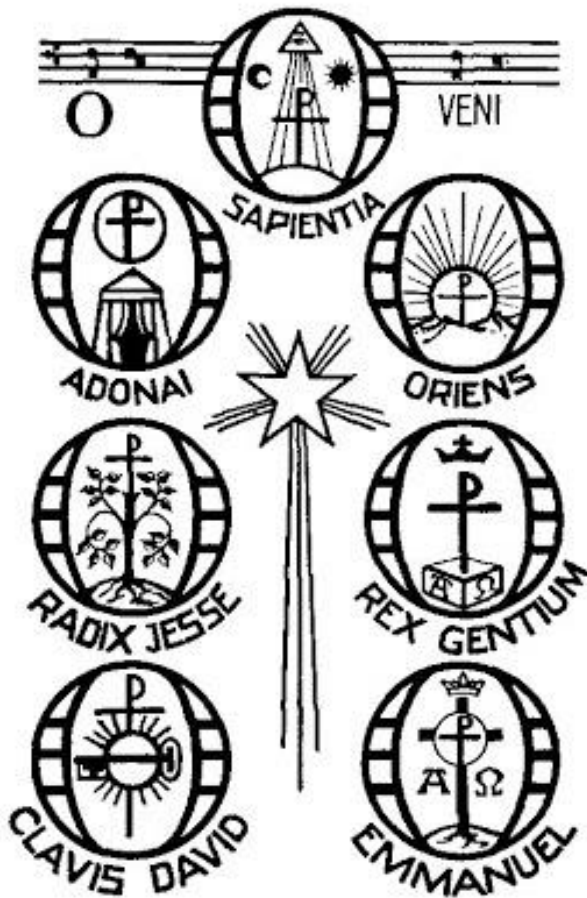




The Joint Charges of St Johns Johnstone
& St Margarets Renfrew
www.SECStJohnStMargaret.org.uk



The Advent Great 'O' Antiphons



These antiphons, or refrains, all beginning 'O ...', were sung before and after the Magnificat at Vespers, according to the Roman use, on the seven days preceding Christmas Eve (17–23 December). They are addressed to God, calling for him to come as teacher and deliverer, with a tapestry of scriptural titles and pictures that describe his saving work in Christ. In the medieval rite of Salisbury Cathedral that was widely followed in England before the Reformation, the antiphons began on 16 December and there was an additional antiphon ('O Virgin of virgins') on 23 December; this is reflected in the Calendar of *The Book of*

Common Prayer, where 16 December is designated *O Sapientia* (O Wisdom). The Common Worship Calendar has adopted the more widely used form. It is not known when and by whom the antiphons were composed, but they were already in use by the eighth century.

17 December – O Sapientia

O Wisdom, coming forth from the mouth of the Most High, reaching from one end to the other mightily, and sweetly ordering all things:

Come and teach us the way of prudence. *cf Ecclesiasticus 24.3; Wisdom 8.1*

18 December – O Adonai

O Adonai, and leader of the House of Israel,
who appeared to Moses in the fire of the burning bush
and gave him the law on Sinai:

Come and redeem us with an outstretched arm. *cf Exodus 3.2; 24.12*

19 December – O Radix Jesse

O Root of Jesse, standing as a sign among the peoples;
before you kings will shut their mouths,
to you the nations will make their prayer:
Come and deliver us, and delay no longer.

cf Isaiah 11.10; 45.14; 52.15; Romans 15.12

20 December – O Clavis David

O Key of David and sceptre of the House of Israel;
you open and no one can shut;
you shut and no one can open:

Come and lead the prisoners from the prison house,
those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death. *cf Isaiah 22.22; 42.7*

21 December – O Oriens

O Morning Star,
splendour of light eternal and sun of righteousness:
Come and enlighten those who dwell in darkness
and the shadow of death.

cf Malachi 4.2

22 December – O Rex Gentium

O King of the nations, and their desire,
the cornerstone making both one:
Come and save the human race,
which you fashioned from clay.

cf Isaiah 28.16; Ephesians 2.14

23 December – O Emmanuel

O Emmanuel, our King and our lawgiver,
the hope of the nations and their Saviour:
Come and save us, O Lord our God.

cf Isaiah 7.14

The Great Os are said as the antiphon at the start and end of the
Magnificat at Evening Prayer

Magnificat (The Song of Mary)

Luke 1.46-55

Start by saying the Antiphon of the day

- 1 My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour; •
he has looked with favour on his lowly servant.
 - 2 From this day all generations will call me blessed; •
the Almighty has done great things for me
and holy is his name.
 - 3 He has mercy on those who fear him, •
from generation to generation.
 - 4 He has shown strength with his arm •
and has scattered the proud in their conceit,
 - 5 Casting down the mighty from their thrones •
and lifting up the lowly.
 - 6 He has filled the hungry with good things •
and sent the rich away empty.
 - 7 He has come to the aid of his servant Israel, •
to remember his promise of mercy,
 - 8 The promise made to our ancestors, •
to Abraham and his children for ever.
- All Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.

Finish by saying the Antiphon of the day

Evening Prayer Lectionary

This lectionary may be adopted at Evening Prayer for the week before Christmas.

O Sapientia 17 December

Psalms 90,11
Ecclesiasticus 24.1-9
1 Corinthians 2.1-13

O Adonai 18 December

Psalm 106
Exodus 3.1-6
Acts 7.20-36

O Radix Jesse 19 December

Psalm 50
Isaiah 11.1-9
Romans 15.7-13

O Clavis David 20 December

Psalm 89.1-34
Isaiah 22.21-23
Revelation 3.7-13

O Oriens 21 December

Psalm 27
Numbers 24.15b-19
Revelation 22.10-21

O Rex Gentium 22 December

Psalm 118
Jeremiah 30.7-11a
Acts 4.1-12

O Emmanuel 23 December

Psalm 80
Isaiah 7.10-15
Matthew 1.18-23