

# The Ides of December and the 0 Antiphons

Have you heard the phrase “Ides of March”? I think I first heard about it in a literature class where it was used in Shakespeare. (That was quite a few years ago...) I always took it to mean the 15th of the month, though I see that it can also be used as [a reference to a turning point](#).

We’re at that point in December where it’s very “Ides” to me. It feels like it’s too late to begin anything Adventy, and it’s still far enough away from Christmas that it feels like there might just be time to do all that needs done. (And then I look at the list and think again.)

So what’s left? Well, as it happens, we’re right at that point where the 0 Antiphons come in.

[Here’s an explanation of the 0 Antiphons from Simply Catholic:](#)

*Beginning Dec. 17 of each Advent season, and for the next seven days, a special antiphon known as an 0 Antiphon is read before the Magnificat during evening prayer. Sometimes called the Greater Antiphons, or the 0’s of Advent (because they begin with that exclamation), the 0 Antiphons differ from the daily antiphons because they herald the coming birth of Christ. Originally written in Latin around the seventh or eighth centuries, these special antiphons are verses extracted from the Old Testament prophets – namely, Isaiah – and express the longing for the coming of the Christ. In fact, the word “come” is used in every 0 Antiphon.*

Take a moment and listen to them performed:

And let's not forget food. Because why not? [Catholic Cuisine has a breakdown of the symbols for each day and suggestions for special foods or treats](#). They are things you have around the house or can easily adjust with what you have. This will help lend meaning to the prayers in so many ways...and who doesn't love special food?

*Do you have a link or resource to share? Send it to us at [takeout@osv.com](mailto:takeout@osv.com) so we can share it in a future issue!*