

**Sunday, Dec 18, 2022**

**Welcome!**

Most folks live in the land of their birth. Only one in 30 migrate, and for many reasons. They may marry a non-national and relocate to make a life together. Jobs may move overseas. But most often, people migrate under forces they can't control: military conflicts, natural disasters, extreme poverty, or other dangers. Migration may not be chosen, but it doesn't have to spell doom to those who depart or those who receive them. Migrants have knowledge, networks, and skills to share. U.S. history proves it as does the history of our faith. As Yahweh told the Israelites: "You shall treat the alien who resides with you no differently than the natives born among you; for you too were once aliens in the land of Egypt" (Lev. 19:33-34). On this International Migrants Day, O Sacred Lord, give us the spirit of welcome and openness so we may each find our way to you.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT (O SACRED LORD)

TODAY'S READINGS: Isaiah 7:10-14; Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-24 (10). "The Lord's are the earth and its fullness; the world and those who dwell in it."

**Monday, Dec 19, 2022**

**Cherish your roots**

Today's O Antiphon—"O Root of Jesse's stem, sign of God's love for all his people: come to save us without delay!"—invites us to meditate on the theme of Jesus' genealogy and our spiritual ancestry. Jesse was the father of King David, and God told the prophet Nathan that David's royal family would last forever. Jesus is the enduring branch that grows out of the root of Jesse, the fulfillment of a hope past and present. When we belong to Christ, we belong to the rest of the tree, too—a family that includes God and humanity. Christmas brings people together, biologically related or not—let the longing of this season bond you closer to all in love.

ADVENT WEEKDAY (O FLOWER OF JESSE'S STEM)

TODAY'S READINGS: Judges 13:2-7, 24-25a; Luke 1:5-25 (195). "He will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God."

**Tuesday, Dec 20, 2022**

**Let's make some room at the inn**

We're in the middle of two great spiritual traditions that overlap in Advent: The O Antiphons (December 17-23)—recited at vespers for the church's Liturgy of the Hours—and the celebration of "Las Posadas" (December 16-24), reenacting Joseph and Mary's search for shelter ahead of Jesus' birth. Since Las Posadas come from our Latin American brothers and sisters, each year the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops encourages us to work and pray, in intentional ways, for migrants to our country who—like Mary and Joseph—seek safety and basic biblical hospitality. The Key of David is also the key to our hearts. See Justice for Immigrants for more background and suggested actions.

ADVENT WEEKDAY (O KEY OF DAVID)

TODAY'S READINGS: Isaiah 7:10-14; Luke 1:26-38 (196). "Listen, O house of David!"

**Wednesday, Dec 21, 2022**

**A light of faith from the North Star**

On this day in 1892, Saint Peter Claver Catholic Church was founded in Saint Paul, Minnesota, the first black parish in the state of Minnesota. Founded decades before the Great Migration of southern blacks to northern states, the church was the brainchild

of hopeful black Catholics (inspired by Josephite founder John Slattery, S.S.J.) and Archbishop John Ireland, a tireless advocate for black liberation in an era of widespread racism. The new church was named for the famed Jesuit missionary, just a few years after his canonization by Pope Leo XIII, and among its first members was Fredrick McGhee, the first black lawyer in state history. May he and his companions inspire our faith and encourage us to witness for justice in our daily lives!

ADVENT WEEKDAY (O RADIANT DAWN)

TODAY'S READINGS: Song of Songs 2:8-14 or Zephaniah 3:14-18a; Luke 1:39-45 (197). "O Radiant Dawn, splendor of eternal light, sun of justice, come and shine on those who dwell in darkness and in the shadow of death!"

**Thursday, Dec 22, 2022**

**Picture this**

For Americans, the O Antiphon for today, "O King of All Nations," might be less than compelling since our incipient nation rebelled against the only king it ever had back in its colonial days. The image of God or Jesus as "king" comes from the prevailing social structures 2,000 years ago. Centuries of church-monarchy unity in Europe and elsewhere kept the tradition going. Contemporary Catholics can understand the power and authority of kingship, but God's tenderness and mercy can be sidelined by this term, which leads to a good question for any disciple: What is your image of God? What helps you connect with the Divine?

ADVENT WEEKDAY (O KING OF ALL NATIONS)

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Samuel 1:24-28; Luke 1:46-56 (198). "The Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his Name."

**Friday, Dec 23, 2022**

**Rejoice, rejoice!**

The "O Emmanuel" antiphon heralds the conclusion of Advent. It also conveys a powerful truth about how we experience the divine. Yes, God is awesome and transcendent—and God is the one who draws close to us, takes on our humanity, and is truly Emmanuel, "God with us." As we prepare to enter into the mystery of the Incarnation, let us take a moment to pray "O Emmanuel" and reflect on how we experience God with us in our day-to-day life. And as a church let us sing together, "Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel / Shall come to thee, O Israel."

ADVENT WEEKDAY (O EMMANUEL)

TODAY'S READINGS: Malachi 3:1-4, 23-24; Luke 1:57-66 (199). "Yes, he is coming."

**Saturday, Dec 24, 2022**

**Forgiveness under the tree**

If you haven't finished your Christmas shopping by now, you're toast (at least according to consumer culture). The best you can hope for now is forgiveness. Which is exactly what this day and this night are all about. Zechariah's Benedictus in today's gospel (which takes its name from the first words in Latin—*Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel*, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel") reflects God's eternal plan of deliverance: "To give his people knowledge of Salvation by the forgiveness of their sins." The best present you can give anybody, tonight or ever, is the forgiveness of their sins. Today is the perfect day to give this perfect gift!

ADVENT WEEKDAY

TODAY'S READINGS: Morning: 2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Luke 1:67-79 (200). "To give his people knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins."

*Invest just five minutes a day, and your faith will deepen and grow—a day at a time*



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