

Yesterday marked a transition in our Advent celebration. The final week of Advent - seven days before Christmas Eve - brings within the Church's liturgy the "O Antiphons."

You know them from the verses of the hymn "O Come O Come Emmanuel." And if you count, there are seven verses, each corresponding to a day in this last week.

The "O Antiphons" are titles for Jesus Christ from various Old Testament prophecies, and are:

O Wisdom, O Lord, O Root of Jesse, O Key of David, O Rising Dawn, O King of Nations, and O Emmanuel.

Interestingly, these titles, when the first letter of each is considered - in Latin or Hebrew - And these titles are: Sapientia, Adonai, Radix, Clavis, Oriens, Rex, and Emmanuel ... we get ... in reverse ... the Latin phrase "*ero cras*" which means "I'm coming tomorrow."

And so, this a medieval puzzle ... operates a bit like an Advent calendar ... counting us down to the "day before tomorrow" ... on Dec 24 ... with "tomorrow" being Christmas Day.

In the Gospel, we hear of St. Joseph being assured by an angel in a dream that all will be well, and that all is in accord with the Will of God.

And we get that funny word: Emmanuel ... which is Hebrew for "God is with us." In case you were curious - "im" is Hebrew for 'with,' "el" is Hebrew for 'God,' and "manu" is the first person plural suffix ... so that one word in Hebrew means those three words in English.

Nonetheless, language class aside ... we are counting down to Christmas.

As we approach this altar to receive the Sacred Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ ... let us pray to "unlock the mystery" of this season and ask God to reveal Himself to us in a new way. Let us also pray that we might desire - like St. Joseph - to live in God's Will ... and whatever the cost, to follow God's Will for us.