
The Lenten Dean's Forum Will

**An article from the *Cathedral Times*
by the Very Reverend Samuel G. Candler,
Dean of the Cathedral of St. Philip**

The Cathedral of St. Philip will offer a variety of ways for parishioners and friends to observe a holy Lent this year. For instance, our dear friend, Luke Timothy Johnson will return on Wednesday evenings for a five-week series on the Book of James. For instance, the clergy of the Cathedral will be offering Quiet Days. For instance, you might want to join one of the weekly Bible studies and formation groups that Cathedral clergy and leaders offer throughout the year. Lent is an appropriate time to explore one of these ongoing groups.

During Lenten Sundays, I will use the "Dean's Forum" to present a faith exploration series, which uses video, put together by one of the Episcopal Church's monastic communities, the Society of St. John the Evangelist (SSJE). The series, titled "Love Life," uses the Gospel of John and short daily video clips to call us to deeper relationship and community with our world.

I have not seen the actual videos yet; but I do know something about, and I trust, the Society of St. John the Evangelist. The SSJE community originated in Oxford, England (parish of Cowley) in 1866, as the first stable religious community of men to be established in the Anglican Church after the Reformation. The order came over to Boston in 1870, where they live at a monastery in Cambridge.

When I lived in the Northeast, I participated in several of their retreats (they have a house in West Newbury, too), and I continue to be struck by their wisdom, service, and progressive faith. They follow a Rule of Life and describe their practice as "rooted in the ancient monastic traditions of prayer and community life", but also "critically engaged with contemporary culture." With this practice, they "seek to know and share an authentic experience of God's love and mercy" and to help others uncover "their deepest desires, live with authenticity, and discover their place in the heart of God." (you can read more [here](#)).

The series they are presenting for Lent 2014 is titled, "Love Life," and it is available for individuals or groups. So, even if you do not plan on attending the Lenten Dean's Forums, you might want to use the daily, downloaded, videos personally.

On Sundays, here is what I anticipate. We will gather in Child Hall, and watch the short weekly compilation video (one does not need to keep up during the week to participate in Sunday sessions!). Then, I will lead discussion on the assigned topics (from the Gospel of John) all of which seek to reveal something of Jesus and his call to us to be in relationship with the world.

Again, the Dean's Forum requires no advance preparation or homework! And I think it will be fun! But you can also participate in the program individually, reading and watching daily devotions, which the brothers encourage. You can find more information [here](#).

So, "Love Life" this Lent! The Sunday series will begin on the First Sunday of Lent, 9 March, 2014, at 10:10 a.m. in Child

Hall.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sam Candler". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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

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