



Anglican Network in Canada

First Friday of the Month Call to Prayer – March 2010

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 March 2010 1st 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.

We encourage you to set aside **the first Friday, March 5th**, 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.

Prayer Quotes

"Next to the wonder of seeing my Saviour will be, I think, the wonder that I made so little use of the power of prayer." D. L. Moody (1837-1899)

Praying for Unbelieving Loved Ones

She may have been made fun of by family members because of her faith. She may have been considered "too religious" or "holier than thou" to have around much except at Christmas – kind of an embarrassment. Perhaps she seemed a little too austere or strict to be much fun for the grandkids although she loved them deeply. Clearly, she was out-of-date, living in the past, and whimsically irrelevant. But how she prayed for them!

We won't know for certain "until the roll is called up yonder" how many millions of times a scenario such as the one above has been repeated, but what we do know from countless testimonies is that many of us have come to saving faith in Christ Jesus because a parent, a grandparent, a close friend or a faithful aunt or uncle prayed fervently for us and our family. My wife, Margaret, is a case in point. Her missionary aunt, although away from Canada in India for decades at a time, prayed daily for Margaret and her brother to both be brought into the Kingdom. Later, this faithful aunt told Margaret of her great delight when she heard of their commitment to Christ. You probably know of similar stories either from personal experience or from others in your parish.

We have talked in recent months about having a passion for the "lost" and the importance of reaching out to those closest to us with the good news of the Gospel. But somehow it's harder with family members and close friends to share Jesus, isn't it. They know us too well and we are vulnerable to their disapproval or rejection. It would be easier to preach on a street corner in a far away city than to broach the subject with our spouse or offspring. So we pray for the right timing, the right circumstance where they might be tender to the message.

But discouragement can easily overtake us. Some of us have been praying for our loved ones to come to faith for a long time. Is it really making any difference, we ask? Is there any point in continuing? The renowned 19th century evangelist, Dwight L. Moody, prayed for more than sixty years for two of his boyhood friends – one was saved during Moody's last sermon and the other one met the Lord almost immediately after Moody's death! Surely one of the hardest tests for us as intercessors is to not lose heart but to persist in prayer, even when it might appear that our prayers are having little effect. God's Word makes abundantly clear His position on our loved ones coming to Him:

*The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that **any** should perish, but that **all** should reach repentance.* 2 Peter 3:9 ESV

One of the ways by which we can strengthen our prayers for unbelieving loved ones is by moving away from our subjective feelings and desires and moving toward the use of scriptures in our prayers. Let's look at a few examples that I trust you will find helpful.

A powerful prayer from Scripture that we can pray is asking the Lord *"to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in Me."* (Acts 26:18 ESV) There is a progression here. Pray it step-by-step – opening of spiritual eyes, turning from darkness to light, ultimately asking for and receiving forgiveness, and then finding their place in the Body of Christ.

Does it seem like they have a hard, stony heart that cannot receive the implanting of the Gospel seed? Surely it is not so hard that the Lord cannot deal with it. He has promised, *"I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will **remove the heart of stone** from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh"* (Ezekiel 36:26 ESV).

*"Is not my word like fire, declares the Lord, and like a hammer that breaks the **rock in pieces**?"* (Jeremiah 23:29 ESV). Sometimes hard hearts need to be surgically removed; other times they may need to be broken in pieces, but, in either case, the Lord knows what is best for your loved one. Remind yourself that He loves them much more than you do. Ask Him to deal specifically with the hardness of heart by praying these verses of promise.

Jesus told His disciples that when the Holy Spirit came He would bring conviction of sin. Let's agree with the Lord by asking the Spirit to *"convict the world (our loved one) **concerning sin and righteousness and judgment**; concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged."* (John 16:8-11 ESV). Pray that this will be an internal work of the Spirit, and that our loved ones will recognize their desperate need for a Saviour. It is quite possible that the Lord will use someone other than us to reach our family and friends. Pray that the Lord will send His messenger into their lives to bring them the Gospel in a manner that is appropriate for them.

Let's conclude this meditation with some reassuring verses of our Lord's absolute power and ability to accomplish what we are praying for.

'Ah, Lord God! It is you who have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm! Nothing is too hard for you.'
Jeremiah 32:17 ESV

Jesus looked at them and said, "With man it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God."
Mark 10: 27 ESV

"For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it."
Isaiah 55: 10-11 ESV

They shall not labor in vain or bear children for calamity, for they shall be the offspring of the blessed of the Lord, and their descendants with them. Before they call I will answer; while they are yet speaking I will hear.
Isaiah 65: 23-24 ESV

Almighty God, You know our hearts, and the deep longing we feel that those whom we love would come to know and adore You as we do. It is such a painful thing to not be able to share our intimate love for You with those who are closest to us. Forgive us, dear Lord, for where we have made peace with the status quo or become complacent in our prayers, and give us the grace to trust you with those whom we love, as we continue to intercede on their behalf. In Jesus' mighty Name we pray. Amen.

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Praise God ...

- That He doesn't want anyone to perish so has provided a way for us, sinful though we are, to be reconciled with God through the salvation Jesus Christ won for us on Calvary.
- That He loves our unbelieving friends and relatives even more than we do.
- That He is able to save to the uttermost and that He hears and answers our prayers
- For our churches, for the Anglican Network in Canada (ANiC) and for the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA).
- For faithful Anglican 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.
- For those who are providing leadership to the Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans around the globe and for the growing unity of orthodox Anglicans in the Communion. .
- For the reformation God is working out in global Anglicanism – and Christianity in general. 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.
- For the many ANiC “projects” – the small, but growing congregations of faithful Anglicans He is adding to our number.

Confess if needed...

- Our lack of passion for the lost.
- Our prayerlessness
- Our complacency or discouragement in praying for our lost loved ones.
- Our timidity in engaging in the spiritual battle through intercession and winsome witness.

Please pray...

- That we would see afresh the horror of an eternity without God and gain new compassion for the many around us who are lost and without Christ.
- That we would be motivated to reach out with grace and humility to those around us with the Good News of forgiveness and restoration through Jesus Christ.
- For specific relatives and friends:
 - That God would open their spiritual eyes, convict of sin, and make their stony hearts receptive
 - That they would turn from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God
 - That they would ask for and receive God's forgiveness
 - That they would be discipled and find their place in the Church, the Body of Christ
- That God would give us the grace to trust Him with our loved one as we continue to intercede on their behalf
- For Bishops Donald Harvey, Stephen Leung, Charlie Masters, Trevor Walters, Malcolm Harding and Ronald Ferris, and their families. Pray for spiritual and physical protection, for wisdom, and for a daily closer walk with God.
- For those suffering under the attack of the enemy in our congregations and families. Pray for victory in Christ and healing where needed. Pray especially for clergy and their family members who are experiencing spiritual and physical attack.
- 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 congregations that have lost their places of worship as well as for those forced to appeal to the courts and facing the possible loss of their buildings. May they demonstrate love to those who persecute them.
- For the legal team and parish leaders seeking God's direction for next steps in the legal cases involving church facilities.
 - For the Vancouver-area parishes which have filed an appeal of the disappointing decision from the BC Supreme Court.

- For the case involving St Aidan's in Windsor, ON.
- For St George's (Lowville, ON), Good Shepherd (St Catharines, ON) and St Hilda's (Oakville, ON) in their dispute with the Diocese of Niagara.
- For a change of heart on the part of the dioceses pursuing ANiC parishes. May they relent and work with parishes to reach amicable, mutually beneficial settlements.
- For the recovery of a lively orthodoxy in the Anglican Church of Canada (ACoC) and for those who feel 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 (ACoC).
- For the work of the Anglican Communion Alliance (ACA) at the ACoC's General Synod in June and for the pre-synod ACA-sponsored cross-Canada speaking tour of Canon George Kovoor.
- For 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 Archbishop Gregory Venables (and his wife, Sylvia) who graciously provided a temporary "home" for ANiC members when we needed Primatial oversight.
- For our new province, the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA):
 - For Archbishop Bob Duncan (and wife, Nara)
 - For the other ACNA dioceses, especially those with congregations in Canada: the Anglican Coalition in Canada and the Reformed Episcopal Church.
- For the orthodox Primates and bishops who are courageously standing for the Truth. Pray for spiritual and physical protection and for discernment, grace and strength as they lead in a torn Communion.
- For the Covenant process. May the Lord clearly lead and may His will be done.
- 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 and poverty – especially:
 - For those facing persecution in Muslim countries hostile to Christianity, such as Pakistan, Iran, northern Nigeria & Iraq
 - For those suffering from famine and drought in Eastern Africa
- For those in authority over us. Pray for wise decisions that honour the Lord and promote the welfare of Canadian citizens. Pray also for protection for those who are in "harms way" as they serve our country. Specifically, pray:
 - For those in government – both for members of Parliament creating laws and for civil servants in positions of responsibility;
 - For judges in our court system who are charged with interpreting and applying laws;
 - For officers of the law who daily risk their lives for our protection; and
 - For those who selflessly serve our country in the military.
- That God would revive us, our church and, ultimately, our nation.



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