

A Plea for Prayer – April, 2015 – No. 147

We would appreciate updates on the location of our military because of continued unit movements.

Note: This list and plea will be updated and expanded as God gives information and grace. While this prayer plea is posted on the Internet, every effort is made to keep information appropriately private and with minimum information on mission, units and location. All requests, news and update information should be sent to the editor at: Coie.1@opc.org

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends (John 15:13). Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need (Hebrews 4:16). And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever (Isaiah 32:17).

The request continues. Please pray for our OPC men and women, sons and daughters who are in harm's way, about to be in harm's way, and who support those in harm's way. *The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much (James 5:16b). Pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17).*

A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels: The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding. (Proverbs 1:5; 9:10) Please also read 2 Timothy 1-14.

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Prayer Focus

Now when He concluded all His sayings in the hearing of the people, He entered Capernaum. And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear to him, was sick and ready to die. So when he heard about Jesus, he sent elders of the Jews to Him, pleading with Him to come and heal his servant. And when they came to Jesus, they begged Him earnestly, saying that the one for whom He should do this was deserving, "for he loves our nation, and has built us a synagogue." Then Jesus went with them. And when He was already not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to Him, saying to Him, "Lord, do not trouble Yourself, for I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof. Therefore I did not even think myself worthy to come to You. But say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man placed under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." When Jesus heard these things, He marveled at him, and turned around and said to the crowd that followed Him, "I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!" And those who were sent, returning to the house, found the servant well who had been sick. (Luke 7:1-10)

Hold Fast My Covenant - Does God hear the prayers of Soldiers who asks our Lord Jesus to help those whom they love when they are in need? Soldiers, like Sailors, Marines, Airmen, and Guardians, must train in the exercise of deadly force, and be prepared to engage with and destroy the enemies of their country. With such a violent profession as theirs, does God hear or answer their prayers?

There may be certain people whom we may be tempted to judge hastily in their prayers and in their relationship to the Christ and His Church. We listen to the stories of Soldiers who have taken human lives in war. We hear them pray and we may be prone to think that God must

surely see their acts as an obstruction to their prayers. We may be tempted to make the same mistake as the Jews and judge a man as worthy or unworthy based upon our criteria as to what constitutes worthiness.

Luke 7:1-10, however, teaches us what we need to know about this. Like the centurion in Luke's Gospel, we must submit our prayers to the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, and exercise a humble, knowledgeable faith in Him, based only upon His Word. It is true that you may know about Christ without truly knowing Him. But you cannot know Christ without first knowing about Him at least as much as the centurion knew.

And it is precisely your knowledge of His authority that should make you humble, and never presumptuous in prayer. Too often people are inclined to consider themselves superior than other believers in prayer because they know so much about Christ and the Bible. Our knowledge about Christ and his Word should lead us rather to a knowledge of ourselves that will make us humble as the centurion was. For as Paul says in I Corinthians, if any man thinks he knows, he does not yet know as he ought to know. This is why Jesus described this man's faith as unique in all of Israel.

Who knew Jesus in his early ministry better than John the Baptist? He was the cousin of Jesus. If anyone had excuse for familiarity with Jesus, John the Baptist did. And yet, as John said, when He who called him to baptize revealed to John that Jesus was the Messiah, what was John's response? "After me comes One who is greater than I, the thong of whose sandal I am unworthy to unite." Untying the sandal was the work of the slave who washed his master's feet. It was the lowest job in Israel. And yet John said that he was not worthy even to be the household slave of Jesus. Humility in prayer is necessary to a true and understanding faith in Jesus.

Other soldiers in the Bible likewise humbled themselves before the Lord and their prayers were answered by His grace. From Naaman the Syrian General in II Kings to Cornelius of the Italian Cohort in Acts 10, God shows that He hears the prayers of those who repent and believe the word of the Lord. This is why the apostle Peter, who led Cornelius to Christ, says in I Peter 5:4, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that in due time, He may exalt you."

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Please pray for our valiant men of war to call out to God continually for strength to enable victory over the enemy and that they will continue to be well equipped for battle. And please pray that our nation will be led by humble leaders who call on the name of the Lord and rule righteously that we might have peace. Please pray that God will *show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him*. Pray that they will fear only God and not man and be of a good courage. Pray that they will be bold as a lion and that the wicked will flee. (Prov. 28:1)

Pray as we battle forces both foreign and domestic in our long war; plead with our God to make a way of escape from defeat, from losing heart in the battle and that in doing so, God will restore us as a nation to His righteousness. Pray for the gracious and needed gift from God of genuine national repentance; especially from the iniquities of abortion, supporting homosexuality, the widespread disregard of the fourth commandment and rejection of the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Continue to pray that we will recognize the true nature of the enemy. Be not weary in hoping, praying and waiting to see the salvation of our great God whose new mercies come every morning! Pray that the Gospel may continue to have free expression. Pray that the culture of death will be defeated and that our nation will stand united and will endure in the defense of freedom. Please continue to pray for the spouses, children, parents and siblings of our warriors. Pray for the families of the fallen and for the wounded that they may all endure and come to rest and trust in Christ. May they defend our nation's liberties as guaranteed by our Constitution with stalwart hearts and minds!

May we be “**animated to pray by the certain hope of obtaining our requests.**” Calvin

We have lives precious to us in harm's way: Andrew (two), Brett, Bryan, Chris, Christopher, Daniel, David (two), Doug, Douglas, Gabriel, Isaac, Jack, Jim, John, Nicolas, Noah, Paul (two), Rachel, Ray, Richard, Robert (two), Samuel (2), Scott, Sebastian, Stephen (two), and Chaplains John Carter and Tim Power New deployments are shown in bold.

- From Pastor Roy - LCDR R. Matthew Holmes USN is now retired.
- From Pastor Doug - LCpl Gabriel Waddle was honorably discharged from the US Marine Corps and is presently enrolled in college using his well-earned GI Bill. Thank you again and again for this labor of love.
- From Pastor Iain - Cpl Jack Griffin USMC has received an Honorably Discharge. [Jack, thank you for your service and may God's blessings be on you in your new endeavors!
- From Pastor Iain – PFC Elizabeth J. T. has graduated from nursing school and is now a 2LT
- The revision of DADT presents difficulties for many Christians, both those serving in line positions and those serving as chaplains. Therefore we urge you to pray:
 1. For all who serve in our military who name the name of Christ,
 2. For all Christian chaplains who serve not only the military but also their churches under creedal statements of faith and belief,
 3. That the implementation of this legislation will be just and righteous,
 4. That the heretofore moral standards of our military will not be severely denigrated by those of good moral character leaving this godly calling,
 5. That the Committee and Commission will have wisdom in order to protect those who serve. Praise God that the Commission has adopted additional protections for our chaplains. Please pray that God will grant a powerful and sustained protection for our chaplains from this revision.
 6. That our military, which has taken an oath defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies foreign and domestic, will not be diminished or perish,
 7. That this trial will not also in time descend on the pulpits of our land.

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Chaplains' Reports:

CH Steve Phillips, Retirement Community Chaplain, Quarryville, PA (Presbytery of New York and New England) . The Lord continues to provide for Quarryville Presbyterian Retirement Community in its 65th year as we endeavor to fulfill our mission "in a manner faithful to the Bible and honoring our Lord, Jesus Christ." The community is expanding, providing even more opportunities to bring the message of life in the Lord Jesus to those dying as well as those

in the beginning of retirement years, and to challenge our residents to serve the Savior with whatever present capacities have been given them.

PRAYER REQUESTS: Pray for strength of Spirit to minister to the many needs among our residents, and for wisdom in hiring another fulltime staff member in the Pastoral Care Department (this is the first time I have been without one in my 14 years on staff).

EMAIL: phillipssl@quarryville.com

CH Bob Needham, King's County Sheriff Chaplain, Hanford, CA (Presbytery of Northern California and Nevada). In spite of breaks in the routine of ministry [e.g. surgery for a broken back (2007), surgery for a shattered femur (2009), surgery for shoulder replacement (2012) and surgery for knee replacement (2014)], the Lord has permitted me to continue serving as Chaplain for the Kings County Sheriff's Department, for which I am indeed thankful. God has provided occasions for ministry to county families who have suffered with a suicide, sudden fatal illnesses, fatal accidents and other trials, as well as opening doors to minister the Word of God to Sheriff's Department personnel.

PRAYER REQUESTS: Please pray that the Holy Spirit will bring unsaved department employees to salvation, and ones who are professing Christians to greater maturity and holiness in their walk with Christ.

EMAIL: newhopeopc@sbcglobal.net

Pray that President Barack H. Obama, will guide us as a nation in righteousness that is according to God's Word, and that he will *be just, ruling in the fear of God* (II Sam 23:3b). Pray for those who lead our warriors, from those in the cabinet to the NCO in the field, particularly for all those who name the Name of Christ.

Pray for those who serve us, that their courage, strength and wisdom will not waver or fail, that their actions will be swift, victorious and *bold as a lion* (Proverbs 28:1), that God will grant them safety and bring them home to their families. Pray for their wives and families, that as they are without their loved ones, they may endure and support them. Pray that we will minister to the families in the stead of those who serve. Pray for their testimony to the lost. Please pray both publicly and privately.

Pray that our **chaplains will be bold** in the ministry of the Word – that precious Word that not only tells how we can have life eternal, but also instructs how we are to live! Pray for all our members who serve, that the light of the Gospel will burn brightly in their lives.

In His hands, Robert M. Coie, for the OPC Committee on Chaplains and Military Personnel with the Prayer Focus by COL Christopher H. Wisdom, USA, Ret.