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Homily

14th Sunday in Ordinary Time

4th July 2010.

Given the visit of Father Emanuel and the focus on the mission work of the Church that just happens to be the Gospel that's set down for this Sunday it couldn't be more appropriate in terms of the work of the missions. Interestingly a lot of people would think that there are an abundance of priests in African nations a number of them from some parts of Africa have been recruited to assist here in Australia and that might be true in some countries its certainly not true in the Diocese from which Father Emanuel comes. The ratio of priest to people over there is one for every thirteen thousand. The ratio here according to the statistics here in the Archdiocese of Melbourne that's all priests including the older ones the retired one and the ones who are still going is but here in the Archdiocese of Melbourne is one to every seventeen hundred so we go from seventeen hundred to thirteen thousand per priest so the enormous work load that Father Emanuel and the small number of fellow diocesan priests in coping for I think there's twelve diocesan priests and some religious and they are to look after over two hundred thousand Catholic people in their diocese so it's a lot of work and we're very lucky to have him here then again we might say he is very lucky to come to Geelong isn't he of course but we couldn't have him come to the Archdiocese and to Victoria without coming to Geelong so we're delighted to have him here so Father Emanuel welcome to St. Mary's and we're certainly delighted to have you with us.

Thank you Father Kevin for welcoming me and thank you my dear people of God for having me and giving me a warm welcome. I came the first time to Australia to 2008 as he mentioned earlier as a pilgrimage for the world youth day, and then I ended in Melbourne here to work for some time for about three months with the Sudanese Community in Dandenong, Noble Park and St. Albans, then I went back home to Sudan. The Parish Priest with whom I work in Dandenong he liked his Australian footy as several of you today they're asking me do you like the footy? And some they invited tomorrow to go and see Geelong football but unfortunately I will be here for some months and I will not be able to go, that is my unlucky to see the football face to face. The Parish priest where I was in Dandenong for the time was a fan of Geelong and he was always encouraging me to watch when Geelong was playing and in my mind I want to see where is this Geelong and this time I have been invited by the Catholic mission to come and preach on behalf of the Propagation of Faith Appeal and am happy for me to come here and I was told Geelong is a very cold place but the weather is not so cold as people are saying. Thank you for all that welcome, and may God bless and increase His love to you all of you in this Parish this beautiful basilica of St. Mary as she is really beautiful.

As you heard, I am from Sudan. And Sudan is a very complicated country. You will doubt whether Sudan in the north east continent of Africa Sudan is the largest country in the continent of Africa. It is 2.5 almost million kilometres square, with this vastness area of Sudan it has a population of the latest 2008 of forty one million about forty one million inhabitants but with this diversity of religion ethnic group one Sudan has both the religion Christianity and Islam. More in the North is Islam, Arab dominated and more African background in the west and the south where I come from and Arab Christians. And again with this different religious background Sudan as a country it has more than two hundred

ethnic groups and each ethnic group is still keeping their own tradition culture languages and everything and that is where with this diversity of religious beliefs and diversity of ethnic groups where there is a conflict. Conflict over power, conflict over wealth conflict over everything. And likely people's area which is rich they are the one growing poorer that is the south maybe some of you have children in Africa or Sudan working with the U.N. The south it has the oil, the richest part but Sudan gained independence in 1956 from the British colony. Since the time of independence up to now more than fifty five years Sudan has never enjoyed peace especially the southern part which is we can tell and generalise region by the Arab control of the political system of the wells of everything that is left Sudan in problem and that is the first war, Sudan experienced two civil wars, the first civil war started in 1955 that is the year before independence that is in the south; and as I mentioned earlier it was because of lack of equality lack of development, lack of sharing especially power in terms of governorship and in terms of wealth that is whatever they have for the good of the people to be socially or economically, that first war ended after seventeen years from 1955 to early 1970's and a peace accord was signed. But again our brothers the northerners the Arabs the Muslim they didn't honour what they had signed in the agreement they said it was not in the Holy bible or Holy Scripture or Holy Koran that anytime you can change a human being is free to change his mind and therefore they dishonour that agreement and again our people went through another civil war that started in 1983 to 2005 which is cared with a comprehensive peace agreement for the last five years.

Now is this the end of the war in Sudan it is not, we are still having war in other parts of Sudan in the Western part of Sudan the Darfur region which the massacre of people discrimination killing of people, raping of women, and every kind of evil being done to this people of the west and they are not Christians as the war it was between Christians and Muslims, north and south, Arabs and Africans the westerners the majority are African origin but they are Muslims.

And again being subjected to these difficulties and suffering and in this why am I here today? I am speaking on behalf of the Catholic Mission. Catholic Mission is one of the organisations here in Australia is promoting the work of mission and that work of mission is bringing the universality of the Catholic church and that is what is so called the congregation of the evangelisation of people in which my country and other many countries belong which is still the mission of evangelisation is going on the propagation of faith is going on. And in this there are a lot of challenges he mentioned some already in my diocese we have a good number of people population but the number of priests is less.

The Propagation of Faith in Rome this is the office which is responsible for the following the faith and evangelisation the mission in the countries like Africa Asia and many other countries in Latin America is already mentioned thanks to you for your donation to the people of East Timor which is one of the countries still much from war and still need help which without your help without your support without your prayer their mission the work of Christ it will not grow. The kingdom of God which is mentioned in the first reading we had is the peace for the nation it will not come. Christ has come to bring peace, but many people they do not live that peace and that peace will come to them through you, through your donation, through your prayers and that support will help the people really to realise really that they are human beings and realise that there are some other people which make them to be in solidarity with them and they call it the Catholic Universal Church.

I have just talked briefly about Sudan and about what I am here for, a lot of things a lot of challenges. He mentioned the number of priests in my diocese is very few and not only in my diocese in many other diocese. The harvest is rich we heard from the Gospel but the labourers are few and that is Sudan or many other countries which are suffering from war. They are people they love a lot of things one of the basic human needs like health, like education, like shelter, like whatever what is lucky and that is an obstacle for many people to come forward if there is no good education. Many children are going without any basic needs of human needs as I mentioned and that is an obstacle for coming encouraging vocations. But thanks be to God for the Propagation of Faith the Evangelisation of People in Rome and through the efforts of many Catholic Missions like the Catholic Mission here in Australia now particularly now here in Melbourne which is asking and encouraging people to participate in the work of mission to help other nations.

Christ in the Gospel of today we have Him sending his disciples supposed to go two by two and He gave them instructions receive whatever you're having and give whatever you have but unfortunately many people they have the will to do something but unfortunately they do not have the means to do it and that is what is happening in Sudan and other countries in the world people who are under privileged and those people who are under privileged they need your help they need your support they need your prayer they need whatever you have to help them to go on to grown up to fulfil the mission that Christ has entrusted to each one of them.

And particularly to those people who are working in the mission world men and women religious people priests who are working for the needs of those people really they are facing a lot of challenges and whatever you are giving the donation you are offering and through the Catholic Mission which offering to the evangelisation of people in Rome and the evangelisation of people send it distribute it to the people to the Churches who are in need it will help many people especially children especially mothers in terms of basic needs.

And the people in those countries especially my country in Sudan they have a very credibility in the church especially the Catholic Church because this is the place where they get hope and this is the place where they can not only be consoled. As I've mentioned they get hope that is from this place they can get whatever they want especially the school which is run by the church and especially the other facilities for the people and this is without the help of other people those facilities which is rendering services to the poor people would not be able to run. The Catholic Mission this year faith hope love, we have the faith it will bring love this will bring hope, hope to people who are living in this place hope for people who are living this place hope to people who are not sure as I've mentioned the experience of the people of Sudan hope to people who are living in Sudan since the time they are independent they are in war some people like my age we are born in the war and we grew in the war and we don't know what will happen next.

Even if now there is a peace signing in Sudan it will be done but we are not sure if this peace it will be for or not until next year we are waiting still till 2011 for the referendum whether it will be one country or two countries and again it is still doubt and that doubt whether they want it to be the profit of doom but we want to have hope that God will work His own wonders to His own people like He did His own wonders to His people of Israel as we had from the first reading. And again that wonders the people who are living in this place people who are living an easy life difficult life they need the support the help of other people as St. Paul said in the second reading rich or poor whatever background is but again the faith makes us to be one. Faith makes us to be one and that faith it brings hope to other people and that

hope will bring the love and the love is the building of the kingdom of God among us in this world and with this may I appeal from you as it is mentioned to you today it is an appeal from the Catholic Mission to you to help the Churches to help those people. Believe me whatever you put it is not something it is not nothing, it is something , something to people who are living on less than a dollar one dollar a day to people especially to children who cannot find the basic needs for their life.

May God bless you and bless your effort especially the effort you are doing for the people of East Timor as I was told by your Parish Priest and that is a great work as Christ has mentioned today sending the people, you cannot go and especially this reading maybe special to me and to Father Kevin as people who are being sent to preach the word of God but again that preaching the word of God Jesus put in here need people will receive it and that reception also will come with warmly hearted with given out whatever they have Praise be Jesus Christ and May God bless you all. Thank you.