



The Shield



August 2024 edition

Praying for the Canadian Military Community

Preamble: Below are themes relevant to the ministry of the Military Christian Fellowship of Canada. We desire that you refer to these themes throughout April, time and time again, and pray for the community that God has invited us to bless.

PRAY FOR OUR NATION:

Many in our country are stuck, standing on the fence, afraid to offer an opinion or stand up for a cause for fear of those who bully those who don't hold the same opinion. It seems if you disagree with one of those individuals, you will be labelled a bigot. More and more opinions are linked to social justice causes. Still, sadly, too often, these angry, opinionated people are looking to validate their ego, seek special treatment, or seek attention.

Biblical references to "justice" mean "to make right." Justice is, first and foremost, a relational term that refers to people living in the right relationship with God, one another, and natural creation. The scriptural point of view for justice means loving our neighbour as we love ourselves, and it is rooted in the character and nature of God. God is just and loving, so we are called to do justice and live in love. Pray that our nation gets on board with justice from passion, not anger.

Consider using this prayer for Canada: *"Father, You created us with the ability to love as You do; however, we have not sought Your assistance to love and have made a mess of things. We know You want us to reach out to the infirm, the homeless, and those with addiction issues just as much as we seek justice for our families and churches. Help us see that You invited us to be on a mission with You to show Your truth and grace to all. Please help us show Your presence and justice. Amen"*

PRAY FOR OUR LEADERS:

These are challenging times for leaders who are tempted and pressured to compromise their values for votes or acceptance. Many must take an oath declaring their willingness to serve others above themselves, but in this selfish world, the temptation to look after oneself is excellent. Will you take time to identify a leader you know and pray for them by name?

Consider praying: *"Almighty God our heavenly Father, send down upon NAME which is in the position to lead, the spirit of wisdom, charity, and justice; that with a steadfast purpose, they may faithfully serve to promote the well-being of all people; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

PRAY FOR THOSE ON OPERATIONS:

Serving in a military operation regarding safety and security is unpredictable. Our military often works amongst people from cultures who see the world differently. There is a significant humanitarian flavour to all Canadian operations, regardless of the type of presence, and we want our soldiers' hearts and souls to be protected as much as their bodies.

There are several ongoing operations involving Canadian Military personnel, each important and each with risks. Will you visit DND's operations website this week, adopt an operation, and pray for the troops serving during that operation?

Operations: <http://www.forces.gc.ca/en/operations/current-list.page>

Consider praying: *“Father, we know worldwide disharmony is not Your desired plan for humanity. However, it is in our nature, and so we have many prepared to stand for what is just. Military operations can place a physical and spiritual strain on individuals, so we ask You, Lord, to infuse them with Your strength and courage so they can serve as they must. As they serve away from home, we ask that You protect family relationships so that they can honour each other and You. Amen.*

PRAY FOR OUR CHAPLAINS:

In this increasingly secularized society, we are blessed to have Military Chaplains serving our military in all the places our military serves. They leave family and enter dangerous zones while facing the evil that seeks to neutralize their message of hope and salvation.

Consider praying this version of the Serenity Prayer: *“God grant our chaplains the serenity to accept the things they cannot change; courage to change the things they can; and wisdom to know the difference. Living one day at a time; enjoying one moment at a time; accepting hardships as the pathway to peace; Taking, as He did, this sinful world as it is, not as they would have it; trusting that He will make all things right if they surrender to His Will. We pray that they may be reasonably happy in this life and pleased with Him forever in the future. Amen.”*

PRAY FOR MILITARY FAMILIES:

God created humanity to live in a harmonious relationship and modelled this behaviour in the bond of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Unfortunately, we are not always good at showing love for those we said we'd love forever. Stressful situations often exasperated by military life can damage family unity. We desire that our military families come to know the peace Jesus offers so that when faced with life's challenges and difficulties, they can recognize the true enemy is not each other but the evil one who wants nothing better than to destroy relationships. We can pray that they find Jesus and build a relationship with Him, leading to a stronger family.

Consider praying: *“Heavenly Father, we offer our prayers for the home front spouse and ask Your blessing over their lives. We pray they would trust You, be firmly rooted in Christ and the Word, and draw strength from Him. We pray for their joy, hope, endurance, strength, patience, protection and safety. We pray against fear, loneliness, fatigue, despair, and depression that may be caused by separation. We pray that support will be present when needed and that friends, family, co-workers, and neighbours will rise and extend assistance and encouragement. Amen”*

PRAY FOR DND EMPLOYEES:

We are fortunate that many of our civilian colleagues have the same desire and passion to serve Canada. They support military operations with their skills and knowledge and step up when their military colleagues are away on a mission. We are grateful for them and can show our gratitude by bringing them before the Lord and asking that He draw them to Him.

Consider praying: *“Loving Father, we thank You for our partnership with our DND workforce and ask that all of us can work in harmony with the vision and mission of the Armed Forces. May all team members speak about bringing comfort, healing, and care. We pray that each worker is filled with heavenly truth and that they feel compelled to seek You out. We pray they allow God to lead them through each moment of their life. Father watch over them as they serve this nation. Amen”*

PRAY FOR RETIRED MILITARY:

Many will joke about looking forward to their retirement from the military, but most can not help but feel a sense of loss the moment they hang up their uniform. The closeness and comradery they have experienced are found in only a few work environments. The dependence on colleagues to help them survive difficult and even dangerous situations creates a bond that is hard to break. They will always be part of the military family; we should not forget them or even draw on them to support the community.

Consider praying: *“Father, we ask Your blessings for those who have served and are now retired. We especially ask that Your grace be extended to those who have left because of injuries. Remind them of the purpose You created them for, which goes well beyond serving their country. Remind them that they still have value and purpose and that their experience can still be an asset to the military and the communities in which they live. Bless them and their families, and they will experience a new life as retired military personnel. Amen.”*

PRAY FOR THE MCF:

The Canadian military community is unique in Canada. By its nature, it is an institution, a system, and a distinct culture separate from all others regarding values, history, norms, behaviours, language, operational experiences, social hierarchy, social expectations, and lifestyle. It is also characterized by mobility, separation and risk. Yet, it includes persons from diverse ethnicity, spirituality, gender, age,

and sexual orientation; thus, the military is a microcosm of the Canadian mosaic. This community consists of those serving in both the Regular Force and the various components of the Reserve Force, civilian employees of the Department of National Defence and their respective families. God has invited the Military Christian Fellowship of Canada to join Him on the mission to bring the gospel to this beautiful community. We know that the prayers and hard work of many make this possible.

Consider praying: *“LORD, thank You for inviting us to be on a mission with You and trusting us with responsibilities to reach our military community. We want all we do to be for Your glory. Give strength to our leaders so they may give their best to reach Your lost children. We ask that You convict those who love You to find a way to serve You through the MCF so that we may become stronger and overcome the obstacles that the evil one places before us. Thank You for loving us, and we acknowledge that it is the power and authority of your name, Jesus, that we can continue to move forward. Amen.”*

