



# Anglican Network in Canada

## First Friday of the Month Call to Prayer – April 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 April 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, April 1<sup>st</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>"Intercession is truly universal work for the Christian. No place is closed to intercessory prayer. No continent - no nation - no organization - no city - no office. There is no power on earth that can keep intercession out."</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Richard Halverson (1916-1995)</i></p>
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### Principalities, Powers and Plants

When I was about thirteen, my father, the Rev. Canon Leslie Hunt, began working on his doctoral thesis entitled, "Principalities and Powers". It was his intention to explore the apostle Paul's theological understanding of the nature of cosmic evil as revealed in his epistles, particularly Ephesians. During that summer, even when he was with us on vacation at our humble summer cottage in Algonquin Park, he secluded himself in our little guest cabin, and we could hear the incessant tapping sound of an elderly mechanical Underwood typewriter, sometimes well into the night.

As a boy, I know that I resented old Paul and his supposed insights into the demonic realm because they kept Dad from swimming and canoeing with the family as he otherwise would have. But I remembered enough of the conversations he and my mom had about what he had been writing that day to understand that when Satan rebelled against God and was banished from heaven, he brought a host of fallen angels with him to earth whose focused agenda was "*to steal, kill and destroy*" (John 10:10) with Christians individually and the Church corporately being high priority targets. An intense hatred of God and His children was, and is, their prime driving force.

It would seem that these demonic hordes are divided in diverse ranks and companies with various levels of geographic jurisdiction and authority, not unlike an army. When I later read, J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, I wondered whether the author had modeled his loathsome Orcs on this perception of the demonic realm.

Now it is certainly not within the scope of this little monthly prayer meditation to examine this theme to any depth whatsoever. However, it is important for all Christians to recognize the reality of Satan and his minions lest we fall in the trap of believing that all opposition that we experience comes solely from human sources. Let's look at what Paul wrote to the Ephesian church about this:

*For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.* Ephesians 6:12 ESV

Paul has been exhorting the Ephesian church to recognize that they are participants in a battle of cosmic proportions. He has been instructing them in the use of the various pieces of the "Armour of God", using military imagery that would be very familiar to residents within the Roman Empire. But his

primary focus here is that this battle is not against other humans, even though they may be the instruments of persecution and opposition to the Gospel message. No, the real battle is against unseen, supernatural forces – “*the cosmic powers over this present darkness*” – and the mightiest weapon that we have is prayer: “. . . *praying at all times in the Spirit, with **all prayer and supplication**. To that end keep alert with **all perseverance**, making supplication for all the saints.*” Eph. 6:18 ESV

Dear Friends, many of us are involved in new church plants and ministries within ANiC, having taken a purposeful stand for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Whether we are in new facilities or still remain in our church buildings, we are a part of a fresh work of God’s Spirit in our cities and towns. It is naïve of us to suppose that we have not drawn the attention of the enemy. We may be experiencing his attack on our parish members’ health, family, employment, and finances. We need to take a resolute stand in prayer against these attacks, gathering with other believing brothers and sisters and aggressively forbidding these assaults to continue in the mighty Name of Jesus.

Some of us may also be experiencing great difficulty in fruitful evangelism, and we’re sensing a palpable spiritual darkness over our towns and cities. Many experienced intercessors, especially those serving in third world countries, have recounted that, depending on local past history of bloodshed and/or witchcraft and idolatry, ruling spirits can strongly influence the spiritual climate of a neighborhood, city or region. There is an account in the book of Daniel that may shed some light on this observation. Daniel had been experiencing some graphic and disturbing visions concerning “the end of days”, and had been earnestly praying for the interpretation. An angelic being appears to him:-

*Then he said to me, “Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand and humbled yourself before your God, your words have been heard, and I have come because of your words. **The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days**, but Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I was left there with the kings of Persia, and came to make you understand what is to happen to your people in the latter days. For the vision is for days yet to come.”*

Daniel 10:12-14 ESV

One commentator speaks of Daniel’s experience as follows:- “The angelic messenger was delayed on his journey twenty-one days by the prince of the kingdom of Persia, an evil angel associated with the Persian Empire and who resists God’s purposes. **This information showed that the Jews were not simply facing human opposition and enmity at the earthly court of the Persian king but powerful spiritual beings operating in the heavenly realms.** Although this spiritual opponent was powerful enough to delay God’s messenger for a period of three weeks, all he could do was delay him. When Michael, one of the chief princes (angels), came to help him, the angel was finally able to complete his journey and bring the message of encouragement to Daniel.” (ESV Study Bible notes)

So what does all this mean for us? Let me make some suggestions as to how we might proceed to effectively intercede for our parish or church plant against “principalities and powers”:

1. Recognize the true spiritual nature of the battle that we must embrace. Wishing that it were otherwise will not make it different. Denial can be dangerous.
2. Also recognize that we have absolutely no power or authority over satanic forces in our own strength. It is only in the Name of Jesus and through the use of the armour and weapons which He provides that we can hope to prevail. A healthy lesson in this reality is recorded in the experience of the “sons of Sceva”. Check out Acts 19:11-20 to see what I mean.
3. Pray for discernment to identify any activity of spiritual forces in your area. Sometimes doing some research on the history of your region can help with the discernment process. For instance, was there ever a major battle during the Indian wars or War of 1812 near your location that resulted in massive loss of life or recurrent shaman incantations? Was there ever in the history of the building where you are now meeting any occult practices or excessive drug usage in the past – any activity that would give satanic forces legitimate access?
4. As you begin to pray concerning these things, **never** attempt to take on these forces by yourself. Yes, Jesus has won the ultimate victory at the Cross and our foe is defeated, but he is

not without power until he is finally cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:10). So, make sure that you are under the spiritual authority of your rector or pastor, that he/she is fully aware of the nature of your intercession, and pray with at least two or three others to guard against hyper-subjectivity and deception.

5. Proceed cautiously. Let the Holy Spirit guide in these matters. Begin with your own parish or congregation before trying to intercede for your city or region. If the Lord leads you ultimately to do that, seek to join with members of other churches in your region who share in your discernment. There is much prayer power in mobilizing the whole Church of the City, rather than just individual congregations.
6. Avoid over-preoccupation with the enemy and his wiles. We need to be aware of his tactics and vigilant to resist them so that the power of the Gospel can go forth unhindered. But one of those tactics is to get Christians overly focused on him and consumed with fear as to what he might be up to next. Jesus is to be our only focus with our eyes riveted on Him because the Glorious News is that *“He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, (Colossians 1:13 ESV).*

Let us close this discussion with the wonderful words of the apostle Paul in his final statement to the church in Ephesus:-

*Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. **Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.***

Ephesians 6:10-13 ESV

Amen!

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

- That our spiritual foe is defeated. Jesus Christ won the ultimate victory over Satan and his hosts when he willingly submitted to the cross, bearing our sins, and rose triumphant over sin and death.
- For the shed blood of Jesus that washes away our sins and covers us in His righteousness.
- For the privilege of engaging in spiritual battle through prayer and for the spiritual armour that God provides for us so we can engage in this battle.
- That spiritual battles are being won and the Church of Jesus Christ is advancing.
- 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 our churches, for ANiC, and for the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA). For His blessing on us, for how He has led, and for the future He has planned for us.
- 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 our personal failings – that which we have done that we ought not to have done as well as that which we have not done that we ought to have done.
- For failing to persevere in prayer – and, even more, for hardened hearts that do not long to spend time with our Heavenly Father.

- For not upholding each other and bearing one another's burdens.
- For not encouraging and regularly praying for our church, pastors, government leaders and all for those in positions of authority and influence.

### Please pray...

- Against the powers of darkness that might be impeding your church's ministry in your community.
- 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 intentional in reaching our communities – especially during this Lenten and Easter season.
- 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 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 strength and wisdom for the new Presiding Bishop of the Southern Cone, **the Most Reverend Tito Zavala**, in his increased 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 **Anglican1000** and those engaged in **church planting** throughout 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 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 people of **Christchurch, New Zealand** and **Japan** who are struggling to recover from terrible disasters.
- For the people of **North African and Middle Eastern countries** where fighting and political unrest are causing suffering and fear – especially for the persecuted minority Christian populations.
- For the **Sudan** and the peaceful separation of the South from the North – especially for the drawing of the border, agreement on division of oil revenue, and 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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