

TO THE CLERGY AND LAITY OF THE DIOCESE OF SYDNEY.

(A letter to be read at Morning and Evening Prayer throughout the Diocese on Sunday, September 24, 1939).

The deplorable outbreak of war calls us to Prayer and to Service.

With regard to Prayer, forms of Intercession for use in the Services of the Church on Sundays and on other occasions were issued within a few days after the outbreak of hostilities. I understand that within the first week 17,000 copies of these were ordered from the Printers and 6,000 copies of the Special Prayer Card for individual use.

The fact that the Commonwealth proposes to raise a preliminary force of 20,000 men means that as a Church there will be special tasks for us to perform and special service to be rendered. I desire to let you know at once that I am taking steps to organize the men and women of the Diocese so that our contribution as a Church may be made in the most effective way and with the least possible delay. Further details will be sent in a "Bulletin" to all the Parishes next week, but meanwhile I would indicate that, with the approval of the Standing Committee, I have inaugurated a special fund to provide, amongst other things, the stipends of Military Chaplains appointed for camp work and the cost of erecting and maintaining Church of England halls, refreshment and reading rooms at the larger camps, and one within the Cathedral grounds for somewhat similar purposes. It is also necessary for us to procure a quantity of special Church Service books for use of men attending services in the Camps.

Sir Kelsö King has kindly consented to act as Honorary Treasurer of the Fund. Contributions, which I earnestly ask for, may be sent to the Financial Secretary, Mr. A. L. Blythe, O.B.E., at the Church House, St. Andrew's Cathedral, George Street, Sydney. Archdeacon Hammond and the Rev. F. W. Tugwell (who served as a Military Chaplain overseas in the last war) have been appointed to raise funds for the objects we have in view.

I ask for the wholehearted co-operation of all the clergy and Church people of the Diocese to enable us to discharge the spiritual responsibilities which rest upon us at this critical moment.

I take the opportunity of expressing the hope that every parish in the Diocese will fall into line with the arrangement made by the Archbishop of Canterbury, at the request of His Majesty the King, that the whole Empire should observe Sunday, October 1st, as a Day of Intercession with Almighty God, to whom I commend you for grace and peace. At the Services on this day the forms of Prayer already authorised by me are appointed to be used.

Believe me,

Yours sincerely,

HOWARD SYDNEY.

21st September, 1939.