
Alleluia is Always Followed by Gratitude!

An article for the *Cathedral Times* by the Very Rev. Sam Candler

Alleluia! Christ is Risen!
The Lord is Risen! Alleluia!

And with our “Alleluia,” always comes “Thanks!” A true “Alleluia” is followed by “Gratitude.” True and generous and overwhelming thanks follow our Alleluias.

Thank you!

Thank you, thank you, thank you, for your presence and love during Holy Week of 2022, and Easter Day of 2022. The Cathedral Parish of St. Philip—with friends, associates, and visitors—turned out by the hundreds for the Sunday of the Passion: Palm Sunday. And we returned to our glorious practice of parading around the Peachtree Point in witness to the presence of Jesus in our hearts and into our city. Thank you!

Then: Thank you, to all of you who walked with us through Maundy Thursday, and the washing of feet and remembrance of the institution of the Lord’s Supper. Thank you, for your presence and prayer on Good Friday, when we heard again the Passion of our Lord, and when we prayed in somber silence. Thank you for your generous time on Holy Saturday, the Saturday before Easter when the campus is drenched with love and devoted preparation.

All these services were true services. They involved people serving – and giving, and volunteering, and hosting, and washing, and cleaning, and preparing, and arranging, and truly working – working to give witness to Jesus Christ our Lord. In the Church, a service is where people serve! Even if you were not here physically, you were serving!

Then: Then, the Alleluia arrived. The Alleluia arrived early on Easter morning, when workers arrived at the Cathedral as early as 3:30 a.m. We were all preparing for The Great Vigil. It arrived! No rain! The Great Fire of the Vigil towered over us and over Peachtree Road at 6:00 in the morning. The Lord is gloriously risen! Dogwood blossoms splashed us with baptismal water of renewal. The Alleluias continued all morning; over two thousand people were singing together. Even if you were not here physically, we felt your spirit and your support, your hope and your Alleluia. We heard your Alleluia wherever you were, and wherever you were praying and worshipping. Thank you!

Thank you for persevering in hope. Thank you for not succumbing to skepticism and cynicism. Thank you for ignoring the nagging voices of pessimism and despair. Yes, despair and death are all around us; that is obvious. Your Alleluia, however, defeats death and despair. Death and despair are the old life. Easter people are not the voices of the old. We are the voices of the new. We are the voices of Alleluia and Gratitude. Thank you for your songs of joy!



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