Advent Reflection on the O Antiphons #4
O Clavis David O Key of David

Latin: *O Clavis David, et sceptrum domus Israel;*
qui aperis, et nemo claudit;
claudis, et nemo aperit:
veni, et educ vinctum de domo carceris,
sedentem in tenebris, et umbra mortis.

English: *O Key of David and sceptre of the House of Israel;*
you open and no one can shut;
you shut and no one can open:
Come and lead the prisoners from the prison house,
those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death.

Isaiah had prophesied:

- "I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David; he shall open, and no one shall shut; he shall shut, and no one shall open." *Isaiah 22:22*
- "His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onwards and for evermore." *Isaiah 9:7*
- "...To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house." *Isaiah 42:7*.

King David, one of the figures we encounter in Advent, is the pivotal leader of the Israelites. He establishes a Kingdom with Jerusalem as the capital on Mt Zion. He is given authority (symbolized by the key that locks and opens). He is also a savior who sets people free and a messiah (one who is anointed). The last line evokes Ps129 the *De Profundis*. Jesus is not only the new Adam and the new Moses, he is also the new David, the promised inheritor of the throne of his ancestors (as promised in 2 Samuel) who establishes the New Kingdom. The qualities of this King also link us to Mary's *Magnificat.*

Thoughts to ponder as we prepare for Christmas:

How do we understand David's relationship to God; he did not always get things right but he had the humility to repent? What things do you repent of? How can we prepare for Christmas in a way to receive with purity of heart the innocent one? What doors do we close and what doors do we open? Do we make following the Lord difficult for others by casting our shade over them? Do we lead those we know and love, and those whom we meet, into freedom? What do we do to set prisoners free? How do we bring light to others? Can we truly call ourselves followers of the Lord if we don't accept and emulate the social justice concerns of Mary's *Magnificat?*