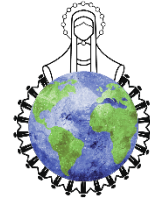




**Hamilton Diocesan Council  
of  
The Catholic Women's League of Canada**



*Welcome Home!*

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**ADVENT 2021**



Dear League Sisters:

Advent is a journey into the light, to the cradle of God's love, where we find Heavenly Peace and Salvation. Advent reminds us that Christ is present in our lives throughout all seasons.

Attached is a teaching I prepared on a special way of praying during the last seven days of Advent. The prayers are the seven jewels of liturgical song, known as the "O Antiphons". There are different prayers for each of the seven jewels of liturgical song, that summarizing our Advent longing for the Savior. You will notice that in each of the seven O Antiphons, there are different names for Christ coming just before his birth (*Wisdom, Lord of Israel, Root of Jesse, King of David, Radiant Dawn, King of all Nations, and Emmanuel*). These last seven days of Advent are known as the "Great Advent – the Great O's", which begins on **December 17<sup>th</sup>**!

Remember to always live with hope, live in love and live in the light of Christ. For God, who said, "*Let light shine out of darkness*," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 2 CORINTHIANS 4:6

May you embrace this Advent season and your journey into the light of Christ by celebrating being a child of God, a child of the light, a beacon of light for others, and called and gifted to always SPARKLE God's way.

It is my sincere hope that you will find peace, love and joy during this holy time of year.

Christmas Blessings and Hugs,  
Teresa DiFalco, Diocesan First Vice President and Spiritual Development Chair



Teresa DiFalco, Diocesan First Vice President and Spiritual Development Chair

## The Great "O's"

*Within the Divine Office (Liturgy of the Hours) is an ancient Advent tradition of praying the O Antiphons, also known as the Great O's.*



As a Liturgical Musician and Cantor, and through my Catholic theology studies I came to truly appreciate the gift of praying the Divine Office, in particular, Vespers (Night prayers). I can't think of a more peaceful way to end my day than giving praise, thanks and glory to God our Creator. Prayer allows us to still our mind, bring peace to our heart and open our soul to God's blessings and love.

Did you know that the evening of December 17th, is the start of the Great Advent? This is the final phase (7 days) of preparation for Christmas, and it begins with the first of the great "O Antiphons" of Advent.

These prayers are seven jewels of liturgical song, one for each day until Christmas Eve, summarizing our Advent longing for the Savior.

Listed on the following page are the "O Antiphons", which are prayed before and after the Magnificent during Vespers (Evening Prayer) of the Liturgy of the Hours.

These are the only Antiphons that are divided among Cantors to sing, as it is deemed to be a great honour to sing one of these names of Christ coming just before His birth. As a Cantor, I can attest to this great honour 😊

The Great O's can also be prayed as part of your evening prayers, alone or in a group. Try chanting them with slight variations of notes. This is called Gregorian chant, which is a form of monophonic, unaccompanied sacred song in Latin. Chanting calms the mind and allows us to focus more deeply on each word as we pray, as the words resonate from our lips, into our ears, and into our hearts. This link will bring you to a sample of the Great O for December 17<sup>th</sup>. Although it is in Latin, (O sapiential means O Wisdom), the chant will give you an idea of how chants are meditative movements of song. The voice has been known as the most true and important instrument for thousands of years, and it's a fundamental part of human expression. So, use the gift of voice and "Sing a new song unto the Lord" Psalm 96:1

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ngcQDQfhIA>

Please remember that prayers only need to be pure *not* perfect. Sing from your heart and let every word speak truth from your lips.

## The Great "O's"

*Within the Divine Office (Liturgy of the Hours) is an ancient Advent tradition of praying the O Antiphons, also known as the Great O's.*

### **December 17**

**O Wisdom** - O holy Word of God, you govern all creation with your strong yet tender care: Come and show your people the way to salvation.

### **December 18**

**O Lord of Israel** - O Sacred Lord of ancient Israel, who showed yourself to Moses in the burning bush, who gave him the holy law of Sinai Mountain: Come, stretch out your mighty hand to set us free.

### **December 19**

**O Root of Jesse** - O Root of Jesse, you have been raised up as a sign for all peoples; kings stand silent in your presence; the nations bow down in worship before you. Come, let nothing keep you from coming to our aid.

### **December 20**

**O Key of David** - O Key of David O royal Power of Israel, controlling at your will the gate of heaven: Come, break down the prison walls of death for those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death; and lead your captive people into freedom.

### **December 21**

**O Radiant Dawn** - O Radiant Dawn, splendor of eternal light, sun of justice; Come, shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death.

### **December 22**

**O King of All Nations** - King of all the nations, the only joy of every human heart; O Keystone of the mighty arch of man: Come and save the creature you fashioned from the dust.

### **December 23**

**O Emmanuel** - O Emmanuel, king and lawgiver, desire of the nations, Savior of all people: Come and set us Free, Lord our God.

