



Anglican Network in Canada

First Friday of the Month Call to Prayer – September 2012

"I love the LORD because he hears my voice and my prayer for mercy. Because he bends down to listen, I will pray as long as I have breath!"
Psalm 116:1-2 NLT

Welcome to our September 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, September 7th, 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><i>"The one concern of the devil is to keep Christians from praying. He fears nothing from prayerless studies, prayerless work and prayerless religion. He laughs at our toil, mocks at our wisdom, but he trembles when we pray."</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Samuel Chadwick (1860-1932)</i></p>
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"LORD, TEACH US TO PRAY"

I really love the Gospel of Luke. Here we have a well-educated believer and a missionary companion of the apostle Paul who was not a part of the original apostolic band which witnessed firsthand the astounding events of Jesus' ministry, death and resurrection. According to his own words, he has carefully researched those events in order to document them, and he includes some wonderfully poignant moments that the other gospel writers omit, such as the visitation of the angels to the shepherds at Jesus' birth, the presentation of infant Jesus at the temple with Simeon and Anna, and the one glimpse that we have of his childhood when he was twelve. He also documents the tender words of Jesus to the penitent robber who is being crucified beside him.

In all of Luke's writings, there is an emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit and the importance of prayer in the life of the Christian. It is in this light that we will look at Luke's account of Jesus' teaching on prayer.

Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples."
Luke 11: 1 ESV

Note that Jesus taught both in words and by example. The disciples saw him frequently withdraw to pray, and were no doubt curious about how he prayed. They said familiar prayers at the synagogue, and apparently John the Baptist had taught his disciples to pray in a specific manner that was different from the normal Jewish tradition. Consequently, they asked Jesus to teach them how to pray his way.

And he said to them, "When you pray, say: 'Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation.'"
Luke 11: 2-4 ESV

Jesus begins his teaching on prayer with the very familiar words of the Lord's Prayer, and then moves in to tell a story that illustrates the fundamental theme of this discourse and others on prayer. Luke captures this theme in a later section where Jesus tells the story of the Persistent Widow:-

*And he told them a parable to the effect that **they ought always to pray and not lose heart.***

Luke 18: 1 ESV

This phrase, “lose heart” is only found in Luke’s Gospel and it is as applicable to us as it was to the early disciples. Look at the story that Jesus tells to demonstrate the importance of persistent prayer.

And he said to them, “Which of you who has a friend will go to him at midnight and say to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves, for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him’; and he will answer from within, ‘Do not bother me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything’? I tell you, though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his impudence (shameless persistence and insistence - Amplified Bible) he will rise and give him whatever he needs. Luke 11: 5-8 ESV

Jesus is not comparing our loving Father with a reluctant man who is too cranky to get out of bed to meet his friend’s needs. He is saying, “Look, if even a grouchy person like this will get up and do as he has been asked because of the willingness of the asker to persist, how much more will our Father who is predisposed to graciously care for us answer our requests? He then goes on to emphasize his point even further:

*And I tell you, **ask**, and it will be given to you; **seek**, and you will find; **knock**, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened.* Luke 11: 9-10 ESV

The tense of these highlighted verbs in Greek suggests that this verse might be better rendered by the following from the Amplified Bible: -

*So I say to you, Ask and **keep on asking** and it shall be given you; seek and **keep on seeking** and you shall find; knock and **keep on knocking** and the door shall be opened to you. For everyone who asks and keeps on asking receives; and he who seeks and keeps on seeking finds; and to him who knocks and keeps on knocking, the door shall be opened.* Luke 11: 9-10 AMP

Do you see what Jesus is after here in his disciples (and us)? Can you hear his deep desire that they would always pray and not lose heart? God is not deaf that he didn’t hear us the first time. But he is after, as always, the building of our character, desiring to make us daily more like Jesus (Romans 8:28-29) and so he does not always answer on our first request. How serious are we? How committed to the circumstance of our prayer are we? How important is it to us? What are we willing to sacrifice in order to take the time to pray? It’s not a matter of impressing God with our long or loud praying, but it is about pressing in to the heart of God and sharing with him those things that matter, for he is the one who has laid them on our hearts in the first place.

Jesus closes this discourse on prayer with a beautiful picture of two loving fathers, one human and one divine:

What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!” Luke 11: 11-13 ESV

Jesus appeals to the parent in us by saying in effect, “If you in your frail, fallen humanity understand how to care for your sons and daughters in a loving, gracious way, how much more do you think our Heavenly Father will give us wonderful blessings, including the gift of the Holy Spirit himself, if we will only ask”. He is not promising us a “carte blanche” or automatic answers to our every whim. But he is saying, “Bring me your burdens, your cares and anxieties, your loved ones, your finances, your future. Don’t give up, for I will not give you a snake or a scorpion. I will give you that which I know is in your best eternal interests. Trust me, for I am trustworthy”. Amen!

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Praise God ...

- For the wonderful words and stories of Jesus that encourage us over and over to be consistent and persistent in prayer.
- That he is completely aware of the weaknesses of our flesh that would give in to discouragement and the losing of heart. Thank Him for the inestimable resources that we have in the Holy Spirit.
- 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...

- The times that we have indeed lost heart and given into discouragement.
- Our believing the devil’s lie that God is not good and doesn’t really have our best interests at heart.

Please pray...

- That each one of us would recognize our ongoing **desperate need of the Lord** in every aspect of our lives.
- 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 **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 July 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 adjusting to our diocese – as well as for others considering joining ANiC.
- 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. May they be filled with the joy of the Lord as they seek His guidance for more permanent 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 more passionate, trained workers.
- **GAFCon Primates and Fellowship of Confessing Anglican (FCA) leaders** – Pray for the Lord's courage and wisdom as they seek to guide the orthodox reformation and realignment that is taking place throughout the Anglican Communion. Pray for the planning of the global gathering next May.
- 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 to set up micro-businesses to support themselves and their children.
- For the **Archbishop of Canterbury**, and the process of 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 and stability in **Egypt**.
- For an end to the escalating violence and bloodshed in **Syria**.
- For a lasting peace in **Sudan** and in **South Sudan**.
- For those in the **Caribbean** and the **US** who have suffered loss and hardship from Hurricane Isaac.
- 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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