



## First Friday of the Month Call to Prayer – June 2017

*Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*  
I Thessalonians 5: 16-18 ESV

Welcome to our June 2017 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, June 2<sup>nd</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

*Converting our unceasing thinking into unceasing prayer moves us from a self-centered monologue to a God-centered dialogue.*

*Henri Nouwen (1932-1996)*

## Can We Finish Well?

*“They still bear fruit in old age; they are ever full of sap and green, to declare that the LORD is upright;”*  
Psalm 92: 14-15 ESV

*“So even to old age and gray hairs, O God, do not forsake me, until I proclaim your might to another generation, your power to all those to come.”*  
Psalm 71: 18 ESV

At what age does one consider oneself “old”? When do I think of myself among the “elderly”? We’re all accustomed to what we look like in the bathroom mirror, but from time to time I’ll catch a glimpse of myself in a department store mirror and I’ll find myself thinking, “Who’s that old bald guy?” The comedian, Bob Hope, once said, “You know you’re getting old when the candles on the birthday cake cost more than the cake!”

Ever since I turned seventy (three years ago), I’ve been aware of increasing physical limitations, memory malfunctions known as “seniors’ moments”, and a noticeable decrease in energy levels. Normal? I suppose so. The world will tell us that these are “the Golden Years”, and that retirement is all about doing all the things that we could never do before due to family, time or financial constraints.

But, in the light of the verses quoted above, for the older Christian there needs to be a different paradigm, one that embraces the concept of “finishing strong”. In my daily Bible reading, I recently read the following account of Caleb’s exploits, even at a “mature” age. Check it out:

*Then the people of Judah came to Joshua at Gilgal. And Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said to him, “You know what the Lord said to Moses the man of God in Kadesh-barnea concerning you and me. I was forty years old when Moses the servant of the Lord sent me from Kadesh-barnea to spy out the land, and I brought him word again as it was in my heart. But my brothers who went up with me made the heart of the people melt; yet I wholly followed the Lord my God. And Moses swore on that day, saying, ‘Surely the land on which your foot has trodden shall be an inheritance for you and your children forever, because you have wholly followed the Lord my God.’ And now, behold, the Lord has kept me alive, just as he said, these forty-five years since the time that the Lord spoke this word to Moses, while Israel walked*

*in the wilderness. And now, behold, I am this day eighty-five years old. I am still as strong today as I was in the day that Moses sent me; my strength now is as my strength was then, for war and for going and coming. So now give me this hill country of which the Lord spoke on that day, for you heard on that day how the Anakim were there, with great fortified cities. It may be that the Lord will be with me, and I shall drive them out just as the Lord said."*

Caleb and Joshua were, of course, the two spies that brought back to Moses a very positive report on their scouting out the land, while all the others were fearful and swayed the people not to consider crossing the Jordan. The end result was 40 years of wandering in the wilderness until that generation had all died off.

Now, I'm not suggesting that at 85 we should be able to say "I am still as strong today as I was forty-five years ago". But "if the Lord will be with me", as both Caleb and Joshua believed the Lord would be, then the source of strength for both the young and the elderly is in the Lord, not in the flesh, however toned or feeble it may be.

So, how about the older people in your life - those in your family, parish, neighbourhood or other spheres of influence? How do you pray for them? I'm sure that for many of us our prayers for them centre on their physical well-being and comfort. Our expectation of them (and, perhaps, theirs, too) is that they'll likely be able to do less and less, and be progressively less useful. Rather than calling them up to all that the Lord might still have for them to do, we pray for the removal of physical discomforts, strength to endure the upcoming tests or medical procedures, or the grace to remember to take all their meds on time each day.

I struggle with this, too, and I confess that sometimes I feel that the elderly seem to consume a disproportionate amount of time and energy from our volunteers or pastoral staffs. But do I pray for something more in God for them? Infrequently, at best. Of that, I do repent, O Lord!

So, how can we change this? Let's consider how we might pray for the older saints in our life.

1. Pray, as Psalm 92 says, that they may "*still bear fruit in old age*" and be "*ever full of sap and green*". Pray that by the power of the Holy Spirit they may still have a vision for their Gospel effectiveness, whether in the words of their testimony or through their intercessory prayers. Pray that, despite their years, they might have a spirit like Caleb's that was willing to put his trust fully in the Lord.
2. Pray that they would have a passion to "*proclaim your might to another generation, your power to all those to come.*" Pray that the Lord would give them opportunity to share with the younger generations the glorious news of the Gospel of Jesus. Pray that the Spirit will give them grace to persevere through seeming disinterest or antagonism.
3. As well as praying for their physical well-being, do pray for their spiritual and emotional health as well. Many of them have recently lost their spouse and best friend of many decades and are quite lonely. Some struggle with the "mind-boggling world" of rapidly changing media and electronics and are feeling progressively more isolated from their family and church. The world is increasingly a scary and unfamiliar place. Consider how you can minister to the elderly in your family, church and neighbourhood.
4. Pray that the older saints would be able to echo St. Paul's words to Timothy near the end of his life-journey "*For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.*"

2 Timothy 4:6-8 ESV

Canon Garth V. Hunt



### **Praise God ...**

- For the ultimate sacrifice that Jesus made upon the cross of Calvary for you and for me.
- For the incredible privilege that we can come boldly into the presence of Almighty God where we can delight in the joy of intimacy with Him.
- For the power of the Gospel to transform lives, even the elderly.
- 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.

### **Please pray...**

- For our primate **Archbishop Foley Beach** (& Allison) – Pray for wisdom, discernment, courage & strength as he leads ACNA and works with other Gafcon primates from across the Communion.
- For **Bishop Charlie Masters** (& Judy) – Pray for our diocesan bishop as he provides guidance and leadership of ANiC. May God grant him renewed courage, wisdom and vision. Pray also for physical protection and good health in the midst of his heavy travel schedule.
- 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 (Langley, BC) and Malcolm Harding (retired in Brandon, MB).
- For our **Archdeacons**: the Venerables Ron Corcoran (Vancouver Island), Dan Gifford (BC), Terry Lamb (AB & BC Interior), Paul Charbonneau (ON), Tim Parent (Ottawa Valley), Paul Crossland (Prairies), Michael McKinnon (New England), and Darrell Critch (Atlantic Region & Quebec).
- For all **ANiC clergy** and families, especially those experiencing spiritual and physical attack.
- 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! Send out **labourers into the harvest**, O Lord!
- That God would make our Diocese's **Five Ministry Priorities** a transformation reality in the life of every ANiC congregation: Bold Witnesses, Biblically Grounded, Loving Children, On Mission, and Planting & Growing Churches.
- For the **Anglican Relief and Development Fund Canada** (ARDFC). Praise God for faithful donors who have enabled ARDFC to raise the needed funds to purchase a van for the ministry of ACNA church plants in Cuba. Pray for God's blessing on these churches in Cuba.
- 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 leaders** with regard to North Korea, the Middle East, and famine-stricken countries in East Africa, northern Nigeria and Yemen. Also for European nations struggling to absorb refugees. Pray for the hundreds of thousands of **refugees** and internally displaced people who are seeking safety and asylum. Pray for churches and communities that are welcoming refugees. May they be a witness to God's compassionate care, both by what they say and do.
- Pray for the **people of Manchester UK** as they seek to deal with their grief and fear after the terrorist attack in May. Pray for the **churches of the city** that they may offer solace, comfort and the transforming hope of the Gospel.
- 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, Asian and African Christians who are brutally persecuted for their refusal to renounce their faith in Jesus.