

Anglican Fellowship of Prayer (Canada)

Serving, supporting, and encouraging prayer



The Priority of Prayer

With regret, we share with you a decision made at a recent meeting of the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer Executive to cancel this year's Consultation (OMG! The Priority of Prayer) in Winnipeg in June.

While we were saddened by the necessity to make this decision due to low registration, we felt that it was ultimately in the best interest of Diocesan and Parish Representatives, and all AFP members, and the work that you do in all of the regions, to re-examine what will be of greatest service to as many as possible.

More particulars of what we are imagining in the months ahead will follow. We thank you for your understanding and as always welcome any questions or feedback you might wish to give.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

The Ven. Paul Feheley

Throughout my life, I have had the privilege of serving and worshipping in some of the largest Churches in Christendom. It is not difficult to be struck by the awe, glory, and majesty of St. Paul's in London, or Canterbury Cathedral, or St. Peter's in Rome. These buildings are important visible symbols of the Church- but they are not the Church.

Pentecost marks the coming of the Holy Spirit and the launch of the Church. Prior to this day the disciples were hiding in the upper room fearful and afraid. The Holy Spirit came down upon them and empowered them for mission. They left the upper room to proclaim and courageously live out the gospel. The beginnings of the Church may be pretty dramatic, but if you think it through it actually began quite simply- no buildings, no property, and no money. The resource it did have, although not many, was people.

Many of us experience the glory of the small in terms of Church. What feeds us is the closeness, the sense of being mutually dependent and the support one can give another. While it may lack the awe and majesty of the large, the small has all we need – a group of faithful Christians meeting, praying, hearing the Word of God, and sharing the broken bread of communion. A verse from The Acts of the Apostles speaks to what is at the heart of the Church: "The apostles devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers." (2:42)

Into our small but faithful bands of Christian people comes the Holy Spirit to abide and to guide us. It is the ongoing gift of the Spirit that connects us to be a community of love. My prayer this Pentecost for all of us is one of renewal, empowerment and of having the love and passion to witness to the world.



A PRAYER FOR PENTECOST

CC BY 3.0 by John Birch

Source: http://www.faithandworship.com/prayers_Pentecost.htm

When was the last time
that we heard the wind of your Spirit
roar through this place?

When was the last time
your fire lit up this room?

When was the last time
we took you at your word
and met together in expectation
of your Spirit filling this place,
and these lives with your Glory and Power?

Lord, you challenge us with Pentecost.

Do we believe that this
was a once in eternity experience,
never to be repeated?

That the Holy Spirit was poured out
on your followers for a single purpose,

and ended His work at that instant?

If so, then maybe that is why the Church
seems so powerless in this age,
helpless when faced with the needs
both spiritual and physical,
that we see in the world.

Lord, as we meet together ,
and celebrate once again
the memory of that first Pentecost,
may it be for us as it was then
a moment of empowerment,
an awareness of your Glory in this dark world,
a life changing experience.

REVITALIZING YOUR PRAYER LIFE

Paul Dumbrille – AFP Canada Resource Coordinator

The period after Pentecost Sunday is an ideal time. From time to time to begin something new in our relationship with God. In this article I am inviting the reader to pray “Outside of the Box” by intentionally changing one’s normal pattern(s) of prayer to discover new ways of connecting with the Divine Presence. This can be done in exploring fresh ways of prayer by trying something new each week for a period of seven weeks.

1st Week – Keep a Prayer Journal. This week, write in a prayer journal every day. Journaling is an opportunity to explore writing as a way into your relationship with God. It is an opportunity to record flashes of insight and treasured moments of encountering God. It is more than a chronicle of events and moves beyond and behind descriptions of life events, by providing answers to only one question: “What is God doing in my life?”

2nd Week – Body Position. During this week, intentionally use different body positions by standing, kneeling, or sitting differently from that which you usually use. Position your limbs in different ways, such as bowing your head, closing or opening your eyes, opening your hands in front of you in a receiving position, putting your hands in front of you in what is often referred to as “hands of prayer”, or raise your arms above your head, reaching up. As you try new body and limb positions, make note of how you felt the presence of God in new ways.

3rd Week – Use Music. During this week, try using music in new ways when you pray. Listen to different types of music, such as Gregorian Chant, contemporary Christian music, favourite hymns, or quiet instrumental music. In addition to listening, try singing to God using a hymn or song book or singing along with a recording. After you have listened to music or sung to God, note how you experienced God’s presence.

4th Week – Focus on a Sacred Object. A way to minimize a wandering mind is to focus our attention on a particular object. During this week, experiment with gazing at one or more objects during your prayer time. Objects such as a cross, a piece of sacred art, a photograph of the natural world could be used. Many people use a lighted candle.

5th Week – Pray While Moving. Being still is not the only way we can pray. Prayer Walking can be a wonderful gift to those who find it useful to get up and move around while intentionally communicating with God. During this week, try praying while walking or running, involving your whole body in prayer. Prayer Walking can be done in any location at any time, sometimes alone, or with a group. Prayer Walking includes, but is not restricted to, traditional practices, such as: making a pilgrimage; walking the Stations of the Cross; and walking a labyrinth.

6th Week – Use Prayer Beads or an Anglican Rosary. For centuries, Christians and those of other religions, have used a string of beads in their hands as an aid to prayer. This week explore the use of beads to assist in your prayer time. There is an Anglican Rosary that is most often used as a tactile aid to prayer and sometimes as a counting device. The Anglican Fellowship of Prayer provides a resource that explains how to use the Anglican Rosary and how to make one for yourself. It can be found at:

http://anglicanprayer.org/resources/Anglican%20Rosary_2017.pdf

7th Week – Take Stock. In the final week, reflect on the different ways you have prayed “Outside of the Box” during the past six weeks. It might be useful to practise a different type of prayer each day of this week. At the end, decide which method or methods you will adopt as a regular practice in your prayer life, moving them from outside the box to inside the box.

CURRENT WORK OF YOUR AFP EXECUTIVE

The Rev Valerie Kenyon

One hundred percent of our time on the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer is spent considering the needs of Diocesan and Parish Representatives across Canada, and how our efforts might best serve them in their day to day ministries. Whether we are evaluating optimal distribution of the Nan Henderson gift of resources to the newly ordained, considering how to facilitate receiving and sharing prayer requests, how best to manage our internal documents for those who will come after us, how social media and the use of various technologies can be of service, or planning of consultations and conferences, in the end it is all to further our main objective of supporting the development of prayer as needed.

It is always helpful to hear from you on what is and is not working. Your feedback is essential to how we operate and is appreciated when sent. We always look forward to hearing from you.



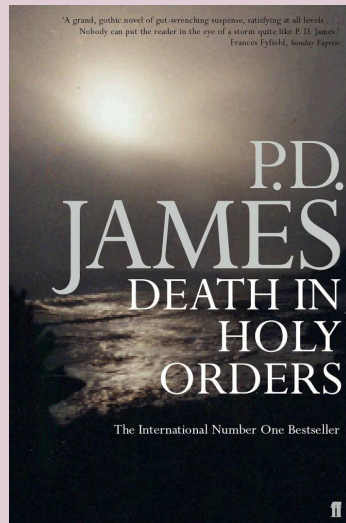
BOOK REVIEW

Death in Holy Orders by P.D. James

Reviewed by Janet Stevens

While not a normal book about prayer, this novel (a fairly good detective novel) also turned out to include a wealth of information about the Anglican Church. One review tells us that 'like the novels of Dickens and Trollope it is a great novel of morals and ideas' and so it is.

The story is set on 'the bleak coast of East Anglia' in a fictional small theological college for ordinands to the priesthood. Though not old by British standards, the college is steeped in Anglo-Catholic rites and traditions, and home to many historical artifacts which play a role in the story. The rector or Warden of the college, the teaching staff, priests and ordinands themselves are generally intent upon retaining their beliefs and rituals as being the true expression of the ineffable mystery and love of God. Their Archdeacon is committed to reducing the number of parishes and colleges and getting rid of 'outworn conventions and an archaic liturgy'. There are a host of characters many of them devout Christians but representatives of all the different facets of their faith.



The book demonstrates the broad spectrum of Anglican ways of life. While I was not expecting this novel to be prayerfully educational, I was pleasantly surprised. I recommend it to others.

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Next newsletter: Thanksgiving 2018

Submission deadline: Sept 10, 2018

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