

The "O" Antiphons

The Great "O" Antiphons of Advent are favorites of mine because they give shape and words to our deepest longings. To the voices of so many generations before us, we add our own:



Lord of Light, come, light the hearts of all in dark and shadow;
Spring of Joy, rain down upon our spirits, come, make us whole;
Root of Life, draw us to you, our hope reborn in dying and in rising;
Key of Knowledge, open to us the pathway of peace;
Wisdom, come and teach us the way of prudence.

(Paraphrases of the "O" Antiphons are listed in ELW #257)

In this season of waiting, may the yearnings expressed in the "O" Antiphons echo our own longing for the Christ we celebrate this season: the Promised One who is Lord of Light, Spring of Joy, Root of Life, Key of Knowledge, Wisdom.

As you wait and prepare during Advent, you may enjoy reading *Come, Lord Jesus: Devotions for the Home* by Susan Briehl (AFP). Briehl's blessings, prayers, poetry, and songs are combined with scripture and meditations. You also might like *Advent Reflections: While We Wait; I wonder as I wander; and Making All Things New* (AFP).

These resources are gifts to the church. Several years ago, Briehl wrote a beautiful Advent reflection on the first of the "O" Antiphons about our desire for wisdom. I've saved it to reread each Advent season. She closes with this prayer: "O Wisdom, come and teach us for we are a people highly skilled, but unable to connect with one another. Come and teach us, Sweet Wisdom, for we are a people burdened to breaking with information, but void of compassion, empty of justice, aching for a vision of hope. Come and teach us that we might be wisely rooted, not merely entrenched. O Wisdom, O God's Wise Heart, O Christ Jesus, come. Amen."

This is my prayer for each of us this Advent, 2011.

Warmest wishes to you all!

Julie K. Ageson