
2016 Christmas Letter from the Dean

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Surely, that majestic hymn, “O Come All Ye Faithful,” is one of the highlights of Christmas, when we process to the altar of the Cathedral of St. Philip!

But, as I reflect upon that altar procession, I realize that it takes a lot to build an altar. At first, maybe not so much. Maybe the first biblical altars were slabs of stone in the wilderness. Maybe the first altars in American churches were wooden tables that also served as dining tables. They were probably simple and quickly assembled.

But, over time, our Christian altars have grown and multiplied. They certainly have here at the Cathedral of St. Philip, in Atlanta. As I noted in our annual parish report, The Cathedral of St. Philip give thanks at altars all over Atlanta now, from prisons and parks, to hospital rooms and bedsides. And we certainly give thanks at our high altar, in the magnificent Cathedral structure itself.

It takes a lot to build these altars, because they represent people. Every altar around which we gather to pray is the result of a community of people who want to serve and give thanks in that place.

This Christmas, I hope you gather around one of the altars of this holy place. I hope that all of us pause to remember the great love that God has poured out to the world in Jesus Christ.

But I also hope you will make a special effort to help us build and maintain these altars of community. With people and service and love and support and mission and hope, it takes a lot to build our altars. And it takes money. The money that you contribute to the Cathedral of St. Philip does not just build a structure; it builds a community, and that community serves the world.

Every year, the Cathedral of St. Philip receives generous pledges and gifts of support that enable us to continue a diverse and thriving ministry in the world. And, every year, we receive the bulk of that financial generosity in the last month or so of the year.

At the end of this year, we really need your gift! To those who have fulfilled generous pledges, thank you so much! To those about to make a pledge for the first time, thank you! To those of you making a gift after years away, thank you! The Cathedral needs each of you.

O, Come All Ye Faithful! Will you please consider a special year-end financial gift to the Cathedral this year? In doing so, you will be a part of our Christmas procession to the altar. And, even more importantly, you will be a part of our Christmas procession out into the world, serving the world in the name of Jesus!

Thank you! And Merry Christmas!

Yours in the giving procession,

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

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

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