



Anglican Network in Canada

First Friday of the Month Call to Prayer May 2016

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 May 2016 First Friday Call to Prayer. Our aim is to provide you with teaching that we trust 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.

We encourage you to set aside **the first Friday, May 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

"Prayer is beyond any question the highest activity of the human soul. Man is at his greatest and highest when upon his knees he comes face to face with God."

D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones 1899-1981

“SO DON’T BE AFRAID, LITTLE FLOCK”

A number of years ago, I attended a conference where I was exposed for the first time to a phrase that resonated strongly with me. The phrase was “the culture of fear”. The speaker went on to comment about how fear has spread pervasively throughout our society. As an intercessor, this concept caused me deep concern as I began to ponder its veracity.

Since the horrific events of September 11th, 2001, our North American society has been deeply influenced by a media-driven culture built around growing apprehension and alarm. Think of the news items with which we are constantly bombarded that concern the latest studies showing threats to our health, home invasions, child abductions, plunging stock markets, soaring or plummeting oil prices, terrorist plots and attacks now in Europe, atrocities in the Middle East, and murders down the street. Sales of home alarm systems are growing rapidly. Parents are afraid to let their children play outside or walk half a block to school.

One cannot have followed with any detail the unfolding presidential election process in the U.S. over the past months and not see the culture of fear at work – let’s build huge walls around our country, let’s restrict immigration on the basis of religion to protect ourselves from terrorist attacks, let’s all carry guns in case something happens in our own neighbourhood, etc.

It could be argued that many of these things have always been with us. Perhaps that’s true, but we are flooded with images, stats, and on-site reports through radio, TV, newspapers and the Internet in a totally unprecedented way. Short of becoming a hermit, there really is no escape. When I was a child, most radio or TV newscasts were 10 – 15 minutes maximum. Now we have channels and websites that provide news exclusively 24/7, many of which are in competition with each other and they will use graphic images and shocking headlines to capture our ever increasingly desensitized attention. Even standing in line at the bank, giant LCD screens pump out headline news, stock market results, and, if you live east of the Rockies, the latest winter storm warning

This atmosphere of anxiety even seeps into the Church, especially given the crisis we have been facing over the past number of years in the Anglican world. For example:

*“If we adamantly state on our website that Jesus is the **only** way to salvation, will we be charged with ‘hate’ crimes?”*

“Our numbers are dwindling. We don’t have much money. What if we have to close the doors?”

“If I tell someone I don’t agree with same-sex blessings, will they hate me, or think I’m homophobic?”

“If we take a stand against assisted suicide or abortion, will the government remove our charitable status?”

The list could, and does, go on. So how do we combat this attitude in prayer? Is this an unfortunate reality of the times that we must simply get used to? As intercessors for the Church, once we've discerned this malaise, is there something that we can do? I believe the answer is an emphatic, "Yes!"

In one of the Apostle Paul's exhortation to the young church in Corinth on spiritual warfare, he uses military terminology to describe this phenomenon in individuals or social groupings. Look at his usage of the term "stronghold" in the scripture below: -

"For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ."
2 Corinthians 10:3-5 ESV

A stronghold, in this sense, is any negative thought pattern that has taken control or has extraordinary and unwarranted influence on our life, our family, our church or society. Paul suggests that this kind of stronghold is built in our minds, and needs to be torn down - *we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ*. Concerted prayer is the greatest weapon that we have against such strongholds!

Is there an antidote to this poison of the mind? Is there a way that we can begin to dismantle this stronghold? Let's look at a scripture passage from John's first epistle:-

"So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love."
1 John 4:16-18 ESV

The place to begin is with ourselves. John makes it clear that the way to freedom from fear is to embrace God's perfect love and allow Him to drive fear from our thinking. Now that sounds simple enough, doesn't it . . . almost overly simplistic. We all know that God loves us, right? But if this Divine Love is to demolish strongholds, then we need to have more than just a theology of God's love, we need an ongoing experience of God's love.

Let me share a personal experience with you. Several years ago, our youth pastor invited a worship band from another church to come and do an evening of praise and worship with our youth. The band sang mostly their own compositions, none of which I knew, but I was standing at the back of our auditorium seeking to enter into the worship. One of the songs had a chorus that included the phrase, "I will always let you love me, Lord". They sang it over enough times that I was picking it up, and I heard myself singing this phrase over and over; "I will always let you love me, Lord; I will always let you love me, Lord".

Suddenly, I felt the Lord speak to my heart, "No, you don't, Garth. You keep me at arm's length. You're afraid to really let Me love you."

I began to weep in repentance, because I knew that He was right. If we ever really let the Lord pour His love into us; if we ever were totally convinced that loving us is His joy and delight, not something we somehow earn by doing good stuff or not doing bad stuff, the stronghold of fear would begin to crumble. We would be filled with an overwhelming joy in knowing we are truly loved that would be revolutionary!

There is no room for fear in the church. As you pray for your clergy, your bishop, your lay leaders and your parish, ask the Holy Spirit to bring to them a fresh and deeper revelation of the love of God than they have ever had. This new freedom can only come by revelation, not by mere head knowledge. Pray for them on a daily basis, "**There is no fear in love. Perfect love drives out fear**". May we see the culture of fear in the church banished and replaced by joy-filled, courageous leadership and parishioners who experience the love of God in an undeniable way, and who allow that love to vanquish any stronghold. Amen.

Praise God ...

- 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. Especially we praise the Lord for the continuing faithful witness by the GAFCON primates.

Please pray...

- That God would reveal to us the depth of His love and that His perfect love would cast out our fears.
- For **“God's Word Written”**, a conference designed to grow in Christian leaders a deep confidence in the Bible and a clear understanding of what the Bible teaches about itself as God's word written. This is a very important gathering for ANiC as it fits strategically into our 5 ministry priorities under “Biblically Grounded”. The conference is being held in Vancouver, June 14 – 16. Pray that all who God is calling to attend will heed the call; pray that the necessary finances would be provided for those who might find the travel costs difficult, and pray that God will have his hand mightily upon all aspect of the conference. (For more info on the conference, click [here](#).)
- For our primate **Archbishop Foley Beach** (& Allison) - Pray for great wisdom, discernment, courage and strength as he gives leadership to ACNA in the days and months ahead.
- For **Bishop Charlie Masters** (& Judy) – Pray for our diocesan bishop as he leads ANiC. May God give him wisdom and vision for what the outcome of the primates’ meetings means for ANiC. Pray also for spiritual protection, and spiritual and physical renewal.
- For **Bishop Don Harvey** (& Trudy) – Pray for Bishop Don in his roles as ANiC’s episcopal vicar and senior chaplain to the ACNA College of Bishops.
- For **ANiC’s suffragan bishops**: Stephen Leung (& Nona) and Trevor Walters (& Dede). Pray for discernment, energy and grace as they care for their clergy and congregations. Also pray for Bishops Ron Ferris (church planting in Langley, BC) and Malcolm Harding (retired in Brandon, MB).
- For our **Archdeacons**: the Venerables Ron Corcoran (Vancouver Island), Dan Gifford (BC), Bruce Chamberlayne (Alberta & BC Interior), Paul Charbonneau (Ontario), Tim Parent (Ottawa Valley), Paul Crossland (Prairies), Michael McKinnon (New England, USA), and Darrell Critch (Atlantic Region & Quebec) – and our Dean of Multicultural Ministries, the Very Rev Dr Archie Pell.
- For **a major awakening**, a sovereign move of God in our churches and across our nations like has not been seen in our lifetimes. **Rise Up, O God** we pray. Intervene, O Lord, in the midst of our decaying culture and society! Raise up **an army of intercessors** who will call out to you for a mighty visitation of your power and presence!
- For all **ANiC clergy** and families, especially those experiencing spiritual and physical attack.
- For the **Anglican Relief and Development Fund Canada** (ARDFC) as it raises funds for farming tools, seeds, goats and agricultural training to address malnutrition and extreme poverty in 3 villages in Burundi - as well as for emergency aid appeals for Syrian Refugees, Myanmar flood relief, and earthquake relief in Nepal.
- For the **Canadian federal government** as it considers the question of assisted suicide. Pray that the voices speaking on behalf of Life rather than death will be heard, voices such as the palliative care doctors.. Pray for legislation that is pleasing to God and a blessing to our nation.
- For **Canon Andrew White** and his ministry team in the Middle East. Pray for continued courage, safety and the provision of basic needs for them and the people that they serve.
- For **those who serve us and are in authority over us** – our police forces, our armed forces, our emergency responders, our municipal elected officials, our provincial MLAs, MPPs and premiers, and our federal MPs and Prime Minister.
- For **God’s wisdom for world’s leaders** with regard to the Ukraine, Syria, Iraq and European nations reeling from terrorist attacks. Pray for the hundreds of thousands of refugees who are seeking safety and asylum in Europe and here in Canada. Pray for those churches and

communities that are welcoming refugees that they may be a witness to God's compassionate care, both by what they say and do.

- Pray for **protection of innocent civilians** – adults and children – who so often are the victims in today's warfare. Pray especially for the many Middle Eastern and African Christians who are brutally persecuted for their refusal to renounce their faith in Jesus.