



## Anglican Network in Canada

### PREPARATION IN PRAYER FOR ANiC'S INITIAL SYNOD

Dear ANiC Member;

So much has transpired since All Saints Day last year! The Anglican Network in Canada has been fully launched, and welcomed into the Province of the Southern Cone under Archbishop Venables. A growing number of churches have voted to leave their respective dioceses under the Anglican Church of Canada and come into the ANiC fold under Bishop Don Harvey. Such decisions have led to various diocesan legal responses and disputes over church properties.

But there is a rising sense of new freedom and joy in the Holy Spirit, even from those who have had to leave their beloved buildings. We are now a part of a world-wide reformation in the Anglican Communion and the good news of Jesus Christ is being proclaimed with renewed passion and power. New church plants are arising. Ordinations and confirmations, many delayed for years, are being celebrated with great joy. Our God is at work and he is simply amazing!

And so we come to our first-ever National Synod, November 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> in Burlington, ON. 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 in prayer on a daily basis. The first time that anything occurs is significant and precedent setting. May the Lord grant great wisdom and vision to those giving leadership to this strategic event.

### Daily Meditation and Prayer

Beginning with All Saints Day, November 1<sup>st</sup>, you will find below a brief meditation for each day until November 15<sup>th</sup>, the final day of our initial synod. As we did last year in preparation for our November conference, we will use the wonderful discourses of Jesus found in the Gospel of John for our daily meditation. Let these words of our Lord provide both deep encouragement and challenge to us, and may they serve as a clear vision for the Church.

We also commend to you for daily use the prayer items listed in the ANiC Prayer Calendar for November and in the All Saints Day Prayer Service included with this document.

#### **November 1- All Saints' Day**

*"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit"*

*John 15: 1-2 ESV*

What a glorious thought to begin our meditations: – our heavenly Father is an expert gardener! He knows exactly what we as branches need and when we need it. Like so many other biblical images of God, here he is shown as active, involved in our growth and health, and has not left us to our own devices. He will prune as required out of deep love and we can trust him to perform it perfectly. How important to pray for God's skilful pruning in our lives, our parish and at synod.

***Almighty God, loving and skilful Gardener, we ask you to so prune and adjust us as your people that we may bring forth more and better fruit. Even when it's uncomfortable, may we submit to your loving care for the "branches"; through Jesus Christ our Saviour and our King. Amen***

**November 2** – *“Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.”*

*John 15: 4-5 ESV*

Here is one of the most important keys to the Christian life – we are not the vine! Ridiculous though it sounds, I have spent much of my life struggling to embrace the fact that I am a branch among many, and that my primary responsibility is to remain, abide in the Vine. Without him, I can accomplish nothing. Fruit develops simply because of the connection between Vine and branch. As we pray for ANiC and the Anglican Communion world-wide, we can rejoice that we are all branches who are actively committed to staying connected to the Vine.

***Heavenly Father, who loved us all so much that you did not spare your Son, teach us, even through the events of the upcoming Synod, how to remain in the Vine above all else. We declare our absolute dependence on Jesus without whom we can accomplish nothing of merit. Keep us, Father, in that place of humility where we are satisfied with being the branches, now and through the years and decades to come, in the Name of Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen***

**November 3** – *“If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.*

*John 15: 7-8 ESV*

“Abiding” in the Lord speaks of a growing intimacy with the Vine from whom we draw our very life and all that we could ever need or imagine. As we draw closer to him, his words remain in us, conforming us to be more and more like him so that what he desires is what we desire. Bountiful fruit appears bringing glory to the Father and our discipleship is authenticated, all because we stay connected to the Vine. Branches don’t need to strain to bear fruit; they need to actively choose to “abide”.

***O Lord God, it would be so easy in our fallenness to presume to take the reins and try to guide our church on our own. Bring forth the fruit in us that brings glory to our Father, and protect us from the snares of pride and self-satisfaction. May we make the Father proud of us. Amen***

**November 4** – *“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love.”*

*John 15: 9-10 ESV*

Our concept of Love is restricted by the shallowness of our own human experience. We still don’t really get the extent to which God loves us. Can you imagine just how much the Father loves Jesus? Is a greater love than that possible? Wouldn’t it be a 10 out of 10? Jesus says that this is the same Love with which he loves us, you and me. Incredible! A love so strong, so constant, so accepting, so comforting, so safe, why would we ever leave, and why wouldn’t we tell every living soul we know about it. Only because we still have trouble receiving it.

***O Father, we find the magnitude of your love almost beyond our comprehension, and yet we are urged by the words of your Son to always remain in his love. May this love be the hallmark of our Synod. Wrap us, envelop us, consume us with that love, we pray, so that all who encounter us, wherever that may be, will sense your love for them as well and find their home in your everlasting Kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen***

**November 5** – *“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.*

*John 15: 12-13 ESV*

There are horizontal implications to the magnitude of God’s love that we looked at yesterday – Jesus commands us to share it! He has earned the right to speak of the ultimate love as that which does not

hold back even life itself. How can we muster such love for one another, to say nothing of loving our enemies? We can't, of course. I believe that Jesus is saying, "Love one another with the very same love with which I love you. Let me love them through you". As St. Francis prayed, we ask "Make me a channel..." – a channel, a conduit, a river of God's love flowing through us, as individuals and as a church, to one another and to a hurting and desperate world!

***Father, it was never your intent that we hoard your love, but that we share it with everyone. Our attempts to show love in our own strength are feeble and grossly inadequate. Use us as conduits for your covenant love – a veritable flood of your acceptance, forgiveness, mercy and grace. May your love flow from the synod meetings to all, even to those who disagree with our stand for the Gospel.***

**November 6** – *"You are my friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you."*  
*John 15: 14-15 ESV*

"What a friend we have in Jesus" penned the hymn writer of old, John Scriven. Such a privilege is hard to grasp, isn't it – a friend of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, mastermind Creator of the cosmos, the One who alone is worthy to unlock the scroll in the last days – he calls me "friend"! It's by his choice and initiative, not just my wishful thinking! And he is willing to share all that he has heard from the Father with his friends.

***O Lord, we are overwhelmed by the thought that you would ever choose to call us friends. By the power of your Spirit, may we walk in a manner worthy of your friendship. Guide us throughout synod and beyond in all that you have heard from the Father so that we may follow you without turning aside to the left or the right. Thank you, Jesus. Amen***

**November 7** – *"You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you."*  
*John 15: 16 ESV*

Imagine yourself as a young orphan, languishing in some dehumanizing refugee camp and yearning for someone, anyone to care about you and take you home. Into that scene walks the Master. He looks at you with loving eyes, smiles and says, "I choose this child. Come with me. I'm taking you home". Can this be real? Can he be trusted to not abandon me? The answer is a resounding "yes" to both questions! And he has things for us to accomplish with him, things that will last, having eternal consequences. How amazing is his love and grace for each of us!

***Almighty God, who has chosen each of us individually, and who has called ANiC into existence for such a time as this, help us to remember that we are yours as a result of your initiative, not ours. Bless this synod and all ensuing ministry with fruit that abides, that stands the test of eternity, and that brings glory to your Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen***

**November 8** – *"If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you."*  
*John 15: 18-19 ESV*

We are passing through a season like no other that we have experienced. People are reacting to our stand for the Gospel. Indeed, some even seem to hate us for what we have done, blaming us for the fracture in the Anglican Communion. Jesus' response to us is simply, "Don't be surprised. They hated me, too." God has given us the privilege/responsibility of being different, chosen "out of the world". Sometimes it's difficult. Sometimes folks we thought were friends betray us and call us all manner of nasty names. But Jesus has been there first, and has taken all that pain to Calvary. Let's lay it all at the foot of the Cross.

***Heavenly Father, sometimes the pain of having lies spread about us and having our motives called into question is more than we can bear. We give the pain to you, Father, asking you to heal us in the deep places of our souls. We choose to forgive those who have betrayed us or treated us badly. Forgive us for the times we have slipped into self-pity. Amen***

**November 9** – “Remember the word that I said to you: ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also. They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know the One who sent me.”

*John 15: 20-21 ESV*

Suffering is one of the great paradoxes of the Kingdom of God. The Gospel message does not promise a fairy tale existence where we “live happily ever after” once we’ve come to faith in Jesus. It is imperative that we do not evangelize on the faulty basis of “easy believe-ism”, but that we help new converts to understand how to rejoice in the midst of persecution, just as the early disciples did. We can also rejoice that we do know the One who sent Jesus into the world, and we can call him “Abba”.

***Abba Father, forgive us for the presumption that claimed that our salvation would cost us nothing and was all about our comfort. Thank you for the privilege of undergoing some persecution for our faith in Jesus, and we rejoice that we have been found worthy to suffer just a little bit for the sake of the Gospel, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen***

**November 10** – “But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me.” *John 15: 26 ESV*

“And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.” *John 14: 16-17 ESV*

The disciples were beginning to panic as the idea of Jesus no longer being with them in bodily form dawned on them. Jesus suggested to them that it was better for them that he go away, so that “another Helper”, the Holy Spirit, might be sent to each one. They had known the Spirit dwelling with them, as in the Old Testament, but after Pentecost, the Spirit would be in each one, empowering them for victorious living and fruitful ministry. What a gift the Father has given to each of us, dwelling within us by the Spirit, forever temples of the Living God!

***Holy Spirit, we rejoice in your presence within us and for the gifts that you bring with you to empower us for ministry. Brood upon our synod, we pray, breaking any chains of sinfulness, and releasing us into a fresh anointing for fruitful ministry. In Jesus’ Name, we pray. Amen***

**November 11** – “Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.” *John 14: 1-3 ESV*

Our Glorious Hope is the return of our Lord Jesus who is coming to take us to the place that he has been preparing for us. There is no greater promise of his than this – that where he is, we may also be, forever with the Lord! Like a bridegroom of the Middle East in biblical times, Jesus has gone away to prepare a new home for his Bride, the Church. This glorious hope causes us to raise our vision above all trials and troubles of this life. May our obedience to his commands hasten the day of his return!

***Almighty God, our hearts thrill at the thought of being eternally in your presence, freed from the limitations of the body and the influence of sin forever. As we make plans and put policies in place at synod so that things temporal may run smoothly, help us to keep our vision locked firmly on our Glorious Hope, the return of our King, in whose Name we ask these things. Amen***

**November 12** – *“And you know the way to where I am going.” Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”* John 14: 4-6 ESV

Jesus’ claim to be the only way to the Father is a stumbling block to the liberal religious establishment, both in his own day and in ours. It is either outrageously arrogant or it simply true. Praise God, the Way is not a direction, it is a Person. Truth is not an abstract philosophical concept, it is a Person. Life is not merely the duration of three score and ten years, it is a Person. And his Name is Jesus! He is the only door that has been provided for humanity to access the Father. How blessed are those who have found the door!

***Lord Jesus, we are filled with great joy at the delight of knowing the One who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. We thank you for the unspeakable privilege of coming to the Father through the Son. “Thank you for our clergy who teach us your way and preach your truth. Bless them as they spend the day with Bishops Don and Malcolm; may Clergy Day be a time of great blessing, encouragement and restoration.” Grant us your protection, both at this synod and at those to come, from ever compromising the truth of your exclusive claim. You are the only Way! Alleluia!***

**November 13** – *Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.” Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works.”* John 14: 8-10 ESV

Jesus came to show us exactly what God the Father is like. The writer of Hebrews said, “The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the **exact representation** of his being” (Heb 1: 3 NIV). Jesus’ numerous references to the Father had seriously piqued Philip’s interest, but he still didn’t get it. (I’m so grateful for the disciples’ “stupid” questions. They are so genuinely human, and so like what I’d ask.) Want to know what God the Father is like? Look at Jesus. Want to know what God considers important? Look at Jesus. He has indeed shown us the Father. The Incarnation is perfect and complete!

***Almighty God, who chose to enter our time/space world by sending your Son to reveal yourself to us, grant us eyes to see all that the Incarnation unveils. As we begin synod today, may we bring glory to your Name and do those things that demonstrate that we have indeed seen the Father revealed in the Son. We seek to do your will, O Lord, and yours alone. Amen***

**November 14** – *“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.”* John 14: 12-13 ESV

There has been much debate over the centuries as to what Jesus meant when he said “Greater works than these will he do”. Did he mean greater in number because Jesus only lived 33 years? Did he mean greater in the sense of more spectacular? The debate may continue, but what we must take from this promise is that Jesus anticipated the continuation of supernatural and miraculous ministry. He promises to do what we ask in his Name so that the Father will be glorified. Demythologizing the Bible, diminishing or denying miracle, has left its dirty footprints on the Church, even on those of us who are evangelical and orthodox in our theology. We don’t see much of the miraculous because we don’t expect to see much. May the Lord forgive us for settling for less than all that Jesus both expected and provided for.

***Heavenly Father, we do repent of allowing the embarrassment of the miraculous to impact our expectations in ministry. As ANiC moves forward in your will and purpose, may we see a renewal of***

*all that you intended in the sending of the Holy Spirit to empower your Church. May healing of body and soul, deliverance from bondage, and miraculous provision be more and more experienced in our lives and ministries; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen*

**November 15** - – On this, the last day of Synod, 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*

*Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name,  
Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth, as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.*

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# ALL SAINTS DAY PRAYER SERVICE

A suggested format for a group prayer service

Saturday November 1, 2008

*Unless the LORD builds a house, the work of the builders is useless. Unless the LORD protects a city, guarding it with sentries will do no good..* Psalm 127: 1 NLT

*... on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.* Matthew 16:18 NIV

*There has never been the slightest doubt in my mind that the God who started this great work in you would keep at it and bring it to a flourishing finish on the very day Christ Jesus appears.* Philippians 1:6 MSG

## Welcome, and Collect for All Saints Day

*O ALMIGHTY God, who hast knit together thine elect in one communion and fellowship, in the mystical body of thy Son Christ our Lord: Grant us grace so to follow thy blessed Saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those unspeakable joys, which thou hast prepared for them that unfeignedly love thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

## Corporate worship

**Individual prayer** and meditation on **God's intention and commitment to build His Church.** It is so imperative that we remember whose church we are and who is ultimately going to build it.

Read Ephesians 4:1-16 and reflect on the good gifts the Lord has given to His Church. Spend some time in Psalm 105 and notice the relationship between Israel and our covenant-keeping God. Re-read carefully the verses at the top of this page and allow the Holy Spirit to imprint them on your heart. Let's also seek forgiveness where we have doubted God's willingness to build His Church or, indeed, where we have tried to insist that He do it our way.

## Corporate prayer:

- For Bishop Don Harvey, Charlie Masters, and the other leaders of ANiC, particularly those involved in the enormous task of preparing for the initial Synod. Pray for those developing policies and canons that God will grant them wisdom and simplicity of structure.
- For discernment and courage for the global Primates as they respond to the decisions of the North American churches and dioceses.
- For the myriad of logistics and details involved in an event such as a synod; i.e., accommodation, billeting, scheduling, transportation, communications, audio/video equipment, musical instruments, refreshments, etc.
- For the partners in Common Cause, including ANiC, who are building the foundation of an orthodox, biblically-faithful Anglican province in North America that will remain in full communion with orthodox Anglicans worldwide.
- For biblically faithful ACoC clergy who are experiencing intensified pressure from their liberal bishops.
- For those who feel they no longer have a spiritual home in the Anglican Church of Canada. Our deep desire is that they will find fellowship with other biblically-faithful Anglicans and help us build the foundation for authentic, faithful Anglicanism in Canada.
- For the leaders of the Anglican Church of Canada – including the Primate, Archbishop Fred Hiltz, and members of the Council of General Synod – that they would truly seek God and His wisdom.

## Holy Communion (optional)

*Let us not seek to do the work God must do. Let us simply trust Him to do it. Our duty is to seek a prepared heart in waiting, longing, and praying and in studying, gazing, loving, worshipping, and believing that the wonderful vision of Christ is the promise of what we can be. Then, putting aside all that can distract, in stillness of soul, silent unto God, we allow His Light to do the work.* Andrew Murray 1828-1917