

# The Dominion of Canada

The Rev'd. Dr. John Roddam | [www.pleromainternational.ca](http://www.pleromainternational.ca)

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I am a proud Canadian! I am even prouder to be a “Bluenoser” – a native of Nova Scotia. My grandfather was a faithful Anglican and a Lunenburg Sea Captain who was a friend of Captain Angus Walters, skipper of the original Bluenose. Lots of history - a rich heritage in my family, this province and our nation.

July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 marked the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our nation. As a child, we called July 1<sup>st</sup> Dominion Day. When the Fathers of Confederation were looking for a term to describe the emergent configuration of provinces and territories, Sir Leonard Tilley of New Brunswick suggested “Dominion of Canada” based on the Scripture verse from Psalm 72:28 – “He (the Lord God) shall have dominion also from sea to sea...” In more recent years July 1<sup>st</sup> has become simply Canada Day. Yet this prophetic Bible verse is still enshrined in stone in the Parliament Buildings Peace Tower.

Few Canadians are aware that our national anthem was originally a hymn. This is unique among nations. Here are all four stanzas of the original hymn -

O Canada!  
Our home and native land!  
True patriot love in all thy sons command.  
With glowing hearts we see thee rise,  
The True North strong and free!  
From far and wide,  
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.

### *Chorus*

God keep our land glorious and free!  
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.  
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.

*God keep  
our land,  
Glorious  
and Free!*

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O Canada! Where pines and maples grow.  
Great prairies spread and lordly rivers flow.  
How dear to us thy broad domain,  
From East to Western sea.  
Thou land of hope for all who toil!  
Thou True North, strong and free!

## *Chorus*

O Canada! Beneath thy shining skies  
May stalwart sons, and gentle maidens rise,  
To keep thee steadfast through the years  
From East to Western sea.  
Our own beloved native land!  
Our True North, strong and free!

## *Chorus*

Ruler supreme, who hearest humble prayer,  
Hold our Dominion in thy loving care;  
Help us to find, O God, in thee  
A lasting, rich reward,  
As waiting for the better Day,  
We ever stand on guard.

## *Chorus*

As we celebrate God's faithfulness for 150 years as a nation – The Dominion of Canada – may I suggest that we consider making our national anthem the prayer as it was originally intended?

I have appreciated the diversity in our nation and how in large crowds we would hear the striking melody of our National Anthem sung in both French and English. I may be the lone voice in the crowd, but in these days of great challenges, as we rise to sing our National Anthem throughout this year of commemoration and celebration, I think I will find myself singing the last verse of the original hymn...

Ruler supreme, who hearest humble prayer,  
Hold our Dominion in thy loving care;  
Help us to find, O God, in thee  
A lasting, rich reward,  
As waiting for the better Day,  
We ever stand on guard.

