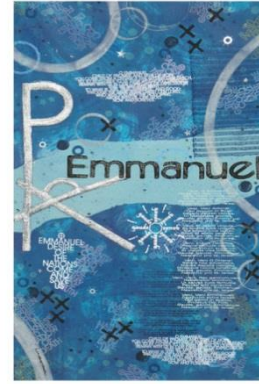
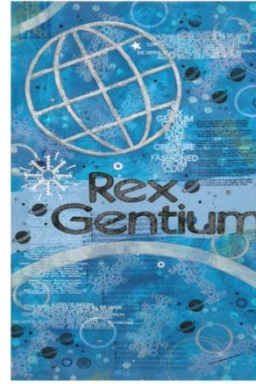
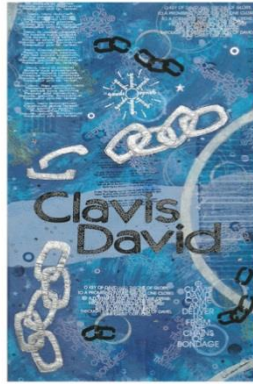
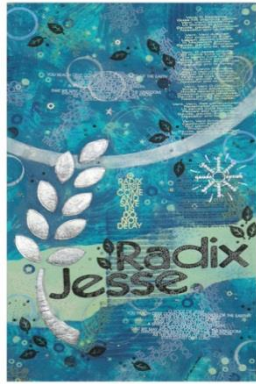
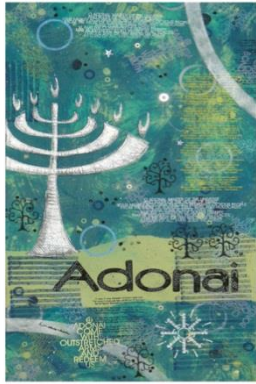
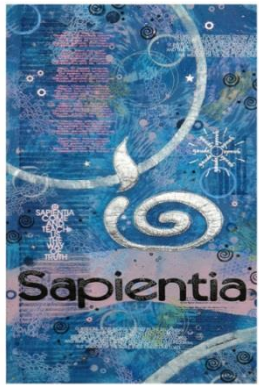


The ☉ Antiphons



An Advent Exploration of the Names of Jesus

The ☉ Antiphons

From *O Wisdom - Advent Devotions on the Names of Jesus*
Reflection by Brother David Vryhof, SSJE

The O Antiphons are a series of seven short sentences (antiphons) that are recited or chanted during Evening Prayer in the days leading up to Christmas.

They are familiar to most of us as paraphrased in the great Advent hymn “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel,” but they have been in use in the church since at least the 8th century.

Each of the antiphons begins with “O” and references one of the titles for Jesus drawn from the Book of Isaiah.

O Sapientia (O Wisdom) - Isaiah 11:2-3, 28:29

O Adonai (O Lord) - Isaiah 11:4-5, 33:22

O Radix Jesse (O Root of Jesse) - Isaiah 11:1, 10

O Clavis David (O Key of David) - Isaiah 9:6, 22:22

O Oriens (O Dayspring) - Isaiah 9:1

O Rex Gentium (O King of the Nations) - Isaiah 2:4, 9:5

O Emmanuel (O God with Us) - Isaiah 7:14

The ☉ Antiphons

Advent is a season of waiting, of longing with eager expectation for God's promise to be fulfilled. The O Antiphons direct our attention to the promised Messiah and build our expectation for his coming.

The repeated use of the phrase "O Come" underscores our desire and enflames it. We *await the Savior*, as we anticipate his three-fold coming:

as a child at Bethlehem on Christmas morning;
daily, in our own experience;
and his coming again in glory, as he has promised.

The ☉ Antiphons

There is an interesting fact associated with the O Antiphons. The first letters of each of the titles, when followed from last to first -

Emmanuel

Rex

Oriens

Clavis

Radix

Adonai

Sapientia

- spell the Latin words *ero cras*. This phrase means, “Tomorrow, I will come.”

Christ has promised to come to us and to be for us all that we need. In Advent, we wait for him, look for him, expect him. We are invited to *pray our expectation* and *our faith in him* because God has not only *promised* to come to us but *has come* to us.

The ☉ Antiphons

As you pray on each of the O Antiphons in this holy season of Advent, here are some questions to reflect upon:

How do you desire Jesus to come to you now, in this particular season of your life?

Which name or title reflects your current desire or need?

How have you experienced Jesus as *Emmanuel*, “God with us”?

Has Jesus been for you *Clavis*, a “key,” or *Oriens*, “the rising dawn” or “morning star,” shedding light on your path?

When has Jesus been for you *Sapientia*, “wisdom” from on high, teaching you the way to true, authentic life?

How do you put your trust in Jesus as *Adonai*, “Lord” and as *Rex Gentium*, “King of the Nations”?

How are you “rooted” (*Radix Jesse*) in Jesus and where are signs of new life springing forth in your life?



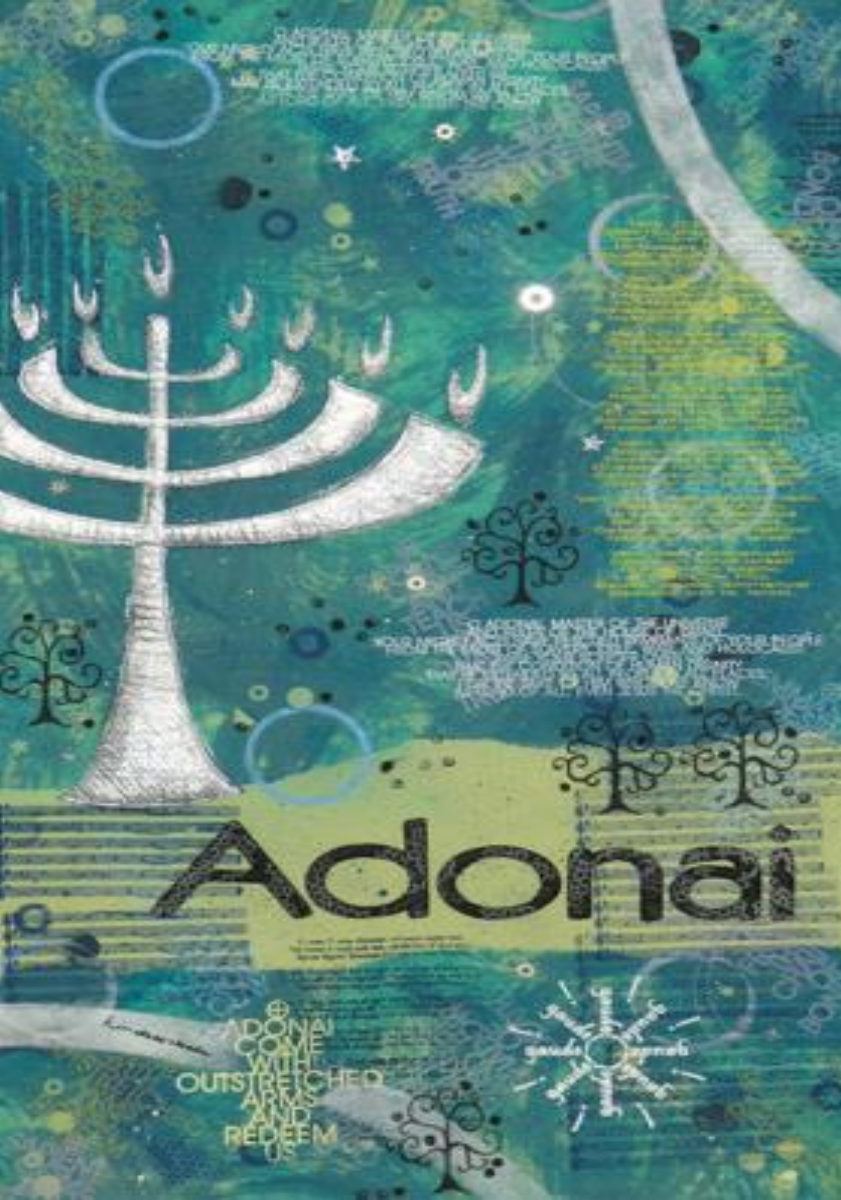
COME, O WISDOM

*O Wisdom,
who came from the mouth of the Most High,
reaching from end to end,
and ordering all things mightily and sweetly:
Come, and teach us the way of prudence.*



The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord. His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes see or by what his ears hear. This also comes from the LORD of hosts; he is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in wisdom.

Isaiah 11:2-3, 28:29



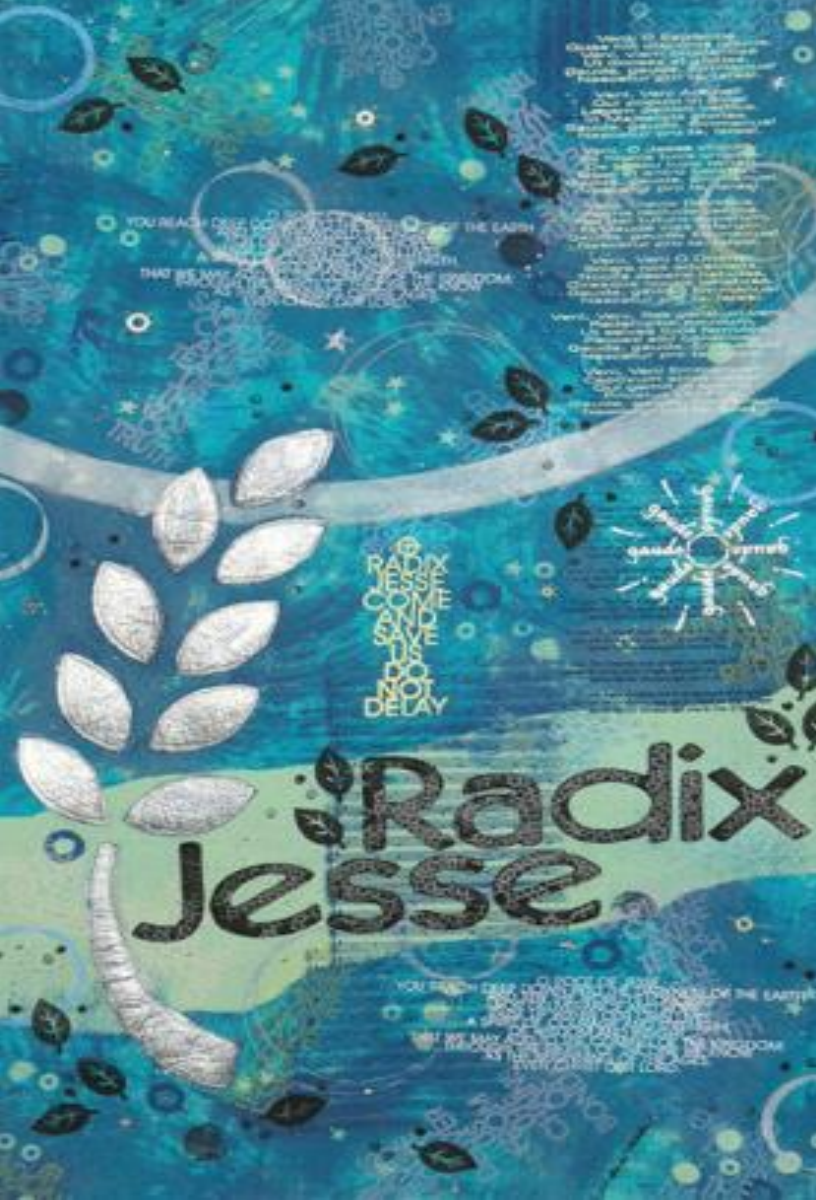
COME, O LORD

*O Lord and Ruler of the House of Israel,
who appeared to Moses in the flame of the burning
bush and gave him the law on Sinai:
Come and redeem us, with outstretched arm.*



But with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and
decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he
shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the
wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt around his
waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins.
For the LORD is our judge, the LORD is our ruler,
the LORD is our king; he will save us.

Isaiah 11:4-5, 33:22



COME O ROOT OF JESSE

*O Root of Jesse
which stand as a sign among the peoples;
before whom the kings keep silence,
and unto whom the Gentiles shall make supplication:
Come and save us, and do not delay.*



A shoot shall come out from the stock of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

Isaiah 11:1, 10

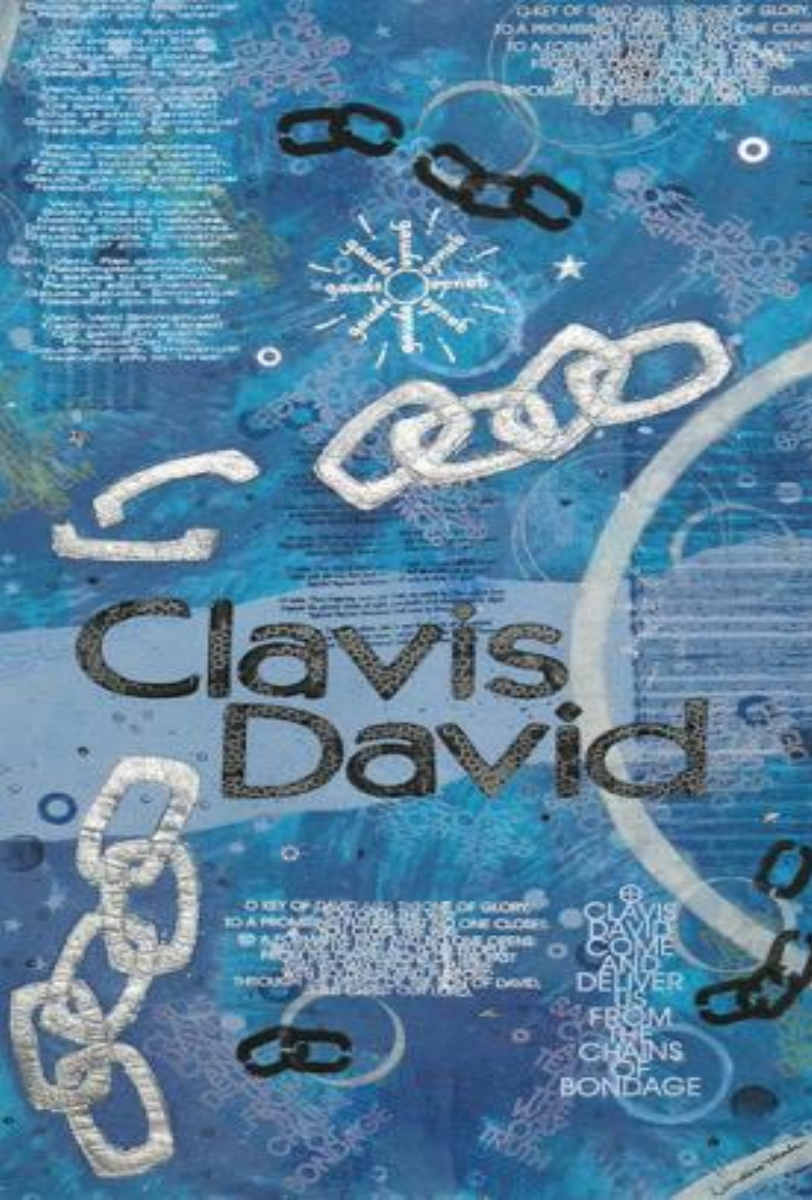
COME O KEY OF DAVID

*O Key of David,
And Scepter of the House of Israel;
who opens and no one shuts;
who shuts and no one opens:
Come and bring forth the captive from his prison,
he who sits in darkness and in the shadow of death.*



For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father Prince of Peace. I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David; he shall open, and no one shall shut; he shall shut, and no one shall open.

Isaiah 9:6, 22:22





COME O DAYSPRING

*O Morning Star,
brightness of light eternal and Sun of justice:
come and enlighten those who dwell in darkness
and the shadow of death.*



But there will be no gloom for those who were in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he will make glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

Isaiah 9:1



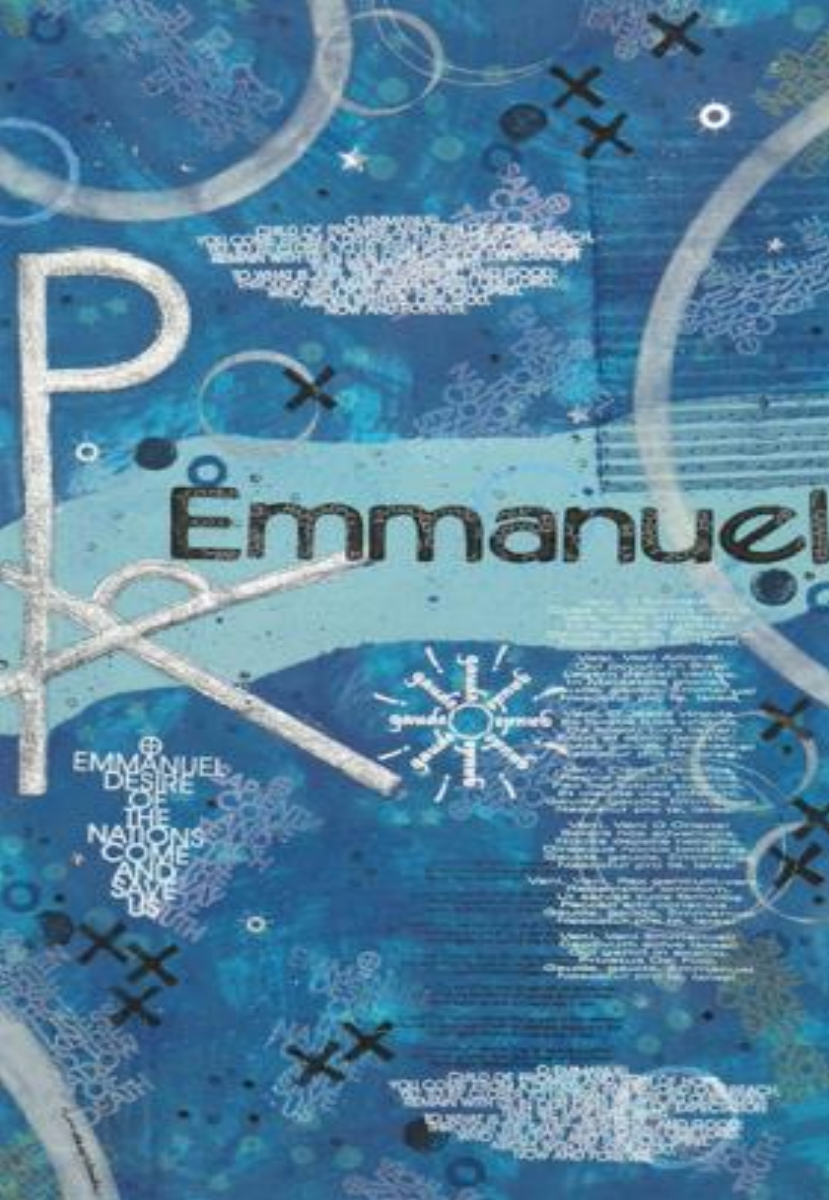
COME O KING OF THE NATIONS

*O King of the Nations,
and their desired One,
the Cornerstone that makes both one:
Come and deliver us, whom you have formed
out of the dust of the earth.*



He shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

Isaiah 2:4, 9:5



COME O GOD WITH US

*O Emmanuel, God With Us,
our King and Lawgiver,
the expected of the nations and their Savior:
Come to save us, O Lord our God.*



Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign.
Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear
a son, and shall name him Immanuel.

Isaiah 7:14