



# Anglican Network in Canada

## First Friday of the Month Call to Prayer – January 2011

*Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.* Philippians 4: 6 ESV

Welcome to our January 2011 First Friday Call to Prayer. Our aim is to provide you with teaching that we trust will enhance your prayer experience and will be an encouragement to you. We will also provide you with praise items and prayer requests coming from within ANiC and the Anglican Communion worldwide.

<p>We encourage you to set aside <b>the first Friday, January 7<sup>th</sup></b>, as a day of prayer and fasting for the Church in these critical days, ideally gathering with other believers in your parish or region for corporate prayer at some point in the day</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Prayer Quotes</b></p> <p><i>Those who, in a day of peace, set themselves at Christ's feet to be taught by Him, may, with comfort, in a day of trouble, cast themselves at His feet to find favour with Him.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Matthew Henry 1662-1714</p>
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### The Mudlark

In the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, poor English children often scavenged along the banks of the rivers, especially the Thames whose levels were influenced by tides. As you might imagine, work conditions were filthy as waste and garbage washed up on the bank. Corpses of animals and humans were not uncommon, and the children regularly cut their bare feet on broken bottles as they searched for anything of resale value. However, some managed to scrape together a subsistence albeit meager living in this manner. Such scavengers were called “mudlarks”.

In 1950, a British film, also called “The Mudlark”, depicted the story of one such child, a young lad named Wheeler, who finds on the banks of the Thames a medallion of Queen Victoria. He is enraptured by the image and risks his life to keep it. An older boy informs him that “she is the mother of all England”, and, armed with that information, Wheeler sets out to meet this beautiful mother-image that he so desperately needs in his life. The rest of the film is the story of his attempt to see the queen, who has withdrawn from all public appearances for 13 years as she grieves the loss of her husband. The movie is thoughtful and poignant, so I won't spoil the ending in case you get a chance to see it.

So what does all this have to do with our prayer life as we enter into a new year and the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century? I have seen “The Mudlark” several times, and I am always struck by the incongruence of this ragged, filthy (and, no doubt, smelly) boy furtively seeking an audience with the Queen of England at luxurious Windsor Castle! Wheeler and Victoria represent two worlds that rarely intersect and know virtually nothing about the other. This profound question always haunts me as I watch the film – do I approach God like Wheeler approached Victoria? When I come to prayer, does Almighty God, the Omnipotent Lord of Hosts and Creator of the universe, see me as a mudlark? Do I see myself as a mudlark? Can I smell the stench of a polluted river on my ragged clothing?

In our Anglican tradition, we have been given a rich sense of the majesty of our God and a profound respect for the mystery and wonder that surrounds Him. We have also been given an appropriate understanding of our sinful nature and depravity. Painfully aware are we that “*We have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep, We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts, We have offended against thy holy laws, We have left undone those things which we ought to have done, And we have done those things which we ought not to have done; And there is no health in us*”. We are in desperate need of a Saviour, and are totally unable to save ourselves.

But, once Grace has worked its wonders in our lives, and we are gloriously forgiven, Almighty God adopts us into His family, gives us an eternal destiny, and our relationship with Him takes on a whole new look. Like the repentant prodigal son with words of unworthiness on our lips, we are clad in “the best robe”, and have the family ring on our finger. He returned looking and smelling like a mudlark, but his father quickly transformed him into a son and heir once again.

Now, I’m aware that we all know this; at least in our theological understanding we know it. But what about in our heart of hearts, in that secret inner place where we are intended to have intimate communion with the Lord? Do you see yourself as a mudlark? Do guilt and shame over the past rob you of coming into God’s presence, not as a mudlark, but as a child of the King made worthy by His shed blood?

The writer of Hebrews seems to have had a great grasp on this truth. Remember, Jewish law and tradition allowed for **no one** coming into God’s presence except on occasion the high priest, so this new concept of accessibility would have been bizarre to them. Let’s look at two passages: -

*“Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then **with confidence draw near to the throne of grace**, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”*  
Hebrews 4:14-16 ESV

*“Therefore, brothers, **since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus**, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, **let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.**”*  
Hebrews 10:19-22 ESV

The writer here uses terms like having “*confidence*” and “*in full assurance of faith*” to “*draw near to the throne of grace*” and “*to enter the holy places*”; a confidence, drawn not from arrogance or a vaunted opinion of self, but solely and utterly from the blood of Jesus. It’s all about Grace, and God’s passionate desire for a people, a family, a bride. Yes, we come originally looking like Wheeler, the mudlark, but the Lord has begun the process of sanctification, the clean-up process, and it is vital that we see ourselves the same way that He does.

When you and I come to prayer, do we draw near with confidence to the throne or do we enter timidly, embarrassed and ashamed to be there? Do we see our loving heavenly Father anxiously awaiting and delighted to see us or do we see a distant potentate who might tolerate us if we are having one of our better, more obedient days? How we see God and ourselves will have a tremendous bearing on our prayer life and our desire to spend time in His presence!

Henri Nouwen, in an article he wrote entitled “*Prayer and the Jealous God*”, made the following statement: - “*I am deeply convinced that the necessity to pray, and to pray unceasingly, is not so much based on our desire for God as on God’s desire for us. It is God’s passionate pursuit of us that calls us to prayer. Prayer comes from God’s initiative, not ours.*”

My dear friends, at the beginning of this new year and decade, my prayer for each of us is that we will respond to His loving and passionate pursuit, no longer as a mudlark, but with a fresh confidence and deepening desire to enter into His presence and to spend time allowing Him to impart to us His compassion for a lost and hurting world. Amen.

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### **Praise God ...**

- For His past grace – that gives us the confidence to come into His presence.
- For the shed blood of Jesus that washes our “filthy rags” and clothes us in His righteousness.

- That our Abba Father delights in us and in communicating with us and responding to our prayers.
- For the privilege of conversing with our Heavenly Father 24/7.
- For the privilege of engaging in spiritual battle through prayer.
- For the reformation God is working out in global Anglicanism – and the entire Christian Church. In the midst of chaos, He is building His Kingdom and refining His bride, the Church.
- For His blessing on ANiC, for how He has led, and for the future He has planned for us in 2011.
- For our churches, for the Anglican Network in Canada (ANiC) and for the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA).
- For the many ANiC “projects” and church plants – the small, but growing congregations of faithful Anglicans – that He is adding to our number.
- For faithful Anglican Primates, bishops, clergy and laity – throughout the Communion – who are standing for truth even when their stand for Christ and His Word makes them targets of attack.

#### **Confess if needed...**

- For not spending undistracted time communicating with our God.
- For failing to be persistent in prayer.
- For not encouraging and prayerfully supporting our clergy and church leaders.
- For not regularly praying for our leaders and those in positions of authority and influence.
- For not upholding each other and bearing one another’s burdens.

#### **Please pray...**

- That we would grow in our love for our Lord and learn to delight in communing with Him in prayer.
- That we would have a passion for those around us who need our Lord.
- For the ministries of our churches; that we would become more intentional in reaching out to our communities.
- For **Bishops** Donald Harvey, Stephen Leung, Charlie Masters, Trevor Walters, Malcolm Harding and Ronald Ferris – and their families. Pray for spiritual and physical protection and renewal, for wisdom, and for a daily closer walk with God.
- For our **Archdeacons**: the Venerables Ron Corcoran (Vancouver Island), Dan Gifford (BC), Paul Charbonneau (Ontario), Desiree Stedman (Ottawa region), Paul Crossland (Prairies), Michael McKinnon (New England, USA), and Darrell Critch (Atlantic Region & Quebec).
- For **ANiC clergy** and their families, especially those experiencing spiritual and physical attack. May the joy of the Lord be their strength.
- For those suffering under the attack of the enemy in our congregations and families. Pray for victory in Christ and healing where needed.
- For those in our congregations who are ill and in pain.
- For **new and forming ANiC congregations** as they attend to the many details of organizing and launching a parish – and for other congregations considering joining ANiC.
- For the many **ANiC congregations** that have lost their places of worship or are now facing the possible loss of their buildings. May they demonstrate God’s love to those who persecute them.
- For parishes involved in legal disputes.
  - For the Vancouver-area parishes and the application to the Supreme Court for leave to appeal.
  - For St Aidan’s in Windsor, ON in its dealings with the Diocese of Huron.
  - For St George’s (Burlington, ON), Good Shepherd (St Catharines, ON) and St Hilda’s (Oakville, ON) in negotiating with the Diocese of Niagara.
  - For St George’s and St Alban’s in Ottawa involved in negotiation with the Diocese of Ottawa.
  - For a change of heart on the part of the leaders of dioceses pursuing ANiC parishes. May they genuinely seek to work with parishes to reach amicable, mutually beneficial settlements.

- For **Anglican orphans** – Biblically-faithful Anglicans in Canada who feel isolated in liberal churches and dioceses – as well as for those who feel they can no longer remain in the Anglican Church of Canada. May they find Christian fellowship and spiritual nourishment.
- For the recovery of a lively orthodoxy in the **Anglican Church of Canada (ACoC)** and for those who believe they are called to remain in the ACoC to pray and work for reformation and for a renewed commitment to Jesus Christ and His inspired Word.
- For the leaders of the **Anglican Communion Alliance** (formerly Anglican Essentials Federation), **Anglican Essentials Network**, and **Anglican Essentials Canada** as they provide support for orthodox Anglicans still within the Anglican Church of Canada.
- For those in the **Zacchaeus Fellowship** who are giving testimony to the liberation God offers those held captive in sexual sin; for the Anglican Church of Canada to listen to their witness.
- For the new Presiding Bishop of the Southern Cone, **the Most Reverend Hector “Tito” Zavala** in his many new responsibilities. And for **Bishop Gregory Venables** as he leads the GAFCon Primates and his diocese.
- For God’s blessing on the **Province of the Southern Cone** which graciously provided a temporary “home” for ANiC when we needed Primatial oversight.
- For God’s blessing on the **Anglican Church in North America (ACNA)**:
  - For **Archbishop Bob Duncan** (and wife, Nara)
  - For the other ACNA dioceses.
- For the **Anglican1000 church planting** initiative and those engaged in church planting in ACNA.
- For the orthodox Primates and bishops – especially those in the **Global South** – who are courageously standing for Truth. Pray for spiritual and physical protection and for discernment, grace and strength as they lead in a torn Communion.
- For growing awareness of the **Anglican Relief and Development Fund Canada (ARDFC)**; for churches and individuals to commit to being regular donors; for the ARDFC’s malaria prevention work in partnership with the Diocese of Maseno West in south-west Kenya.
- For the **Covenant** process and the realignment underway in the **Anglican Communion**. May the Lord clearly lead and may His will be done.
- For Primates considering whether to participate in the **Primates Meeting** called by the Archbishop of Canterbury for the end of January. May God work out His will in the Communion.
- For the **Archbishop of Canterbury**. May he pursue God wholeheartedly and seek the wisdom and discernment he needs to fulfill his responsibilities to the glory of God.
- For **suffering Christians** around the world in conditions of persecution, war, drought, famine, flooding and poverty – especially those in Muslim countries who face discrimination and violence.
- For the **Sudan** and the upcoming referendum. May the peace of God reign in the Sudan.
- That God would revive us, our church and, ultimately, our nation.
- For **those in authority** over us and who serve our country. Pray for wise decisions that honour the Lord and promote the welfare of **our nation**. Pray specifically:
  - For those in government – both for our elected leaders creating laws and for civil servants in positions of responsibility – that they would uphold righteousness.
  - For judges in our court system who are charged with interpreting and applying laws;
  - For officers of the law and emergency response personnel who daily risk their lives for our protection; and
  - For those who selflessly serve our country in the military as well as for their families at home.



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