

Sunday 19th December 2021

Fourth Sunday in Advent



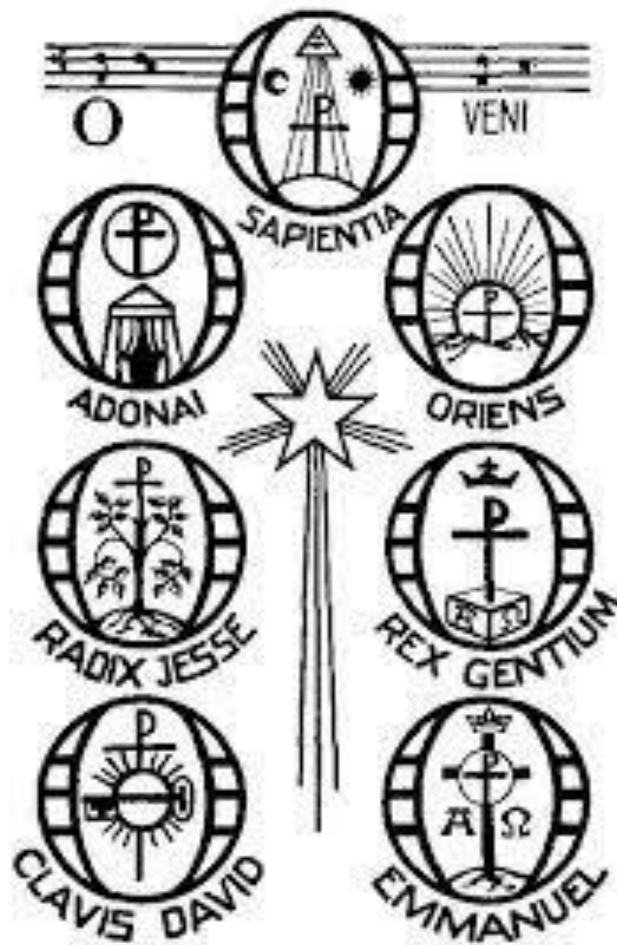
Today's Gospel reading: Luke 1. 39-45:

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.'

During Advent, we have been thinking about the people who pointed the way to Jesus – patriarchs, prophets, John the Baptist – and today we especially remember Mary, the mother of Jesus. Our Gospel reading is the story of the visit by Mary to her cousin, Elizabeth, the mother-to-be of John the Baptist.

In the verses following today's Gospel reading from St Luke's Gospel, we hear Mary sing her beautiful song of praise to God, which we call "The Magnificat". It is said or sung in churches on every day of the year, at the service of Evening Prayer or Evensong. On the final days of Advent, running up to Christmas Eve, we say or sing the "O Antiphons" before the Magnificat. These verses are very ancient and each highlights a name used for Jesus and refers to the prophecy of Isaiah about the coming Messiah.

Below, in the diagram, are the Latin versions of the antiphons for each day from 17th until 23rd December.



Translated into Welsh and English, we say:

○ Ddoethineb!	○ Wisdom!
○ Adonai!	○ Adonai!
○ Wreiddyn Jesse!	○ Root of Jesse!
○ Allwedd Dafydd!	○ Key of David!
○ Wawrddydd!	○ Dayspring!
○ Frenin y Cenhedloedd!	○ King of the Nations!
○ Immanuel!	○ Emmanuel!

☹️ Can you remember what the name Emmanuel means?

It means "God with us" and the most important message of Christmas is that God came to be with us and still comes to be with us.

☹️ How many candles are lit on the Advent wreath today?

Lighting the fourth candle means that Christmas is nearly here!

Are you ready for Christmas? Ready to welcome Jesus, Emmanuel, "God with us"?

Here are some pictures to colour:



