

December 23, 2025



O EMMANUEL

By Sister Katherine "Kit" Gray, CSJ

Introduction

The O Antiphon for December 23 is O Emmanuel.

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

Today's O Antiphon

O EMMANUEL, KING AND LAWGIVER, DESIRE OF THE NATIONS,

Savior of all people.

Come and set us free, Lord Our God.

TRADITIONAL VESPERS ANTIPHON, DECEMBER 23

Background

Christmas is the feast of Emmanuel, God with us. Isaiah prophesied that a virgin would bear a son whose name would be Emmanuel (Isaiah 7:14 and 8:8). Matthew saw this prophecy fulfilled in a most unexpected way in Mary, the virgin, conceiving Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1: 22-23). Jesus, the eternal Son of God, “who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself” (Philippians 2:7) and “became like us in every way” (Hebrews 2:17).

John says it this way:

*And the Word became flesh
and made his dwelling among us,
and we saw his glory,
the glory as of the Father's only Son,
full of grace and truth.*

JOHN 1:14



O EMMANUEL
KING & LAWGIVER
DESIRE OF THE NATIONS

For Pondering

How have you experienced Jesus as Emmanuel, God-with-you?

For Prayer

*O God, Source of all peace,
We have heard again your promises of old
And your vision for all humankind.
In the coming of Christ, we recognize the one
Who can free us from all that prevents their fulfillment.
Help us to respond wholeheartedly to this liberating presence.
We ask this through Jesus, the Eternal Word,
Who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, forever.
Amen.*

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