

December 22, 2025



## KING AND CORNERSTONE

By Sister Katherine “Kit” Gray, CSJ

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### Introduction

The O Antiphon for December 22 is King of the Nations.

For an introduction to the O Antiphons, refer to the reflection on December 21.

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### Today's O Antiphon

***O KING OF ALL NATIONS,***

*The only joy of every human heart.*

***O KEYSTONE*** of the mighty arch of humanity,

*Come and save the creatures you fashioned from dust.*

**TRADITIONAL VESPERS ANTIPHON, DECEMBER 22**

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## Reflection

- What are your thoughts and/or feelings about the title “king?”
  - What is the function of a cornerstone? A keystone?
  - Notice the contrast between Christ, the “living stone,” and the description of the “creatures you fashioned from dust.” What do you think/feel about that contrast?
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O KING OF ALL NATIONS  
O KEYSTONE OF THE  
MIGHTY ARCH OF  
HUMANITY

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## Background

There are two powerful images in this O Antiphon—Christ as King and Christ as Keystone or Cornerstone; both are symbols of unity. The prophet Zechariah prophesied that the day would come when God would become the king of all the nations (Zechariah 4:9). Think of the history of Israel, its own kings, and its relationship with the kings of other nations. It is not always a lovely picture; kings and other national

leaders—then and now—often put their own interests above those of the people and nations they hold power over. Kings and national leaders—then and now—compete among themselves for power, wealth, and territory.

This antiphon declares that only the one true God can be the full joy of our hearts.

Nothing can take the place of God's love, which breaks down all divisions—between and among individuals and nations.

Isaiah describes Christ, the King of this antiphon:

*They name him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero,  
Father-Forever, Prince of Peace.*

*His dominion is vast  
and forever peaceful,  
Upon David's throne, and over his kingdom,  
which he confirms and sustains  
By judgment and justice,  
both now and forever.*

**ISAIAH 9:6-7**

And the prophet Daniel says:

*One, like a son of man.  
He received dominion, splendor, and kingship;  
all nations, peoples and tongues will serve him.  
His dominion is an everlasting dominion  
that shall not pass away,  
his kingship, one that shall not be destroyed.*

**DANIEL 7:13-14**

Isaiah declares:

*See, I am laying a stone in Zion, a stone that has been tested, a precious cornerstone  
as a sure foundation; whoever puts faith in it will not waver.*

**ISAIAH 28:16**

Jesus is the living stone upon which God is building a living temple—the church. In Jesus all of God's people are joined together in community and worship.

*Come to him, a living stone, rejected by human beings  
but chosen and precious in the sight of God,*

*and, like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it says in scripture: “Behold, I am laying a stone in Zion, a cornerstone, chosen and precious, and whoever believes in it shall not be put to shame.”*

**1 PETER 2:4-10**

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## **For Prayer**

**O KING OF ALL NATIONS,**

*The only joy of every human heart.*

**O KEYSTONE** of the might arch of humanity,

*Come and save the creatures you fashioned from dust.*

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