation. Make an effort to do something concrete to bring peace and unity to others. Before the end of the day, share your effort with someone else. What did it entail? How did you experience peace?





December 23 - 'O Emmanuel'

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

The story of Emmanuel - God with us - is framed within the context of a young couple waiting expectantly for the birth of the child, Jesus. With Christmas just two days away, reflect upon your own sense of expectation. For what do you hope for yourself and for the world? As you light your Christmas tree or Advent wreath, pause to pray this final antiphon aloud, and allow that hope to fill your heart and home with joyful expectation.



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'O Antiphons' Reflections

These seven cards can be used on a day-to-day basis throughout the Octave of Advent!

Incorporate these seven reflections on the 'O Antiphons' into your personal study, as well as into your family or class activities.

Antiphons found at USCCB.org