
Go Show Yourselfs to the Priests

**an article for the *Cathedral Times*
by the Very Rev. Sam Candler
Dean of the Cathedral**



Two Sundays ago, it was a great delight, and honor, for me to preach at All Saints Chapel, at the University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee! The place is loved by many here at the Cathedral of St. Philip, and our two institutions share a close history. Indeed, the Sewanee shield and motto, "Ecce Quam Bono," ("Behold how good it is," from Psalm 133) is the subject of one of the three excellent stained glass windows in our Cathedral narthex hallway; the motto is also on the altar of the Saint Mary's Chapel. Many members of this community here at the Cathedral are members of that beautiful Sewanee community, too.

My sermon on that Sunday was titled, "Go Show Yourselfs To The Priests," which was the instruction that Jesus offered to the ten lepers near Samaria who wanted healing and mercy. I took a turn that is familiar to many of you who have heard me at the Cathedral of St. Philip; I focused on the priesthood of all believers. I imagine that the "priests" that Jesus meant were not the high priests of the great temple in Jerusalem.

Instead, the priests that Jesus meant could have easily been the priests in and around Samaria, which was also an ancient place of worship. (Remember the Samaritan woman at the well who told Jesus, "Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem" (John 4:20).

In fact, good priests are everywhere, and they are not all ordained in the same way. Many of them are not formally ordained at all. They are the leaders of our local communities of faith, and they share our burdens. A good priest shares the burdens of his or her people. "Go show yourselves to [these] priests," said Jesus, and the lepers were healed.

It is the instruction I give to people in our own time, who want healing, who want our communities and country to be healed. Go show yourselves, go be open and vulnerable, in your local communities of faith. In those communities, over time, is where we learn the values of healing: praise, thanks, mercy, faith, wellness — all of which values are part of that lovely gospel in Luke 17:11-19. We learn those values from the priesthood of all believers.

There are healing priests everywhere, and not necessarily all ordained in the same way. Thus, I was thrilled to worship on the Sewanee mountain with some good friends who have been priests to me! Below is a photograph of who was there. There was my wife, Boog, of course. But, look! Here are Sydney and David Shipps, former members of the Cathedral of St. Philip, who now worship and serve faithfully on the Sewanee mountain. There was Leigh Preston, who was the celebrant that day and who was sponsored to be a priest by

our Cathedral community! (And I deeply thank the new Chaplain at the University of the South, Chris Epperson —not pictured—who spent some time earlier in his ministry at our sister parish down the street, All Saints, Atlanta!)

Praise God for the refreshment, the healing, the understanding, the love, that emerge in our local communities of faith. Praise God for good priests everywhere. Healthy parishes, wherever they are, will save the world!

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
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