
All Things to All People Revisited

**An article from the *Cathedral Times*
by the Very Reverend Samuel G. Candler,
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What a grand and glorious and wide-ranging Sunday we had last week! As usual, the Cathedral held services throughout the Sunday, starting at 7:45 a.m. and concluding after the 7 p.m. service; and, as usual, those services contained all sorts and conditions of humanity.

But what else was going on? The Holy Eucharist Instruction Class some 60 children and their parents and friends attended the 8:45 service together, observing the conclusion of their six-week course. We were observing Scout Sunday, and Boy Scouts read the lessons and prayers. Our youth, throughout the morning, were collecting food and donations in two large barrels one labeled New York Giants and the other labeled New England Patriots. (Again, as usual, the Cathedral parish put more donations in the barrel of the winning Super Bowl team!)

St. Anne's Guild was helping us stock the food pantry of Buckhead Christian Ministry (as we will throughout the month of February). At 4 p.m., our Cathedral Choir helped us observe the Feast of the Presentation with a Candlemas Procession (its true date was February 2, but we moved its observance to Sunday afternoon).

We heard fine sermons throughout the day, but I repeat here some words from my own sermon at 8:45 titled "All Things to All People." The Cathedral represented the manifest glory of Jesus Christ in great ways on Sunday!

"Throughout my ministry as a priest, as I have tried to serve God's people, and God's church, advisers and consultants have insisted to me that I cannot be all things to all people. "You must choose your specialty, your particular call, your particular mission," they say especially advertising advisers, "After all, you can't be all things to all people."

But I tend to dismiss those advisers and consultants, who take their lead from too constrained a vision, who don't start with the glory of God. On the one hand, I know they are partly right. They are right in that by myself, I cannot be all things to all people. By myself. But on the other hand, I believe that "to be all things to all people" is a vision, even a goal. It is a vision inspired by St. Paul himself, when he wrote to the Corinthians (9:23, "I have become all things to all people.")

... I admit that, today, no one person of us can be all things to all people. By ourselves, we cannot represent the fullness of God. But together. "Together" is a different story. When we are together, black and white, young and old, liberal and conservative, Patriots fans and Giants fans, something happens ...

Ultimately, it is God who can be all things to all people. It is Jesus who became incarnate and so became the fulfillment of all the various hopes and needs of every person in the world. God meets all our hopes and fears, when God touches us in Jesus Christ. It is Jesus, who is all things to all people, so that he might save some. Individually, we cannot be all things to all people; but, together, we can be the Body of Christ."

(from the sermon of Sam Candler on February 5, 2012, titled, "All Things to All People." Read it all [here](#).)

Sam Candler signature



The Very Reverend Sam Candler

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