



## First Friday of the Month Call to Prayer June 2015

*Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit.* 1 Thessalonians 5:16-19 ESV

Welcome to our June 2015 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.

We encourage you to set aside **the first Friday, June 5<sup>th</sup>**, 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

*“To fail to pray is not to merely break some religious rule—it is a failure to treat God as God.”*

Timothy Keller,  
pastor of Redeemer Presbyterian Church, NYC

## A Pentecost Prayer

Dear Friends, by the time you are reading this, we will have recently celebrated Pentecost Sunday in our churches across the land and around the world. Depending on varying theological emphases and worship styles, services on this day will have taken many different expressions, and the sermons will have had a vast range of themes and scriptural interpretations. Unlike Christmas and Easter, this festival of the church seems to present thorny issues for some.

As “a cradle Anglican”, growing up in a Bible-believing, evangelical Anglican church in west Toronto where my dad was the rector, we called this Whitsunday in the British tradition, and it seemed to be much more about the birthday of the Church than it did about the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as a fulfillment of the prophecy in Joel, chapter 2. It was the beginning of something two thousand years ago, but with little or no relevance to the spiritual life of the average person in the pews. It certainly did not seem to celebrate the incredible gift of the third member of the Trinity, sent to dwell within every believer in Jesus to empower and embolden us for witness, and to enable us to live supernaturally in obedience to all that Jesus has commanded!

Now it is neither my intention nor desire to be controversial in this article. I am neither qualified nor authorized to prescribe a theology of the Holy Spirit that solves all the controversies and curbs the excesses. But because of the controversies over such issues as “when exactly do we receive the Holy Spirit as believers?” or “is speaking in tongues really for today’s church?” it seems that we often relegate the Spirit to a safe place where he is tidily stored in our Trinitarian theology but is rarely heard from or experienced. Sometimes, I feel like we are still in the upper room, obediently awaiting the coming of the promised Comforter. We’ve met the Risen Lord; we are washed in the blood of the Lamb for the forgiveness of sins, but there is very little of the promised “power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you.” (Acts 1:8) to impact our God-less culture and to see our lives becoming gloriously more victorious over sin. Aren’t we missing something of great importance?

Let me say this again because the implications of this statement are absolutely staggering. Think of it: we have been given the gift of the actual third member of the Trinity – equal in power and majesty and glory to the Father and the Son – to come and live within us so that, as Paul says, we can “be filled with the Spirit!” (Eph. 5:18) It is the crowning achievement of the finished work of Jesus on the cross. God and his people can live together once more in intimacy and great blessing!

This Gift we have been given is none other than God himself in action in the earth and in our lives. He is the member of the Trinity that we experience in our time and space world. He is the One who opens our eyes to understand Scripture and brings it alive as we read. He is the One we sense at those times when the presence of God is palpably real. He is the One who guides our prayers and even intercedes through us. He is the down payment, the guarantee of our salvation and of a glorious eternity spent in the presence of Almighty God.

At creation, the Spirit was present and active, “hovering” or “brooding” over the face of the waters. Throughout the entire Old Testament, we see the Spirit inspiring and directing God’s holy leaders. He was very much involved in God’s redemptive plan for the world in Jesus; Jesus was *conceived* by the Spirit, *anointed* by the Spirit at His baptism, *led* by the Spirit into the wilderness, and *raised from the dead* by the Spirit. This is the One who lives within us!

I am aware that as I have meditated and, indeed, wrestled with this amazing truth recently, I’m still only seeing the smallest part of what it means, but I’ve tasted enough to be spoiled for anything else. We cannot look at the post-Pentecost lives of the early apostles as compared to pre-Pentecost without seeing spectacular transformations. Even after personally witnessing the glorious Risen Christ, they were instructed to “wait for the promise of the Father”. The life they were to live and the testimony that they were to share could never be achieved by human zeal or passionate enthusiasm. Even at this point in their experience with Jesus, it was quite beyond them. They needed the gift of the third Member of the Trinity!

Paul knew this to be true for all Christians, not just the apostles, and he summed it up in writing to the young Christians in Ephesus:

*Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, **but be filled with the Spirit.*** Ephesians 5:15-18 ESV

Aside from the Spirit, all we have to offer are our best but flawed human efforts. But we have God Himself, in the form of the Holy Spirit, living within us, empowering our ability to obey God’s Word, making us fruitful so that we’re more like Jesus, making impossible things possible! In other words, a Spirit-filled life!

So, as intercessors, what should our response be to this fresh revelation? What should a Pentecost prayer look like? Perhaps, something like this:

*O Heavenly Father, if we are brutally honest, we are so dreadfully tired of trying harder. We desperately need you to open our eyes to the beauty and power of a Spirit-filled life. Forgive us for neglecting the blessed Holy Spirit in our lives. Forgive us for our mistrust of the Spirit in our worship services where we have been afraid that He might do something inappropriate. Forgive us for our presumption that we can build your Church while keeping your Spirit at arm’s length.*

*In this season of Pentecost, reawaken our awareness of who the Spirit is, both in our personal lives and the life of our Church. Cause the parishes of ANiC with one accord to recognize our desperate need for the Spirit’s supernatural power to live as “more than conquerors” over temptation and sin, and to radicalize our witness and testimony to a world that at best finds us boring and irrelevant. Pour out the Spirit’s fire upon us, the fire that ignited the apostles to turn the Roman Empire upside down. Bring the revival across our nations that we have been asking for in these recent months. And, above all else, may we never settle for anything less than all of the resources and benefits gained for us by our Saviour’s passion upon the Cross. In his Mighty Name, we ask these things. Amen!*

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### Thoughts on Revival Prayer – The Five Priorities

Bishop Charlie Masters' cross-Canada tour is now completed. Visiting every region where there are currently ANiC parishes has been the Bishop's means of introducing his Five Ministry Priorities to our congregations, priorities which he first presented to ANiC Synod in November 2014. His heartfelt desire is that we would "pray that God will make these five priorities **a transformational reality** in the life of every ANiC congregation."

In order to keep them prayerfully before us, we will feature one of the five priorities each month in this box as a visual reminder to pray fervently for these urgent concerns. Over recent months, we have shared the first two. Here is our prayer for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Priority:

#### 3. LOVING CHILDREN INTO THE KINGDOM

*"Jesus is calling all of us to be childlike and humble in our awareness of our desperate need for a Saviour and to put our simple trust in him. But he is also making it clear that children have the inside track in terms of these qualities and are not to be held away at the very time when they are the most receptive and ready to receive."*

+Charlie's 2014 Charge to Synod

Heavenly Father, we see in the actions of Jesus your passionate love of children and your deep desire for them to come into the Kingdom, even at an early age. We pray for a mighty, sovereign work of your Spirit among the children that you have given into our sphere of influence – our own sons and daughters, grandchildren, neighbourhood kids. Prosper the children's ministries already flourishing in our ANiC churches, and raise up many more, so that the children of our cities and towns may have the opportunity to know your love and saving grace. In Jesus' Name. Amen.



#### Praise God ...

- **That He reigns supreme.** Despite the chaos and evil in the world, God is working out His purposes for His glory and our good!
- **That He has not left us on our own,** but has sent us the Gift of the Holy Spirit, the third Member of the Holy Trinity, to reside within and empower each and every believer in Christ Jesus.
- **That He delights to spend time with us** as parents delight to be around their children.
- For the **incredible gift** that God has given us in prayer – immediate access to our Father at any time of day or night. Thank Him for the incredible privilege of participating with him through prayer in his grand redemption plan.
- 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...

- **our neglect of the Holy Spirit** in our lives.
- **our mistrust of the Spirit** in our worship services where we have been afraid that He might do something inappropriate.
- **our presumption** that we can build your Church while keeping your Spirit at arm's length.

#### Please pray...

- 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 our primate **Archbishop Foley Beach** (& Allison) - Pray for great wisdom, courage and strength as he gives leadership to our province. May God glorify Himself through the ACNA.

- For **Bishop Charlie Masters** (& Judy) – Pray for our diocesan bishop as he leads ANiC. May God grant him vision, 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 also 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 all **ANiC clergy** and families, especially those experiencing spiritual and physical attack.
- For the **ANiC congregations** that have lost their places of worship and are meeting in temporary facilities. May God comfort and pour out His blessing on them, giving them solid hope for the future.
- For the **Anglican Relief and Development Fund Canada** (ARDFC) as it raises funds for drilling water wells in South Sudan as well as for emergency aid for earthquake relief in Nepal.
- For **Canon Andrew White** and his ministry team in the Middle East. Pray for 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 other troubled nations. Pray that the evil one’s agenda for violence, hatred and bloodshed would be averted.
- 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 East and African Christians who are brutally persecuted for their refusal to renounce their faith in Jesus.