

PRAYER MENU

2008 No. 3

Prayer! **America's Strength & Shield**

Remember our National Day of Prayer
Thursday, May 1

- **FIGHTING HIV/AIDS.** The U.S. House approved a bill to reauthorize the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. The bill would provide \$50 billion for HIV/AIDS and related health problems in third world countries over the next five years. The bill limits U.S. contributions to the Global Fund to one-third of total contributions. (*April Advocate*) Thank God for governments that are willing to address the AIDS epidemic in poor countries.
- **ECONOMY.** Nobody wants to use the word "recession," but warnings are abundant. Recently a warning went out to farmers and those in agri-business. Prices for land, fertilizers, fuel, and seed, are unusually high, as are prices for food. "We're in a very risky time," warns an agricultural economist. (*SCJ 4-21-08*) Pray for a stable economy in the world.
- **SEXUAL ABUSE.** In his extended visit to the U.S, Pope Benedict fearlessly raised the issue of sexual abuse in the Roman Catholic Church. The Pope's message is for everyone who is in a position of authority and power: abusing the weak and vulnerable is a grave sin. (*SCJ 4-21-08*) Pray for healing in the body of Christ, especially for the victims of sexual abuse wherever it exists.
- **AFRICAN UNREST.** Zimbabwe continues to reel after the last election and President Mugabe's refusal to recognize the results. While election results have not been made public, everyone believes Morgan Tsvagirai was elected and should be installed as president. The country—traditionally the breadbasket for South Africa—is now devastated because of Magabe's awful leadership. (*Forth Worth 4-6/6-08*) Continue to pray for the people of Africa, where tribal wars, disease, famine, and mismanagement cripple much of a continent.
- **ADDICTION.** A major health problem in Afghanistan is opium addiction. Opium is plentiful in this war-torn country, and easily available. There are forty treatment centers in this relatively small country, but they are full to capacity. Many addicts are women who take opium to deal with minor headaches due to the stress of poverty and the war. Eradication of opium is a goal in Afghanistan, but far from successful. (*FW Star-Tribune 4-7-08*) Pray for drug addicts in Afghanistan and in our own country.

- **LETHAL INJECTION.** The U.S. Supreme Court turned down the lethal injection appeal of convicted Kansas City killer Michael A. Taylor. Taylor's case was one of seven the court turned down in the wake of its ruling last week upholding the constitutionality of the lethal injection method used in most states, including Missouri. Taylor and co-defendant Roderick Nunley were convicted in the 1989 rape and murder of 15-year-old Ann Harrison, who was kidnapped while waiting for the school bus. *(KC Star 4-21-08)* Pray for victims of violent crimes and those who face death or life sentences for committing violent crimes.
- **JOBS.** Surveys show that there are 50,000 jobs available in the state of Iowa. Many are jobs for unskilled workers, but there are also plenty of jobs for skilled workers. Another report shows that by 2014 Iowa could have a shortage of 198,000 workers. *(SCJ 3-18-08)* Thank God for jobs and work during an economic slow down.
- **MORE GAMBLING IN IOWA?** The Iowa Gaming Commission will consider licenses to build several new casinos in our state. Groups in Fort Dodge, Ottumwa, Tama, Newton, and Franklin County have made application. Iowa already has 20 casinos and 17,485 slot machines, which gross \$1.3 billion a year. *(SCJ 3-3-08)* Pray that gambling will be curbed, not increased, in Iowa, and pray for those addicted to gambling.
- **ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS.** Two months after Arizona enacted a law punishing employers, who hire illegal immigrants, Arizona is seeing results. Illegal Latin Americans are fleeing the state for other states, or returning to their native countries. This solution to illegal immigrants seems to be working, but few states want to criminalize employers for not asking immigrant applicants for proof of citizenship. *(SCJ 4-1-08)* Pray for those who honestly seek a better life and for our federal government that fails to meet the immigration challenge.
- **PRISON POPULATION.** For the first time in U.S. history, more than one in 100 Americans is in jail or prison. The cost for maintaining prisoners in 2007 was more than \$49 billion. To curb the cost states are trying new sentences for low-level crimes, such as "community supervision," which allows first offenders to work and be productive citizens while "doing time." *(SCJ 2-29-08)* Pray for prisoners and the staff that care for them; pray for prison ministries, such as Crossroads Bible Institute and the Northern Lighthouse. 75% of people who were in prison will commit another crime; however, only 14% will commit another crime if they studied the Word of God during incarceration.

We urge you to include items from the PRAYER MENU in family and personal prayers. You may contribute to the menu by giving a news item of concern to one of our committee members: Abe Bos, Diana Gonzalez, Jim & Sally Koldenhoven, Jason & Tammy Lief, Jim & Thea Mouw, Lauren & Barb Ochsner, Andrew Sybesma, Jo Vander Werf, or Lisa Vander Plaats.