



# Anglican Network in Canada

## First Friday of the Month Call to Prayer – February 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 February 2011 1<sup>st</sup> 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, ACNA and the Anglican Communion worldwide.

<p>We encourage you to set aside <b>the first Friday, February 4<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>. "Talking to men for God is a great thing, but talking to God for men is greater still." E.M. Bounds 1835-1913</p>
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### Roadblocks

In May 2002, my wife, our two sons and I made our first ever trip to Dublin, Ireland, the birthplace of my father. It was also my first experience with driving on the left side of the road. Within moments of leaving the airport in our rental mini-van, I had cut off three furious drivers, gone several times through the same roundabout, and caused various levels of hysteria amongst my family members. An immediate lunch break at a neighbouring carvery restored a degree of sanity.

But our adventures continued as soon as we re-engaged the roadways. The hostess at our bed and breakfast in Dún Laoghaire was nervous of their new M50 “dual carriageway” and so had emailed us instructions that avoided the M50 and took us right through the heart of the city, along streets that seemed to change their names every block. Fumbling with the road map, we proceeded more or less as directed until we spotted directly ahead of us an ominous sign that struck horror to our collective hearts:– “Road Closed”. Now in North America, there would most likely be “detour” signs with appropriate arrows showing which way to turn to eventually reconnect with the street once we had passed the roadblock. Not here! Left or right, we knew not which, and so, within seconds, we were hopelessly lost. Were it not for a kindly resident that we met at a petrol station, we might have spent our entire week trying to find our way to Dún Laoghaire.

Roadblocks, with no clear way around, can also appear in our prayer life. Answers to prayer seem hard to come by. The heavens seem like brass, with our prayers barely rising to the ceiling, to say anything of reaching Heaven. Has God gone deaf? Does He not hear us? Has He ceased to care? There were certainly times in the Old Testament when God’s people thought so: -

*O LORD God of hosts, how long will you be angry with your people's prayers? You have fed them with the bread of tears and given them tears to drink in full measure.* Psalm 80:4-7 ESV

*How long, O LORD? Will you hide yourself forever? How long will your wrath burn like fire?* Psalm 89:46 ESV

We all walk through times of dryness in our prayer life; times when the Lord seems very far away and prayer is difficult. An elderly pastor whose wisdom I highly esteem once said to me, “Sometimes God tests us to see whether we will believe in the dark what we once saw clearly in the light”. If you’ve ever been sitting in a familiar lighted room after dark when there is a sudden power outage and then have tried to stumble your way to the nearest flashlight, you will understand his analogy.

But the scriptures also make clear for us certain “roadblocks” or hindrances to answered prayer that are not merely times of personal dryness. Let’s look at several of them.

*“Behold, the LORD’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, or his ear dull, that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear.”*  
Isaiah 59:1-2 ESV

1. Unconfessed sin can be a definite roadblock to answered prayer. None of God’s saints is perfect, but serious sin patterns that we willfully refuse to deal with can make prayer extremely difficult and cause the Lord to resist our prayers until we come to repentance. It’s one of the ways that He uses to “get our attention”. Let’s frequently ask the Holy Spirit, *“Search me, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me!”* (Psalm 139:23-24 ESV)

*Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honour to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.*  
1 Peter 3:7 ESV

2. Peter here ties loving marriage relationships with the flow of answered prayer. We men in particular are singled out to ensure that we are appropriately cherishing and showing honour to our wives, lest our prayers be hindered. Isn’t it both marvelous and challenging that God refuses to allow us to compartmentalize our lives; our marriage being one area while our prayer life is another. Jesus desires to be Lord over it all!

*For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.* Matt 6:14-15 ESV

3. Unforgiveness is without question one of the most common roadblocks to answered prayer, and given what we in ANiC have walked through in the past five years, it should not surprise us that it is an area of struggle for some of us. In several places in the gospels, Jesus ties directly the Father’s willingness to hear and answer our requests for forgiveness to our willingness to forgive others. In our pain, we sometimes feel that we are making those who have offended us suffer by refusing to forgive them, whereas, in reality, it is we who suffer at so many levels. By harboring resentment and unforgiveness, we run the risk of putting ourselves outside of the healing and liberating grace of God’s forgiveness. Let’s take some significant time in prayer to ask the Lord to show us anyone, no matter how far back in our personal or corporate history they may be, that we have yet to forgive. And may He give us the grace to follow through on His leading to forgive!

*And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.*  
1 John 5:14-15 ESV

4. Not every prayer is prayed from unselfish motives and is “according to his will”. James puts it this way; *“You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.”* (James 4:3 ESV). According to John, “the disciple whom Jesus loved”, the key to answered prayer is having God “hear” our requests, and the key to his hearing us is praying according to His will. That sounds easier to say than to do, doesn’t it? However, the more time we spend in the Word and in quiet solitude, sitting at His feet, the more we will understand His will and share in His compassion for a broken and hurting world.

There are other roadblocks, of course, but I trust that looking at these four will cause us to be more sensitive to the Holy Spirit as He guides us in prayer, and alerts us to places where roadblocks to prayer have established themselves in us. May we not shy away from the loving discipline of the Lord as He shows us “any grievous way” that still lingers! 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 away our sins and covers us in His righteousness.
- That our Abba Father delights in us, in communicating with us, and in 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 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 unconfessed – perhaps even secretly “cherished” – sin in our lives.
- For failing to be persistent in prayer.
- For not upholding each other and bearing one another’s burdens.
- For not encouraging and regularly praying for our church and government leaders and for those in positions of authority and influence.

### **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 pursue holiness and break the yoke of sinful patterns in our lives.
- That we would have a passion for those around us who need our Lord.
- For the ministries of our churches; that we would become intentional in reaching 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 **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 parishes and their application before 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 wisdom for the congregations of St George’s and St Alban’s in Ottawa as they consider a possible settlement 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 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 the orthodox **Primates** in the Anglican Communion – most of whom boycotted the just-concluded Primates Meeting in Dublin – as they prepare for an upcoming gathering of orthodox Anglicans from throughout 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 peaceful implementation of the referendum results – in setting a border with the North, in agreeing on the division of oil revenue, and in the creation of a new government.
- 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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