

A Letter from the Archbishop to the Clergy.

LENT, 1931.

My Dear Brethren,

It is our very manifest duty to attempt to turn the present national crisis into a means of spiritual blessing, and to use it as an opportunity for bringing home to the hearts of the people the claims of God upon their lives. The approaching season of Lent may well be directed towards taking advantage of this opportunity. I am venturing, therefore, to make some suggestions as to the use of Lent this year.

1. The foundation of all our work lies in personal contact between Clergy and People; and I suggest that a **thorough visitation** be made of your parish by yourself, with the help of your assistants and Laity. With the use of all assistance available, it will be possible to cover the parish (in most instances) during the six weeks of Lent, but the work will require to be carefully organised. The outcome of this visitation will be the gathering of complete parochial statistics and other information by which all parochial organisations and services may be strengthened, and avenues opened for further opportunities for spiritual work.

2. At the same time it will be well to have some **special evangelistic effort going through Lent**, preferably conducted by yourself. This might take the form of direct personal mission preaching at the usual Sunday Services, aimed at arousing consciences, strengthening faith, and stimulating dedication to God. At these services also there might be prayers for the nation, bringing before the Throne our great public needs and sins. If you think it advisable, this evangelistic work in the Church might be supplemented by street preaching.

3. I would further suggest that your mid-week service be devoted to **Intercession**, and to the encouragement of your workers. Both of these things are of immense importance. Perhaps at these services you might like to invite your brother Clergy to come to your Church and tell your people how the work is progressing in their parishes. The effect of this will be to make your people feel that they are participating in a great movement directed to meet the great spiritual needs of the nation.

4. I believe that the Clergy themselves will obtain much strength by **meeting together for prayer and consultation** with regard to this work. This might be done through the Rural Deaneries, or in more informal ways. Co-operation and fellowship are means which are used by the Holy Ghost, and the more we have of them the better for God's work. It might be possible for two parishes, or a group of parishes to co-operate in this effort.

5. I have prepared a **letter to the Laity**, which you may distribute at your discretion to your people. This letter has been written in order to encourage your people to help you in your work. If you desire to make use of the letter in your parish, will you kindly inform me how many copies you will need? You will understand that it is important that the letter be **carefully distributed**.

6. We believe that it is God who is calling us to this effort, and it must be begun, continued, and ended in Him. He can do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think; I therefore suggest that **you begin by strengthening your own faith in Him**, and by personal prayer and dedication make yourself a means by which His grace may reach your people.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN CHARLES SYDNEY.

Kindly sign and return to—

THE ARCHBISHOP,

Diocesan Church House,

George Street, Sydney.