

1975

A Brief Statement

Immigration Sunday

23rd February

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Bishops' Commission for Social and Charitable Works*

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Today is Immigration Sunday. [2854]

A quarter of a century ago the Bishops issued the first Immigration Sunday statement. In it they appealed for generosity in receiving and assisting newcomers of whom not a few had suffered severely in the cause of Faith and Freedom.

In particular the Bishops asked that newcomers would not be viewed as foreigners [2855] but as potential citizens who desired to love Australia as their new homeland and its people as fellow citizens.

The passage of twenty-five years has not altered in any substantial manner the [2856] nature of such appeals, nor lessened the need of concern and care for immigrants who still, in considerable numbers, desire to make their homes among us.

Immigration Sunday retains its original objective of informing Catholics of [2857] extensive religious and national developments flowing from the great tide of post war immigration. Support is still sought for attendant liabilities and responsibilities. There is demanded of us today, as in the past quarter of a century, a full consciousness of personal responsibility and a readiness even for sacrifice.

In practical terms, we, as Catholics, are asked to-day, as previously, to contribute [2858] generously to the annual migration collection. There are a multiplicity of undertakings that are the continuing concern and liability of the Migration Committees, and making heavy financial demands.

Of such concerns none is more important nor more productive of greater good than [2859] that of the work of the Migrant Chaplains. These devoted priests, who attend to the spiritual needs of their fellow nationals with apostolic zeal, merit utmost support.

Most important also is the education, religious as well as secular, of the migrant [2860] children. Heavy expenditures are involved. Please help generously with these.

Under God's Providence, we Australians have much reason to be proud and [2861] grateful for the growth and enrichment given Nation and Church alike, by some three million post war immigrants. Building worthily upon these fortifications we all must strive for the extension of God's Kingdom and make of this country a

veritable bulwark of religious solidarity, a nation cohesive in its identity, a land of united, happy, God fearing people.

“May all peoples praise you, God. The earth hath yielded her fruit. May God, Our God, Bless you.” (Ps. 66.5.6)

For the Australian Episcopal Conference Commission for Social and Charitable Works

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Source: Archives of the Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office (ACMRO), Canberra, Australia.
