
Two Red-Shouldered Hawks Admire Creation



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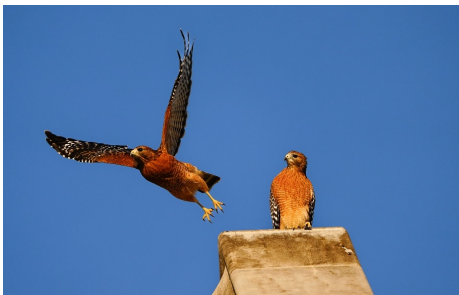
**An article for the *Cathedral Times*
by the Very Rev. Sam Candler, Dean of the Cathedral
October 8, 2023**

On the Saturday before we observed the Feast of Saint Francis, I arrived early at the Cathedral Farmers Market. My Saturdays are full and wondrous when I can get to the Farmers Market by 8:30! Familiar farmers and vendors have arranged their produce, the fruit of the earth; and the market overflows with tasty and creative creations.

As we prepared to celebrate St. Francis by blessing animals on Sunday (that next day), and thereby remembering and blessing all of creation, I reminded myself that the Cathedral Farmers Market is itself a celebration of creation. Here in the middle of the city, we gather around God's created goods from the ground and earth. And not just leaves and flowers and roots! But also eggs and sausages and meats and milks and cheeses and mushrooms. And then, there are what I might call "value-added" human creations! Pastries, of course, but also knitted textiles, and paintings, and carved things, and all manner of clever human creativities.

Our Saint Francis Day at the Cathedral of St. Philip, our celebration of creation, includes not just animals in Sunday church, but also our campus, providing a thriving place where community celebrates creation by creating!

When I walked around the Cathedral itself last Saturday, I saw what I am always looking for: our friendly, red-shouldered hawk. And there he was! He was perched on the peak of the long nave roof, right above the rose window. Inside the cathedral, right below him, the rose window was celebrating "Benedicite, Omnia Opera Domini," which means "Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord."



Just then, I was thrilled to watch a second red-shouldered hawk fly down to meet our friend. They both perched there, as if they were both crowning, or maybe overseeing, the Benedicite Omnia Opera rose window inside. Two hawks! Both hawks glistened beautifully in the morning sun. Indeed, all the people at the Farmers Market were also glistening beautifully in the morning sun.

I know some "nature-lovers" get tired of people. Some "nature-lovers" think people get in the way. But I disagree. People, too, even the weirdest of us, are also part of God's creation. The God who designs the glory of the outdoors also designs the glory of the human being. The community of people at the Farmers Market, we ourselves, are also worth celebrating, when we celebrate God's creation.

Well, this is what the red-shouldered hawks told me, from their throne above the Cathedral rose window on the Saturday before Saint Francis Day. I admired them. And they were admiring all of God's creation with me. Benedicite Omnia Opera Domini!

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Sam Candler".

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