



First Friday of the Month Call to Prayer – May 2012

*To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever.
Amen.* *1 Timothy 1:17 ESV*

Welcome to our May 2012 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 the first Friday, May 4th, 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;">Prayer Quotes</p> <p>“To make intercession for men is the most powerful and practical way in which we can express our love for them.”</p> <p style="text-align: right;">John Calvin (1509-1564)</p>
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In the Fullness of Time

*But when **the fullness of time** had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.*
Galatians 4:4-5 ESV

Let me ask you a personal question – do you ever get impatient with God and His seeming slowness to answer prayer? Really now, doesn't it feel sometimes like God is taking forever to do something that you've been praying about for years? If you have ever struggled with such thoughts, let me reassure you that you definitely are not alone! Listen to the words of the psalmist David:-

How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I take counsel in my soul and have sorrow in my heart all the day? How long shall my enemy be exalted over me? Psalm 13:1-2 ESV

O LORD God of hosts, how long will you be angry with your people's prayers? Psalm 80:4 ESV

For about seven years, my family and the dear friends who share the property on which our homes reside have been struggling with local bureaucracies to secure condominium status. Because we don't fit into any of their usual categories, we have had to deal with multi-layers of government agencies and the snail-paced progress on this application has at times been maddening. The longer that it takes the more expensive it becomes, and for some of our resident families, the completion of this project has deep financial implications for their future. And so, we have prayed, and prayed fervently for the Lord to expedite our application. But, as of this writing, it is still not completed. It will happen, but not yet. How long, O Lord?

Some of us have been praying for the very salvation of close family members for decades, but as yet we have not seen the fruit of our prayers in their coming to know the Lord Jesus. Others have been seeking the Lord for employment in a difficult and uncertain job market. Christians around the world have been praying fervently for centuries for the Lord's return and the ushering in of His millennial reign. "Maranatha. Come, Lord Jesus!" . . . but, not yet.

So, does this mean that in the greater scheme of things the Lord doesn't really care about our individual circumstances and prayer requests? Are we wasting our time by interceding over and over again for the same people or situations? Absolutely not! Our prayers do matter, and God will answer at just the right moment. But we've got to accept that it will be answered in His timing, not ours!

Our culture is so immersed in instant results that we find waiting painfully difficult. This paradigm for me was perfectly captured in the slogan from a furniture and appliance company's TV advertising campaign of a few years ago – "You can have it all, and you can have it now!" "No payments for 18 months!" The economy of God does not work on that basis. Sometimes His answer to our prayers is "Wait". Sometimes what is in our best interests, even if we can't see it, is the answer "Not Yet".

In the Galatians 4 passage quoted above, St. Paul uses a phrase that carries with it an element of mystery – "in the fullness of time". Much has been written by bible commentators on what this means, but I like what Henri Nouwen, noted author and lecturer, has said about it:

"Jesus came in the fullness of time. He will come again in the fullness of time. Wherever Jesus the Christ is, the time is brought to its fullness."

In some way that our finite minds cannot comprehend, God is not limited by the chronological passing of time like we are. Just try wrapping your mind around what "eternity" really is and you'll see what I mean. We just don't have the tools, or the context, to handle what it means that our God had no beginning and will have no end. We can't fully understand why the Messiah being born in a Bethlehem manger 2000 odd years ago was "the fullness of time", but if God chose it, then it must be absolutely perfect in every respect. St. Paul says that Christ's return will be in exactly the same timing:

*For **at just the right time** Christ will be revealed from heaven by the blessed and only almighty God, the King of all kings and Lord of all lords.*
I Timothy 6:15 NLT

So, what then is God requiring of us in all this? The answer is simply this: Trust and Patience. When we catch a glimpse of the big picture of what the Lord is doing in His redemptive plan for mankind, we will grow in our ability and willingness to trust Him with our smaller, personal issues. Let's turn to David once more, the psalmist who cried out, "How long, O Lord?":

***I waited patiently** for the Lord; he inclined to me and heard my cry. He drew me up from the pit of destruction, out of the miry bog, and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure. He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God. Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the Lord.*
Psalm 40: 1-3 ESV

The key for us as intercessors is to grow in our trust that the Lord is good, knows what He is doing, is in charge of all things, and has our best interests at heart. The psalmist may lament in passionate Middle-Eastern style from time to time about how long answers to prayer are taking, but he is learning to "wait patiently" for the Lord – the One who does all things at just the right time for His purposes to be fulfilled. David doesn't say how long it took for the Lord to hear his cry, but he does give testimony to the Lord's faithfulness to lift him out of the miry bog and set his feet securely upon a rock.

Worship then emanates from the mouth of the psalmist, new songs of praise to our God. And what is the fruit of his experience? Many observers will put their trust in the Lord in a new and deeper way, and that includes us, doesn't it. May we be willing to put our trust in the fact that, in the fullness of time, at just the right moment, our God will answer. Amen.

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Praise God ...

- For the trustworthy nature of God that is completely faithful to fulfill His promises in the fullness of time.
- That we can depend fully and unreservedly on our loving Father for every aspect of our lives.
- For the work God is doing in the life of our diocese and province: cleansing, restoring, transforming, healing and equipping.
- 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 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 times where we have been impatient and have murmured about God’s timing.
- For allowing discouragement and unbelief to seep in to our hearts when prayers are not answered as quickly as we want, and the complacency in prayer that ensues.

Please pray...

- That each of us would recognize our ongoing desperate **need of forgiveness**
- That even in times of prosperity and relative peace, we would be **vigilant in prayer**
- That we would demonstrate our faith in God’s goodness and sovereignty by cultivating **thankfulness** and expressing **praise** in the midst of loss, adversity or injustice.
- That we would have a **passion for souls** – 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 the upcoming electoral synod in Ottawa in November and for God’s clear leading in **the election of a coadjutor bishop**. The coadjutor will succeed ANiC’s moderator Bishop Don Harvey when he retires in June 2014.
- For our **Archdeacons**: the Venerables Ron Corcoran (Vancouver Island), Dan Gifford (BC), Paul Charbonneau (Ontario), Tim Parent (Ottawa Valley), 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 **ANiC congregations** that have lost and are losing their places of worship. May God comfort and pour out His blessing on them. May they be filled with the joy of the Lord as they seek His guidance for new worship facilities.
- For the **Anglican Sojourner Fellowship** as it seeks to connect and encourage isolated Christians who live where there are no biblically faithful Anglican churches.
- For the leaders of the **Anglican Communion Alliance** (formerly Anglican Essentials Federation), as they seek to 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 testimony.

- For strength and wisdom for the Presiding Bishop of the Southern Cone, **the Most Reverend Tito Zavala** and for God's blessing on the **Province of the Southern Cone**.
- That God would continue His work in and through the **Anglican Church in North America**
 - For **Archbishop Bob Duncan** (and wife, Nara), especially for wisdom as he seeks to give Godly leadership through any growing pains our province may encounter
 - For the other ACNA dioceses.
- For **Anglican1000** and those engaged in **church planting** in Canada and throughout ACNA. Pray for courage and strength for ANiC's church planters and for an increase in passionate, trained workers.
- **GAFCon Leaders** – Pray for the Lord's wisdom as global Anglican leaders seek to implement plans following their meeting last month in London, England.
- For growing support of the **Anglican Relief and Development Fund Canada (ARDFC)**. Pray especially for the implementation of the projects which help impoverished women in Peru and Myanmar become set up micro-businesses to support themselves and their children.
- For the **Archbishop of Canterbury**, and the process in selecting his successor. May the Lord grant to His church courageous leadership that will stand firmly for the true Gospel of Christ
- For **suffering Christians** around the world in conditions of persecution, war and poverty – especially those in Muslim and communist countries who face injustice and violence.
- For God's protection of **Israel** as it is surrounded by those who seek its destruction.
- For peace in **Sudan** and in **South Sudan**.
- For **those in authority** over us and those 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 & emergency response personnel** who risk their lives for us.
 - For those who selflessly serve our country in the **military** as well as for their families at home.



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