

CHRIST THE KING, A 2011

In light of the millionaire Congressmen who are breaking bad and talking tough about cuts in the social programs of U.S.;

hard Cuts to Medicaid and Medicare, social security, prisoner re-entry programs, faith based programs;

in light of the Supreme Court's impending hearing on Health Care legislation;

in light of millions of abortions, hundreds on death row, and tens of thousands of murders;

in light of the billions of dollars and millions of lives spent on war: war on drugs, on Iraq, on Afghanistan and no money for job creation, debt relief and homeowner bailout for the working and middle classes;

In light of 2,017,234 Americans in prison-mostly for non-violent drug offences;

In light of more than 7 million Americans -one in every 31 adults behind bars, or on probation or on parole thanks to the war on drugs;

In light of whole cities—Chicago/Camden where nearly every black male between ages of 16 and 35 has a criminal record;

In light of the increasing incarceration and criminalization of immigrants mostly from Mexico,

Consider the words of Christ the King to U.S.:

Depart from me, you accursed into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

I was hungry and you took away my food.

I was thirsty and you polluted my water.

I was an immigrant and you threw me in jail.

I was naked and you gave me no clothing.

I was sick and there was no health care.

I was in prison and you did not care about me.

When did we do this, you may ask?

When you voted for incarceration instead of education, privatized jails instead of jobs and the 1% over the 99%, you did it to me.

In the book of Ezekiel God says

The lost I will seek out,

The strayed, I will bring back

The injured I will bind up,

The sick I will heal.

In Camden at the Parish of St. Josephine Bakhita we are the ways and means by which God is the Good Shepherd. For this reason Christ the King says to you:

Come, you who are blessed by my Father.

Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

I was hungry and you gave me food.

I was thirsty and you gave me drink.

I was an immigrant to your land/church/city/and you welcomed me.

I was naked and you clothed me.

I was sick and you cared for me.

In prison, and you visited me.

When did we do this, you may ask.

When you minister at our Soup Kitchen,

When you minister at our After School and Summer School programs,

When you contribute to the Bishop's Appeal/House of Charity Campaign,

When you put your hard earned money in the second collections, you did this for me, says Christ the Shepherd King.

When we have Mass once a month at the jail in Camden,

When you organize with Camden Churches,

When you share from your want and not only your wealth, you did this for me, says Christ the Shepherd King.

Now come you who are blessed by our heavenly Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you.

In light of what is happening in millionaire Congress, on Wall Street and Madison Avenue, we need more young adults to step up, step in and step out in faith. The community needs you, our parish needs you and Christ the King calls you. We need you to be occupied by the things of God so that you can occupy Congress, Wall Street, Trenton and Madison Avenue with the Spirit of God.

The United States is in a crisis. This crisis is not only financial but it is also social, moral and spiritual. It is a crisis that each one of us faces individually and as a citizen. As individuals we have to make the same hard decisions that Congress has to make regarding your healthcare, security, education, finances and entertainment. Will you be guided purely by self-interest or will you be guided by

the common good? Will you be ruled by the ways of the world, the laws of the jungle or the ways of Christ the King?

Many of the 1% of people who control 40% of America's wealth have strayed from the common good. Christ the Good Shepherd searches to rescue them and bring them back to the human family--the 1% who are so addicted in their wealth, drunk with their power and enchanted with their stuff, believing that they are sleek and strong. If they will not repent God says, "The sleek and the strong, I will destroy."

The Day of Judgment is upon the U.S. How we as individuals and as a nation vote, spend our money and our time, the policies of how we treat the least among us, will decide if we inherit the kingdom of Christ the good Shepherd or if we are cursed into the eternal fire!

This assembly of two or more is a saving ark in a perfect storm!

This parish is an oasis in a desert of dry bones!

This community is a fortress against the armies of the undead!

This church is an occupation of life in a culture of death!

To you, Christ the Shepherd King says "Come, you who are blessed, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you."

Fr. Gerard Marable