



*International Communion of the
Charismatic Episcopal Church*

*Patriarch's Office
50 Saint Thomas Place
Malverne, NY 11565-1438*



To the Bishops, Clergy, and People of God in the Charismatic Episcopal
Church of North America

The year 2020 has been an interesting year and it is not yet over. We are still in a pandemic. We are not sure of the future regarding that pandemic. Is there going to be a vaccine by the end of the year or early next year? Are we going to have a second wave? Are we to believe, as some have suggested, that the darkest days are ahead of us, or that we are on the verge of a breakthrough in treatment and prevention?

We are also experiencing economic recovery, though I hear that is slowing down. Some businesses are still shut down. Many are facing the loss of income and it has put them in hard times. It seems that congress has stalled, and they are caught up in partisan politics and plays for power rather than finding ways to assist so many hurting people.

We are in an election cycle that has become more divisive than I can remember. I know of people who have lost long-standing friendships over politics. I know people who are afraid to express their opinions for fear of retaliation. I am uncertain what is going to happen no matter who wins the election. Could we be in for a more divisive atmosphere?

Someone said to me that they normally don't stay up on New Year's Eve, but this year they will make sure they are wide awake at midnight. Not so much to welcome in the New Year but to make sure 2020 leaves.

The life of the Church has gone on during all of this and will continue to go on after it is all over and we face the next thing. The life of the Church and her mission is not determined by the course of world events or circumstances, but it is determined by the Holy Spirit. Our mission is still focused on the King and the Kingdom. In this pandemic and this election cycle, the Word continues to be preached and the sacraments are being



International Communion of the Charismatic Episcopal Church

*Patriarch's Office
50 Saint Thomas Place
Malverne, NY 11565-1438*



administered. While we are forced to embrace the virtual world, we have discovered so many means of not surviving but increasing our outreach and our ability to preach the Good News.

I remember hearing a sermon on giving when I was a young pastor. It was a sermon that changed my perspective on giving to the Lord and His work. It led me to believe that life is meant to be a life of giving and not taking. In other words, the quality of life is determined not by what we get out of life, but what we put into life from our time, our talents, and our treasures. The preacher was talking about what to do in time of lacking finances and resources. The sermon was given in the late seventies when the nation was in the midst of run-away inflation, interest rates were at 18%, unemployment was extremely high, and we were lacking oil and gas. The shortages forced many Americans to stand in gas lines (if there was gas). I remember as a pastor having meeting after meeting about how we were going to heat the Church and if we were going to meet our small budget at the end of the year.

When I saw this teaching called “attack your lack” on a cassette tape (remember those) I immediately picked it up and listened to it. The central point of the message is that lack is not an obstacle but an opportunity to move by faith. He said it made no sense but the victory over lack is to give more away. If you are in need then you need to give at the point of your need. He said we are called to put our treasure where we want our heart to go and our heart should be going more and more into the direction of trusting God.

I know many are facing lack in the CEC. But God has a plan, and it is giving of our time, talent, and treasure into the work of the Kingdom. God's resources are unlimited, and He is ready to provide for us and it might be miraculously. I have found this teaching to be true over the 40 years I have served as a pastor and have tried to follow Jesus. So the Mission offering gives me and you a means of releasing our faith into the work of God in East Africa.



*International Communion of the
Charismatic Episcopal Church*

*Patriarch's Office
50 Saint Thomas Place
Malverne, NY 11565-1438*



So much has been accomplished through your generosity. We have schools, a seminary, churches, orphanages, water projects, and a host of other ministries. One hundred percent of the offering gathered on Mission Sunday goes to developing projects that generate money to increase the work of the Lord. There is a short video on CEC-NA or can be made available to you to watch and show you people. I hope every Cathedral shows the video and you can join them and watch it yourself.

We need to attack our lack. It is time to trust more and more in God's provision for us, because He is trustworthy, and His promises are true. It is not a time to worry. It is time to step up and step out with the message of Jesus. As we release our faith in Christ, we will find that even in our desperation He will hear and answer our prayer. We will give generously and then expect God to release blessings in abundance because He is a generous God.

Under His mercy,

The Most Rev. Craig W. Bates,
Patriarch