



Anglican Network in Canada

PREPARATION IN PRAYER FOR OUR 2009 SYNOD AND CONSECRATION OF BISHOPS NOVEMBER 1 – 13

Dear ANiC Member;

As we observed leading up to our first synod last fall, so much has transpired in our shared life together since All Saints Day a year ago! Despite ongoing legal disputes over church properties, the Anglican Network in Canada has continued to expand with new parishes and church plants regularly applying. A third bishop, Ron Ferris, has come out of retirement to join Bishops Don Harvey and Malcolm Harding to extend further episcopal care and oversight.

We have seen the astounding formation of the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA), a non-geographical Anglican province – of which ANiC is now a diocese – that draws together many expressions of orthodox Anglicanism on the continent. Truly this new province is a dynamic example of a world-wide reformation in the Anglican Communion, and the good news of Jesus Christ is being proclaimed with renewed passion and power.

And so we come to our second National Synod, November 11th to 13th in the Niagara area of southern Ontario, which concludes with our first-ever consecration of three new bishops. Whether you are a delegate to synod or not, we ask you to take this prayer preparation to heart and make a commitment to uphold synod and the consecration in prayer on a daily basis. May the Lord grant great wisdom and vision to those giving leadership to these two significant events.

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Daily Meditation and Prayer

You will find below a brief meditation for each day, beginning with All Saints Day, November 1st, and continuing through until November 13th, the final day of our 2009 synod. Bishop Don has given us as a theme scripture for these strategic days, ***“My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness”*** – II Corinthians 12:9. Accordingly, we will be drawing all our daily scriptures for meditation from this most personal of St. Paul’s epistles. May the Word of God provide both encouragement and challenge to us as we prayerfully uphold synod and the consecration before the Lord.

We also commend to you for daily use the prayer items listed in the November ANiC Prayer Calendar.

November 1 – All Saints’ Day

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For as we share abundantly in Christ’s sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too.”
II Corinthians 1:3-5 ESV

On this All Saints Day, we are reminded of those who have gone before us in the faith, and the trials that they faced. As we read the stories of their lives, we cannot escape the fact that they often experienced much suffering, persecution, hardship, and in some case martyrdom. As we walk through difficult days of sacrifice, broken fellowship, and being frequently misunderstood, we can draw comfort from this steadfast faithfulness, and joy-filled attitude, even in the face of death. As St. Paul shares, we too can be the conduit of God's comfort for some who are just beginning their journey with ANiC, and who perhaps are carrying significant pain as a result of their decision to remain faithful to the Gospel.

Almighty God, Father of all mercies and God of all comfort, we give you great thanks for the faithful men and women who throughout the ages have remained true to the Gospel message. We thank you for the comfort that we can draw from observing the way that they embraced their hardship. May we be willing to remain steadfast in our faith, fervent in our love for you, and compassionate towards those in need of comfort and encouragement, in the Name of Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen

November 2

"But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere. For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life."

II Corinthians 2: 14-16 ESV

Have you ever considered the fact that as Christians there is an aroma to our lives? It is the fragrance of knowing and loving Jesus, the aroma of having spent time in his presence. When we depart from the glorious consecration of bishops on the last day of synod, or even when we leave after a normal Sunday morning service, there should be a conspicuous scent in the spiritual atmosphere that is detectable to both believers and unbelievers alike. Not all will be keen on the aroma, St. Paul adds. To the "perishing" it is perhaps a stench because it brings conviction and challenges their lifestyle choices. Just as some hated Jesus, so it is inevitable that some will react to our "aroma", but as "Christ always leads us in triumphal procession", let us seek to be like him in all ways so that it is not the aroma of our sin that they detect.

Heavenly Father, whose Son Jesus always leads us in triumphal procession, may the aroma flowing out of our synod, our churches and our lives be one of true acceptance and compassion toward all those that we encounter and may the decisions that are made at synod be filled with the fragrance of your holiness and your glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

November 3

"Such is the confidence that we have through Christ toward God. Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God, who made us competent to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life."

II Corinthians 3: 4-6 ESV

One of the hallmarks of true spiritual renewal is the humility of its leadership. Having been a part of the Anglican orthodox movement for more than six years, I have observed this quality over and over again in our leaders in ANiC, in the new archbishop of our North American province, and among the GAFCon primates in the global south. They have visibly demonstrated their awareness of St. Paul's profession where he asserts, in essence, "There is no sufficiency, no competency that lies within us to be ministers of the New Covenant. Our competency comes only from God. We are desperate in our need of him". May we as God's people cherish this quality in our leaders, and pray fervently for them and for the next wave of

leaders which follows, praying that humility and absolute dependency on God will always remain at the core of their leadership.

O Lord, we are so grateful for the humility that we observe in those you have given to lead us. And yet at any point it would be so easy in our fallenness to presume to take over the reins and try to guide our church in human strength. May humility and dependency on you always characterize those who lead our church. Amen.

November 4

“Since we have such a hope, we are very bold, not like Moses who would put a veil over his face so that the Israelites might not gaze at the outcome of what was being brought to an end. But their minds were hardened. For to this day, when they read the old covenant, the same veil remains unlifted because only through Christ is it taken away. Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts. But when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is a freedom. And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another.”

II Corinthians 3: 12- 18 ESV

The glory of God reflected on the face of Moses was radiant when he descended from the mountain after his encounter with Yahweh. But it soon began to fade and he veiled his face so that the Israelites wouldn't notice it and rebel against him yet again. It was the way things transpired under the old covenant – various encounters with the living God, some more dramatic and profound than others. Hardened hearts and minds are also veiled because only through Christ is that veil lifted so that we can see the truth of his kingdom. Under the new covenant, however, we have the Spirit of God dwelling within us, and as we gaze with unveiled faces at his glorious majesty in adoration and awe, we are being transformed into the very same image, the image of Jesus. How incredible! What an amazing gift we have been given!

Holy and glorious God, you have given us through the indwelling presence of your Holy Spirit, the radiance of your glory as he changes us to be more and more like Jesus Christ our Lord. It is a radiance that does not fade. May all those attending our synod and consecration recognize that radiance in one another and comprehend the incredible privilege we have been given in having the Holy Spirit resident within us. Thank you, Father. Amen

November 5

“Therefore, having this ministry by the mercy of God, we do not lose heart. But we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways. We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God's word, but by the open statement of the truth, we would commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God.”

II Corinthians 4: 1-2 ESV

Two days ago, we saw that St. Paul's (and, by implication, our) competence in ministry is based solely on his dependence on the mercies of God. In today's verses, he makes it abundantly clear that cunning styles of persuasion or tampering with the veracity of scripture to make it more palatable and relevant to a hostile, pagan society is disgraceful and should be renounced. Much of our struggle with the liberal expression of Anglicanism has been over this very issue. May we guard ourselves, though, from any form of pride or spiritual smugness, and be vigilant to ensure that “tampering with God's word” never creeps into our ministry.

Father, we thank you that because of your mercy we need never lose heart. We thank you also for the faithful leaders who have gone before us and who have been great examples to us in their faithful

preaching of the true Gospel of Jesus Christ. Guard us, we pray, from the temptation to water down your standards or tamper with your truth in any way. In Jesus' Name, we pray. Amen

November 6

"We have this treasure in jars of clay to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies."
II Corinthians 4: 7-10 ESV

"This treasure in jars of clay" is another image that St. Paul uses to describe the same message of God's surpassing power and our human frailty. Throughout this epistle, he strives to help the Corinthian church see that it's not about super heroes in the faith doing mighty exploits for God, but about simple believers like you and me seeking to be obedient to Jesus and desperately dependent on the Holy Spirit to accomplish anything of lasting value. He also continues the story of all that he has been through, without losing heart, so that we may be comforted in the midst of our own trials and hardships.

O Lord, who has made the heavens and the earth out of nothing, and who has given us the gift of your Holy Spirit to empower ministry to a lost and hurting world, we confess before the seen and unseen realms, that Jesus is Lord over all, and that we are merely jars of clay, frail humanity indwelt by the living God, and filled with joy, gratitude and love. We trust you with our circumstances, however difficult that may seem. Thank, you, Lord that you are good and utterly trustworthy. May your presence guide and direct our worship and decision-making – at synod, in our churches and in our lives. Amen

November 7

"For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.."
II Corinthians 5: 14-15 NKJV

What does it mean that "the love of Christ *compels* us? Some biblical translations render this word "controls", and there is a sense of that in the text. However, *compels* is a word that to me connotes "being carried along by an irresistible force", but not here in a negative sense. Christ's love for us was so immense that not only did He pay the penalty for our grievous sin, but He also carried us with Him to death on the cross so that we might be free from our old nature – "buried with Him in baptism" (Romans 6). It's so astounding, and life transforming that we just can do no other than to share this news with everyone we know.

Heavenly Father, may the ever-unfolding revelation of what Jesus has accomplished for us on the cross deepen both our awe and passion to share the Good News, compelled by the love that Jesus has for all of us. Give us a renewed heart for the lost, both individually and corporately, that we may see many come to faith in Jesus over the course of the next year. Grant us this, we pray, in the mighty Name of Jesus. Amen

November 8 – The International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church

"So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal."
II Corinthians 4: 16-18 ESV

St. Paul gives us a potent reality check in today's verses. Am I losing heart? Has it all got just too difficult? Has that dark inner voice that says, "Just quit. You've done your bit. Let someone else carry the ball for a while." become too compelling to keep resisting? St. Paul is able to call all his hardships "light momentary affliction" because he is looking past them to something much more real – eternal glory that is beyond anything to which we could compare it! He is looking not at the transient things that we perceive with our senses, but at the unseen things that are eternal. As we prayerfully prepare for synod, and pray in solidarity today for Christians who are being persecuted around the world, we must seek a fresh infilling of the Spirit of Grace to look at the eternal, not the temporal.

Lord, sometimes your Word cuts so deeply into our hearts. Search us by your Spirit, and reveal to us any areas of our life and ministry where we have been overly influenced by the temporal and lost sight of the eternal. Forgive us, Lord; we repent of our spiritual "short-sightedness" and for the inappropriate decisions that we have made as a result. Wash us clean, and renew our vision to focus on that which is eternal. Grant strength, courage and the grace to see the eternal weight of glory to all who today are being persecuted and harassed for their faith, through Jesus Christ our only Advocate and Mediator. Amen.

November 9

"From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come."

II Corinthians 5: 16-17 ESV

The profundity of what St. Paul says to us in these two short verses must not be lost on us. As a result of Christ's compelling love for us and the privilege of seeing beyond the temporal to the glory that is yet to come, we need to look at fellow Christians with different eyes than we used to. Our carnal eyes often looked in judgment and criticism; the eyes of eternity look with acceptance and appreciation of what Jesus is doing in one another. We now see "a new creation" where "the old has passed away". Some of us need to look in the mirror and see our own reflection with the eyes of acceptance and forgiveness, truly believing that even in our case, "behold, the new has come".

Father, you know our frame; you know that we are but dust. You understand how difficult it is for us to believe that real lasting change can occur in us. Grant us both revelation to see this truth and faith to apprehend it for ourselves, and empower us to "from now on regard no one according to the flesh", through the merits of your dear Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

November 10

"All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."

II Corinthians 5: 18-21 ESV

Ambassadors with the ministry of reconciliation – that is what God has made of us. As ambassadors, we, the Church, represent the Kingdom of God in a foreign and often hostile land. This is not our home, but we carry to all those we encounter here an appeal from God, "We implore you, be reconciled to God!" May all who attend synod this week, emerge with a fresh sense of the eternal importance of the message that we

bear, and look for new and varied ways to communicate it. May we share the Father's heart of compassion for those who do not yet know him.

Almighty God, in your wisdom you have made us to be your ambassadors to the nations where you have put us. We thank you for the incredible privilege that you have given to us. May we, your Church, faithfully fulfill this calling, and obediently deliver the message of reconciliation with which you have entrusted us, in the power and joy of the Holy Spirit. Amen

November 11 – Day 1, pre-Synod sessions and Remembrance Day

*“The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make **all** grace abound to you, so that having **all** sufficiency in **all** things at **all** times, you may abound in every good work. As it is written, ‘He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever.’ He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God.*

II Corinthians 9: 6-11 ESV

Although this scripture passage contains much personal application, it is also true in a corporate sense for ANiC. It speaks of aiming high and living large, of generosity and gracious giving. It also speaks of God's amazing provision for his church. Look at the number of times “all” appears in the text. Despite our circumstances – individual circumstances, world-wide recessions, and legal entanglements – God's Word is promising “all grace abounding, so that having all sufficiency in all things and at all times, the Church may abound in every good work” to which he has called us. We have Gospel seed to sow, a message of reconciliation to deliver, and God will “multiply our seed for sowing and increase the harvest” as we trust him. As the conference portion of synod begins today, may our hearts be filled with generosity, whether in the giving of time, energy or money, and may our faith be enlarged to believe for “an increase in the harvest of righteousness” and the finances that sowing the Gospel seed requires.

Almighty God, we stand amazed at the scope of your promised provision for an obedient Church. So frequently we fail to trust you and look for ways to provide for ourselves, just in case you don't come through. Forgive us for our lack of faith, and may we put our confidence solely in you. Lord, we declare our desperate need of you. We have no other Source, no other Hope. Thank you for your promise of provision. And we also thank you for Canadians – both in the past and even in recent years – who have given their all – their very lives - in the service of our country and to preserve our freedom. We pray your blessing on and protection for the men and women of our armed forces who are serving our nation and fighting for freedom in Afghanistan and elsewhere. Thank you that Jesus gave his all to purchase our freedom. Amen

November 12 – Day 2, Synod begins

“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, being ready to punish every disobedience, when your obedience is complete.

II Corinthians 10: 3-6 ESV

As Synod 2009 begins this morning, it is appropriate that our thoughts are turned briefly to the reality of spiritual warfare. Throughout the past year, many have experienced the attack of spiritual forces on our

spouses, families, possessions and personal finances. It is not surprising at one level – the enemy of our souls is furious at what has happened in the growth of ANiC and recent birth of the Anglican Church in North America. He hates everything that we have stood for through these last years. He thought his customary tactics of bullying and intimidation would work once again. He was wrong!

Let us take care to be clad in the Armour of God (Eph.6), taking “every thought captive to obey Christ”, so we can use “the weapons that have divine power” to stand against these assaults, and continue undaunted to attack the devil’s strongholds and arguments throughout synod and the coming year.

Lord Jesus, in your precious Name, we resist the assaults of the enemy against ANiC clergy and laity and their families. We believe that all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to you, and we use the power of your Name to rebuke all evil forces aligned against us! Thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Alleluia!

November 13 – Day 3, last day of Synod and Service of Consecration for ANiC’s new Bishops

“So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. But he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

II Corinthians 12: 7-10 ESV

Today is the last day of synod and ANiC’s first-ever consecration of bishops. This event has been highly anticipated since Bishop Harvey announced the selection of three candidates for the episcopal office. It is also appropriate today that our scripture contains the theme for this year’s synod that Bishop Don has chosen: “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness”. We have seen this theme woven through many of the passages that we have examined since All Saints Day. Pride is such a destroyer of the ministry of God, and it is paramount that our new bishops and all of ANiC’s leadership maintain a posture of repentance and desperation for the Lord. May they, and indeed, all of us, be “content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions and calamities”, and may we say with St. Paul, “For when I am weak, then I am strong”. Amen.

Let us pray this well-known Prayer for the Church found in the Book of Common Prayer:

Most gracious God, we humbly beseech thee for thy holy Catholic Church. Fill it with all truth; in all truth with all peace. Where it is corrupt, purify it; where it is in error, direct it; where any thing is amiss, reform it; where it is right, strengthen and confirm it; where it is in want, furnish it, where it is divided and rent asunder, make it whole again, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen