
A Poem to Point Us to Easter

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

A week ago, one of my weekly Bible Study members suggested that I provide more of the poetry I have been writing. Given the rain coming this week, I thought I would reprint a poem I offered a few years ago, a poem that attempted to reflect the glory of one of our early morning Easter Vigil services here at the Cathedral.

I offer this poem as an anticipation of Easter, even though I realize that we are still in the season of Epiphany! Well, Epiphany is, after all, the season in which we hear the following words, Sunday after Sunday, in the “proper preface” of our Eucharistic prayer: “in the mystery of the Word made flesh, you have caused a new light to shine in our hearts, to give the knowledge of your glory in the face of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.” Our faces shine in the seasons of both Epiphany and Easter.

THE EASTER VIGIL
(at the sunrise service of the Cathedral)

The sky is still deep dark
When pinpoints of people, like stars,
One by one, in quiet procession,
Precede the dawn.

White hot Vega gazes down from overhead,
And Arcturus shepherds us into a circle
Around the slight spark,
And now a fire, rising from Good Friday.

When the bonfire roars, a bright blindness
Transfixes our eyes, and flames,
Rise still higher
Until they cast a golden crown around
Every face there.

In that moment, I see no bodies
Or fine clothes, or Easter bonnets,
For they are still hidden in the darkness,
Buried with the rest of our worries
And evening pains, and Saturday graves.

I see only faces, beautiful icons
Glistening in resurrection glory,

In moist anticipation of baptism,
Just before sunrise.

Now is the time, Easter,
Now is the only time
We can ever look directly at the sun --
When it is on the horizon,
At the edge,
Of something new,
When we can see
The Lord face to face.

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