
New Year's Resolution!

**An article from the *Cathedral Times*
by Dean Sam Candler**

As you might expect, I have never been a huge fan of various New Year's resolutions. First, most New Year's resolutions seem like fads and short-lived attempts to lose weight or stop drinking. One should be doing those things all the time, not just in January! Secondly, I live according to a Christian calendar whose new year starts in Advent, and whose new life starts at Christmas (the Incarnation) and again at Easter (the Resurrection!). I love observing new life on those days. Okay, the third reason I am not a fan of New Year's resolutions probably has to do with the reality that I am rarely able to keep them!

However, I am a fan of "resolution," and I do respect "resolve," at whatever time they appear. This week, I want to salute not the particular resolutions that people may take on, but, rather, the act of resolve itself. It is good to meet this new year with a sense of resolve, with new year's resolution. Here's to meeting this new year with resolve!

I noticed quite a few resolves in the past month. The blessed Saint Mary answered the angel's visit with a clear sense of resolve. "Let it be to me according to your word," Mary told the angel. She resolved to meet her situation with faith.

I saw resolve this Christmas when I noticed, again and again, a young baby learning to pull himself up to a coffee table. Then he resolved to examine and to open each kitchen cabinet and shelf. He was determined!

I saw resolve in a young mother intent on feeding her children at the appropriate hour, no matter what else was going on. Resolve was in a man determined to make his year-end quota. Resolve was in a set of grandparents deciding to make the journey, once again, to see children in another state.

In a few days, we will hear about Jesus resolving to be baptized by John, "for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness." Jesus, and John, too, were determined. They were resolved.

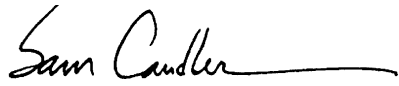
This year, I want to see, not necessarily various resolutions. Rather, I want to see resolve itself. Resolve is an intentional act of goodness and beauty. Resolve is not wishful thinking. It is not mere dreaming. It is not waiting for something good to happen. It is not winning the lottery.

Resolve is putting your will into the situation. Being part of the solution. Being part of the action. Getting in the game. Engaging, not waiting.

Our world needs people of resolve. Of course, that resolve should be directed in the proper way! Proper resolve is directed towards the common good, directed towards beauty and truth. Resolve is not obstinance in the face of error. And resolve is not the refusal to admit error. We all make mistakes. Resolve is the intent to do good, especially when that good must come out of something bad.

Perhaps my New Year's resolution, then, is simply to be resolved. To resolve myself towards the common good, to resolve myself in the direction of truth and beauty. Here's to the New Year. And here's to New Year's Resolve!

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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sam Candler". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

The Very Reverend Samuel G. Candler
Dean of the Cathedral of St. Philip

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