



Anglican Network in Canada

First Friday of the Month Call to Prayer – March 2009

Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. Psalm 139: 23,24 NIV

Welcome to our March 2009 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 6th**, 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

Our prayer must not be self-centered. . . To make intercession for people is the most powerful and practical way in which we can express our love for them." John Calvin

An Urgent Appeal for Prayer

Due to the heightened legal activity by some ACoC dioceses which could result in serious personal hardship for some of our people, our leadership is asking every ANiC congregation and church plant and all friends of ANiC set to aside **Tuesday, March 10** as a day of prayer and fasting. Pray for the legal challenges that we face, asking, if it is His will, for a dramatic work of God which would free us from these legal concerns so that we can move ahead in spreading the Gospel without further distraction or dissipation of energy and resources. Please plan to gather with others at some time during the day for corporate intercession.

A Lenten Confession

As I write this meditation, it is Ash Wednesday morning – the beginning of the Lenten season. It is a time for all of us, who love and serve our wonderful Lord Jesus, to allow the Holy Spirit to examine us, knowing and testing our hearts to "*point out anything You find in me that makes You sad*" (Psalm 139: 24 LB 1971). The Spirit will indeed gently and lovingly draw to our attention areas of our sin and incompleteness so that we may repent and be set free.

It is in the spirit of this candor and vulnerability that I share with you, dear Intercessors, one of the areas in which the Lord has been deeply convicting me – I struggle with being judgmental. Those of us who carry a burden for intercession frequently are in some degree "prophetic" in temperament. There is a tendency to see things in black and white, right and wrong, and with a good measure of impatience towards those who don't quite "get it".

Let me cite a few fictitious but typical examples of my own folly. We are gathered for prayer on a Tuesday evening and someone begins to pray for a man who is having great difficulty in communicating with his teenage daughter. We've prayed for this family before and not much has changed. I find myself thinking, "Well, of course they have trouble communicating – he's

so controlling and legalistic. What else would you expect!" Then there is the person who prays in King James English and goes on twice as long as anyone else. My reaction? "Well, there she goes again!" along with perhaps some rolling of the eyes. Finally, an elderly person prays fervently for a "liberal" bishop in the Anglican Church of Canada who has been particularly vitriolic in his attacks on ANiC parishes that he will come to repentance and reconciliation. A wonderful thought, but we all know that will never happen. What's the point in praying? He's sunk too far into apostasy.

Sound shocking? Sound familiar? I am ashamed at what goes on in my mind, and I'm asking the Spirit to help me eradicate phrases such as "what else would you expect" and "there he goes again" from my vocabulary. For years, I have excused judgmentalism by feeling that pastorally we need to identify trends or patterns in people if we're going to successfully help them through counseling. Surely, we need to discern and catalogue people's strengths and weaknesses if they are ever to be given positions of service in the life of the parish. Right?? Somehow, though, it just always seems to end up with my locking people in boxes which are very difficult to escape from.

Henri Nouwen, in his little book, Here and Now, deeply challenged me in this area. He writes:

"We spend countless hours making up our minds about others. An unceasing exchange about people close by or far away keeps us distracted and allows us to ignore the truth that we ourselves are the first ones who need a change of heart . . . As long as we continue to live as if we are what we do, what we have, and what other people think of us, we will remain filled with judgments, opinions, evaluations and condemnations. We will remain addicted to the need to put people and things in their 'right' place. **To the degree that we embrace the truth that our identity is not rooted in our success, power, or popularity, but in God's infinite love, to that degree we can let go of our need to judge.**"

A common retort that is used by many people these days when we are feeling criticized or challenged is, "Are you judging me?" There does seem to be a direct connection here between our propensity to judge and our fear of being judged by others. We jostle for favourable positions of acceptance and popularity, even in the church world. Surely the goal for us through prayer must be to become **so secure in the love of God and our identity as the Father's adopted and beloved child** that we will no longer fear the judgment of God or of others and are thereby set free to not judge.

Dear Friends, during this Lent, may I encourage us all to let scriptures like the ones below wash over us and minister to us in new and fresh ways, convincing us ever more deeply of our true identity. And may we be willing to allow the scrutiny of the Holy Spirit to examine our hearts, without reservation and, indeed, without fear of judgment. Amen

*How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!
And that is what we are!*

1 John 3: 1 NIV

This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

1 John 4: 11-13 NIV

For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-

heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.
Romans 8: 15-17 NIV

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Praise God ...

- For His lavish love and that He loved us enough to send His Son to atone for our sins.
- That He through Jesus Christ has made us His children – sons and daughters of the King of Kings.
- That He allows us to share in Christ’s sufferings now – and in His glory for eternity.
- That He loves us passionately and allows nothing that will not serve our ultimate good, even if the enemy means it for evil.
- That He hears and responds to our cries and prayers, when we pray in submission to His will – and answers in His way and in His time.
- That we have an advocate with the Father, Christ Jesus.
- For faithful Anglican bishops, clergy and laity who are taking a stand for the truth of God’s Word within the Anglican Church of Canada and in the Anglican Church in North America.
- For courageous and godly Anglican leaders who persevere in their stand for Christ and His Word despite the high cost of becoming targets for attack.
- For those who have been ordained recently and for other clergy who have joined ANiC.
- For the courage of orthodox Primates who are working together to care for faithful Anglicans in North America – and in other Provinces that have wandered from the Truth.
- For the “new thing” God is working out in global Anglicanism. In the midst of chaos, He is building His Kingdom and refining His bride, the Church.
- For God’s amazing blessing on ANiC and for all He has planned for the months ahead.
- For the congregations of faithful Anglicans He is adding to our number.

Please pray...

- That we would see the ugliness of our sinful behaviours, attitudes and habits.
- That we would chose to think well of others – and pray for them – rather being critical.
- That we would fall deeper in love with Jesus, growing more like our Saviour each day. May we see as Jesus saw, love as He loved, serve as He served, and die to ourselves as He died to Himself.
- For our clergy and church leaders, including Bishops Don Harvey, Malcolm Harding and Ron Ferris, and their families. Pray for spiritual and physical protection and for a daily closer walk with God.
- For those suffering under the attack of the enemy, especially spouses of clergy and leaders. Pray for victory in Christ and physical healing, if that is God’s will.
- For new ANiC congregations as they get organized and take care of all the many practical details – and for emerging congregations considering joining ANiC.
- For those who are preparing for ordination and confirmation. And for parishes going through the discernment process often in hostile dioceses.
- For the emerging Province, the Anglican Church in North America. Pray especially for Archbishop-designate, Bob Duncan, for the Lead Bishops and for all those involved in bringing this new Province to fruition.

- For congregations that have lost their places of worship as well as for those forced to appeal to the courts and possibly facing the loss of their buildings. May they demonstrate love to those who persecute them. Pray especially for the **March 11th court hearing** in Hamilton and for wisdom and clear-sightedness for the judges.
- For a change of heart on the part of the dioceses which are pursuing ANiC parishes in court. May they choose to work with parishes to reach amicable settlements.
- For our partners in the Anglican Church in North America who are uniting to build an orthodox, biblically-faithful Anglican Province – especially the Anglican Coalition in Canada and the Reformed Episcopal Church.
- For Archbishop Gregory Venables (and his wife, Sylvia) who has graciously provided a temporary “home” for ANiC members who no longer have a home in the Anglican Church of Canada due to “serious theological disputes”.
- For the orthodox Primates – including the GAFCon Primates – and bishops who are taking a stand for truth at great personal cost. Pray for spiritual and physical protection and for discernment, grace and strength as they lead in a torn Communion.
- For those who feel called to remain in the Anglican Church of Canada to pray and work for a renewed commitment to Jesus Christ and His inspired Word.
- 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 the recovery of a lively orthodoxy in the Anglican Church of Canada.
- For the leaders of Anglican Essentials Federation, Anglican Essentials Network and the ANiC as they provide leadership and support for orthodox Anglicans in Canada.
- For the Covenant process. May the Lord clearly lead and may His will be done.
- For the Archbishop of Canterbury. May he be fully yielded to God and seek the strength, guidance and discernment he needs to fulfill his responsibilities to the glory of God.
- For suffering Christians around the world in conditions of persecution, war and poverty.
- For those in authority over us in government; for judges in our court system; for officers of the law; for those who serve our country in the military. Pray for wise decisions that honour the Lord and promote the welfare of the citizens.
- That God would revive us and our church and, ultimately, our nation.



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