



Anglican Network in Canada

First Friday of the Month Call to Prayer – May 2009

May the Lord direct your hearts to the love of God and to the steadfastness of Christ.

2 Thessalonians 3:5 ESV

Welcome to our May 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, May 1st**, 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

Prayer is so simple. It is like quietly opening a door and slipping into the very presence of God. There, in the stillness, to listen to His voice, perhaps in petition or only to listen. It matters not. Just to be there in His presence is prayer. ... author unknown

“ . . . that we may perfectly love thee, . . . ”

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The familiar Collect for Purity, quoted above, is without question my favourite collect in the Book of Common Prayer. I find myself using it as a part of my daily devotions, and it frequently brings me to tears when I hear it read at church. It is the eloquent and poignant beginning to the liturgy of Holy Communion, and more and more over recent years, has expressed the deepest cry of my heart. After many decades of both pastoral and intercessory ministry, I have come to the conclusion that there is no more important expression of “ministry” than to learn to love my Lord Jesus more perfectly, just as the collect petitions.

For too long I have kept the Lord at arm’s length, struggling to embrace his love which I am so unworthy to receive, and yet somehow hoping to find some shred of evidence suggesting that perhaps I can add some tiny portion of good works, fervent zeal, or personal righteousness. I am more willing today to admit my own personal bankruptcy and brokenness, my desperate need of His saving love, and my deepest desire is to learn to respond to his love.

The very next portion of the service of Holy Communion is the Summary of the Law, and most frequently we use the words of Jesus, quoting the Old Testament, as He responded to the query as to which was the greatest commandment.

Our Lord Jesus Christ saith: Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with thy strength. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

Satan has effectively and strategically deceived us in the church by causing us to lose sight of the importance of the “first and great commandment” – to love him with our totality, everything that we are and have. We have believed Satan’s lie that this kind of intense and intimate love is likely not possible this side of eternity, or, at best, is only possible for some ultra-spiritual mystics. Accordingly, we’ve busied ourselves doing all sorts of activities in His Name, but perhaps we’ve missed what is most important in the heart of God. Virtually every time I hear the Summary of the Law read in church, I am convicted to the core that I am so far from loving my Lord that way. But now it is becoming the deepest desire of my heart!

As intercessors, we of all the saints need to be challenged in our hearts by the first and great commandment. We come to the Lord in prayer, on behalf of those around us in want, the needs of the Church and a desperate and hurting society around us. We cry out for the lost and ask the Lord to send out workers into the Harvest. We pray for strength for our leaders, healing for the infirm, and justice for the downtrodden. But are we loving Him with all of our being?

The second commandment, that involves our horizontal relationships, follows naturally out of the first. Here’s what I believe the Lord yearns to get through to us: Love him first, with every facet of who we are, and then love those around us in the power of the love he has for us. Let our love for the Lord fuel our intercessions.

In other words, we’re to be lovers of God who serve him; and yet everything in our fallen nature wants to be a servant who *earns* his love and approval by serving faithfully. But God is not eager for servers who love; the Lord longs for lovers who serve – because that is why he created us in the first place

Aren’t we to pray for the fulfilling of the Great Commission? Absolutely! But can we see that the Great Commission flows out of the 2nd commandment, not the first? Being a lover of God is our new identity – who we were meant to be – just as it is his identity to be a lover of the human heart.

As we embrace the monthly prayer focus below, may we do so with a fresh and deepening love in our hearts for the One to whom we pray, responding to his passionate love for us, eager and yearning to spend time in his presence; and may our prayers be bathed in worship and the adoration of all of our heart, and soul, and mind, and strength. Nothing held back; complete abandonment to his love! Amen.

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Praise God ...

- That He loves us just as we are. We can do nothing to make Him love us more – or love us less.
- That He loves us passionately and allows nothing that will not serve our ultimate good – if we respond in faith.
- That He longs for our love.
- That we have an advocate with the Father, Christ Jesus.
- 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.
- For faithful Anglican bishops, clergy and laity who are taking a stand for the truth of God’s Word in the Anglican Church in North America and within the Anglican Church of Canada – even when their stand for Christ and His Word makes them targets for attack.
- 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 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 will learn to desire God above everything.
- That we would fall deeper in love with Jesus, growing more like our Saviour each day.
- That we would see our own brokenness and desperate need of His saving love.
- That we would respond to his passionate love for us, loving Him with our very being.
- That we see as Jesus saw, love as He loved, serve as He served, and die to ourselves as He died to Himself.
- For Bishops Donald Harvey, Malcolm Harding and Ronald 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 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 judge’s decision regarding court costs in the case of the three ANiC parishes which were in court March 11 in Hamilton. May the judge have wisdom and insight.
 - For the three-week court case in Vancouver, BC, beginning **May 25**, involving four ANiC parishes.
 - For the case involving St Aidan’s in Windsor, ON.
- 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 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 support for orthodox Anglicans in Canada.
- 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 emerging Province, the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA).
 - For our partners in ACNA who are uniting to build an orthodox, biblically-faithful Anglican Province – especially our Canadian partners, the Anglican Coalition in Canada and the Reformed Episcopal Church.
 - For Archbishop-designate, Bob Duncan, for the Lead Bishops and for all those involved in bringing this new Province to fruition.
 - For the inaugural Provincial Assembly set for **June 22-25** in Bedford, Texas.
- 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 the Covenant process. May the Lord clearly lead and may His will be done.
- For the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) meeting beginning **May 1** in Jamaica and considering the Covenant, among other things. (The ACC is one of the “instruments of unity” in the Communion – an important body that meets every 2-3 years.)
- For the Archbishop of Canterbury. May he pursue God wholeheartedly and seek the 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, our church and, ultimately, our nation.



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