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Although sharing much common ground when it comes to philosophy and ministry, often Mary and Bob find themselves approaching ministerial concerns from different angles... *He said - She said* is a venue to share differing perspectives and provide food for thought.

## O Antiphons

*Bob's perspective:*

An Antiphon is the verse of a song or a psalm that is used to focus our prayers. An example is the part of the Responsorial Psalm that the Assembly sings at Mass. Antiphons are especially used in daily prayers in monasteries throughout the world.

The "O Antiphons" are different names or titles that refer to Jesus. They are used in prayers from December 17<sup>th</sup> to the 23<sup>rd</sup>. The basis of these antiphons are found in the book of the prophet Isaiah. They are called the "O Antiphons" because each title starts with "O."

The titles of Jesus found in these Antiphons are:

O Wisdom - One of the prophets' ancient names for God was "Wisdom". They wrote of Wisdom moving about the city like a beautiful woman inviting people to her home, where she would teach them to know what was good and just.

O Lord - Out of respect, the Jews never say the name of God aloud. When reading from the scriptures, they call God "Lord." Christians also call Jesus "Lord." He is the fulfillment of the promise that God would one day come to live among the people to strengthen and redeem them.

O Root of Jesse - King David, the son of Jesse of Bethlehem, was the first great king of Israel. Long after he had died, the people longed for another great king who could lead them as he had done. Through the words of the prophet Isaiah, God promised that the Messiah would be a new branch on the royal family tree of Jesse and David.

O Key of David - People with keys are often people with authority. They can open and close doors and gates so that people can enter. Jesus is the key that opens the gate of heaven for us.

O Dayspring - Just as the dawning sun soon rises high in the sky and shines brightly, we think again of the coming of Jesus who is our "sun of justice" and "light of the world."

O King of the Nations - God's kingdom is stronger than any human made kingdom. Jesus' authority reigns supreme over all nations.



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O Emmanuel - The name Emmanuel means “God-with-us.” As we draw ever closer to the celebration of Jesus’ birth, we are assured of God’s presence in our lives and our world.

Embedded within the O Antiphons is an uncommonly known code. When taking the first initial of the Latin form of these titles in reverse order (beginning with Emmanuel) it spells out the phrase, “Ero Cras,” literally translated meaning - “Tomorrow I shall be.”

O <i>Emmanuel</i>	(O God is With Us - December 23 <sup>rd</sup> )
O <i>Rex Gentium</i>	(O King of the Nations - December 22 <sup>nd</sup> )
O <i>Oriens</i>	(O Dayspring - December 21 <sup>st</sup> )
O <i>Clavis David</i>	(O Key of David - December 20 <sup>th</sup> )
O <i>Radix Jesse</i>	(O Root of Jesse - December 19 <sup>th</sup> )
O <i>Adonai</i>	(O Lord – December 18 <sup>th</sup> )
O <i>Sapientia</i>	(O Wisdom – December 17 <sup>th</sup> )

*Mary's perspective:*

Seriously?