

Diocesan Church House,  
George Street, Sydney.  
13th May, 1941.

re Day of Penitence and Humiliation

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I write to ask that on Empire Sunday, May 25, the note of penitence and humiliation may be sounded in our services. I quote from the preface to a service I am preparing for those who dare to use it -

We are facing one of the gravest crises in our National History. The area of war is gradually extending, and there are not wanting signs that the countries bordering on the Pacific may yet have to face further dangers and difficulties.

As students of God's Holy Word we must recognise that in such situations the men and women who were in closest touch with God regarded these portents as a call to definite repentance and humiliation.

We need to take the same attitude. We should consider our responsibilities to God.

We have been put in trust with a sacred deposit of Divine truth. Have we fulfilled our trust? The indifferent at home, and the mass of the unevangelised abroad may furnish the answer. We have been called to be witnesses to God's truth, and we have been negligent in our witness. There is an easy acquiescence in that which is God-dishonouring, and a too great reluctance to come out wholly for God in personal consecration and separation from evil.

As a consequence grave national sins have been tolerated, and have taken toll of the spiritual life of the community. Let us therefore:

1. Return to God with our whole heart.
2. Bewail our sinful participation in things of the world, the flesh and the devil.
3. Acknowledge our faithlessness in true Christian witness.
4. Humbly implore God to spare us and our people that we may be amongst the living to praise Him.

A copy of the service will be sent to each Rector next week. Clergy may find it helpful to read part of this preface in calling their people to prayer.

Believe me,  
Yours sincerely,

Howard Sydney