

### ***Notes and Requirements***

- *For the Commissioning Ritual the Head and Assistant Head of each Cell and Association of the parish need to be invited to be present for the Eucharist. The Assistant Head will be needed at the commissioning ritual.*
- *A list of names of all the Lay Heads to be commissioned to be kept ready for the commissioning Rite.*
- *The Book of Blessings, marked to the page of Blessings of Sacred Things and Objects.*
- *Sufficient number of crosses, the type that can be pinned on to a lapel/ collar or threaded with a cord and worn around the neck, as a sign of commissioning of the lay leader. These should be placed in a tray, one for each person being commissioned.*
- *Pascal candle to be lit for the service.*
- *Make arrangements for reserving sufficient seats in the front pews for the Lay Leaders.*
- *Each Cell and Association could be encouraged to display their work through kiosks or charts (creatively) put up around the church premises. This could be an opportunity for them to enrol new members too. They need to delegate their group members to be there after every mass.*

## **INTRODUCTORY RITES**

### ***Introduction***

Today is the Solemnity of Sts. Peter and Paul, the great stalwarts of the church who led by example and spread the faith in a humongous manner. We can never stop learning from their missionary lives and give glory to the Almighty. We are also celebrating Laity Sunday today and each of us can learn to be great missionary disciples of Christ like Sts. Peter and Paul, in a world that is in pain and distress. We shall pray specially for the Lay Heads of all our Cells and Associations as they renew their commitment to lead their members to serve the church.

Please stand and join in the entrance hymn ...

### **Entrance Procession and Song**

A solemn entrance procession, with lay leaders to be commissioned, the altar servers and the Celebrant, accompanied by the singing of any suitable processional hymn.

### ***Penitential Rite***

#### ***Gloria***

## **LITURGY OF THE WORD**

### **Readings**

**1st Reading-** Acts of the Apostles: 12: 1-11

**Responsorial Psalm-** 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9

**2nd Reading-** 2 Timothy 4: 6-8, 17-18

**Acclamation** -To be sung (Second Timothy 1: 10)

**Gospel-**Matthew 16: 13-19

**Homily Hints** (*Use points you find suitable to your situation*)

### ***Reflections on God's word***

(From the homily of Pope Leo at his first Mass as Pope in the Sistine Chapel on 9 May 2025, addressing the cardinal electors who had chosen him.)

“You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Mt 16:16). In these words, Peter, asked by the Master, together with the other disciples, about his faith in him, expressed the patrimony that the Church, through the apostolic succession, has preserved, deepened, and handed on for 2,000 years. Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God: the one Savior who alone reveals the face of the Father. In him, God, in order to make himself close and accessible to men and women, revealed himself to us in the trusting eyes of a child, in the lively mind of a young person, and in the mature features of a man (cf. *Gaudium et Spes*, 22), finally appearing to his disciples after the Resurrection with his glorious body. He thus showed us a model of human holiness that we can all imitate, together with the promise of an eternal destiny that transcends all our limits and abilities.

Peter, in his response, understands both of these things: the gift of God and the path to follow in order to allow himself to be changed by that gift. They are two inseparable aspects of salvation entrusted to the Church to be proclaimed for the good of the human race. Indeed, they are entrusted to us, who were chosen by him before we were formed in our mothers’ wombs (cf. Jer 1:5), reborn in the waters of Baptism and, surpassing our limitations and with no merit of our own, brought here and sent forth from here, so that the Gospel might be proclaimed to every creature (cf. Mk 16:15) ...

Peter, however, makes his profession of faith in reply to a specific question: “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” (Mt 16:13). The question is not insignificant. It concerns an essential aspect of our ministry, namely, the world in which we live, with its limitations and its potential, its questions and its convictions. “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” **If we reflect on the scene we are considering, we might find two possible answers, which characterize two different attitudes.**

First, there is the world’s response. Matthew tells us that this conversation between Jesus and his disciples takes place in the beautiful town of Caesarea Philippi, filled with luxurious palaces, set in a magnificent natural landscape at the foot of Mount Hermon, but also a place of cruel power plays and the scene of betrayals and infidelity. This setting speaks to us of a world that considers Jesus a completely insignificant person, at best someone with an unusual and striking way of speaking and acting. And so, once his presence becomes irksome because of his demands for honesty and his stern moral requirements, this “world” will not hesitate to reject and eliminate him.

Then there is the other possible response to Jesus’ question: that of ordinary people. For them, the Nazarene is not a charlatan, but an upright man, one who has courage, who speaks well and says the right things, like other great prophets in the history of Israel. That is why they follow him, at least for as long as they can do so **without too much risk or inconvenience**. Yet to them he is only a man, and therefore, in times of danger, during his passion, they too abandon him and depart disappointed.

What is striking about these two attitudes is their relevance today. They embody notions that we could easily find on the lips of many men and women in our own time, even if, while essentially identical, they are expressed in different language. Even today, there are many settings in which the Christian faith is considered absurd, meant for the weak and unintelligent. Settings where other securities are preferred, like technology, money, success, power, or pleasure.

**These are contexts where it is not easy to preach the Gospel and bear witness to its truth, where believers are mocked, opposed, despised or at best tolerated and pitied. Yet, precisely for this reason, they are the places where our missionary outreach is desperately needed.** A lack of faith is often tragically accompanied by the loss of meaning in life, the neglect of mercy, appalling violations of human dignity, the crisis of the family and so many other wounds that afflict our society...

This is the world that has been entrusted to us, a world in which, as Pope Francis taught us so many times, we are called to bear witness to our joyful faith in Jesus the Savior. Therefore, it is essential that we too repeat, with Peter: “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Mt 16:16). It is essential to do this, first of all, in our personal relationship with the Lord, in our commitment to a daily journey of conversion. Then, to do so as a Church, experiencing together our fidelity to the Lord and bringing the Good News to all (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 1).

*Witness*

Claude And Norma Alvares: **Tireless activists, Environmentalists, Nature advocates**

This husband-wife duo, with their keen understanding of ecology, an incomparable commitment to environmental preservation, and laughing irreverence of the status quo, for 40 years the Alvares' have adroitly shepherded Goa's environmental movement. The implausible victories they have won along the way, many under the umbrella of the Goa Foundation, have been nothing short of monumental. A partnership forged during their student years at Mumbai University, turned into a lifetime of social activism. - In 1987, they filed the first Public Interest Litigation in Goa for the cancellation of mining leases to extract sand from beaches;

- in 1992 they were prominent in the successful 'rebellion' against American chemical multinational Du Pont, forcing it to retreat;
- in 1998 the Goa Foundation was nominated to the State's Coastal Zone Management Authority; and Claude to the Supreme Court's Committee on Hazardous Wastes;
- in 1997 and 1998, through the People for Animals-Goa, of which they are founder trustees, they halted the barbarous practices of organised bull fights and dog shooting in Goa;
- in 2002, they commenced a unique project to rehabilitate a mining site;
- in 2006, they took over Goa's largest garbage dump... and within three months cleared it to the extent that they were able to host a tea party at the site;
- in 2009, they set up a composting unit to deal with fish waste from the Mapusa fish market; and
- in 2012, they won a prodigious victory when the Supreme Court halted mining in Goa until it could be regulated on the basis of a writ petition filed by their foundation.

But these are just the highlights. Alongside this immense body of work, the Alvares' have written and published books, and mentored dozens of conservationists in their coastal state. Their harmonious partnership may well be the result of their opposing personalities. Where the sharp-minded Norma is the pragmatic lawyer par excellence who leads the foundation's legal tussles (she won a Padma Shri in 2002 for her legal work enforcing animal rights), Claude is the maverick philosopher and scholar seeking to decolonise thinking in the global south. Together, the Alvares' have truly laid a foundation upon which generations of conscientious Indians can stake their environmental battles.

## **COMMISSIONING OF LAY LEADERS**

*Please see 'Notes and Requirements' above.*

### **An Outline of the Rite**

#### **Calling of the candidates**

**Celebrant:** All the Heads of Cells and Associations, please come forward as your name is called out.

*(Note: The calling of Candidates will be done by a person deputed by the Parish; as the names are called out, they will form a semi - circle in front of the Sanctuary.*

#### **Blessing of Sacred things from the Book of Blessings**

*Two altar servers will carry the Book of Blessings, sprinkler and the tray with crosses to the Celebrant. After blessing the crosses, they are kept on a table. The Assistants are requested to come up and stand behind their leaders.*

#### **Instruction**

**Celebrant:** *addressing the Candidates in these or similar words.*

Dear sons and daughters in Christ:

Through his son, who became a man for us, God the Father has revealed the mystery of salvation and brought it to fulfilment. Jesus Christ made all things known to us and then entrusted His church with his mission. By the grace of your Baptism, you will assist in this mission, and so take on a special office within the Christian community; you will be given a responsibility in the service of the faith, which is rooted in the Word of God. You will proclaim that word, instruct children, youth and adults in the faith and prepare them to live their Christian lives worthily. You will bring the message of salvation to those who have not yet received it. Thus, with your help men and women will come to know God our Father and his Son Jesus Christ, whom he sent, and so be able to reach eternal life.

**Celebrant:** Are you all resolved to work in your ministry and serve to build up the Parish and the Archdiocese?

**Response:** Yes, we are.

**Celebrant:** Are you all resolved to fulfil your role with utmost care and loyalty to Christ and his church?

**Response:** Yes, we are.

### **Invitation to prayer**

**Celebrant:** Brothers and Sisters,  
Let us ask God the Father to bless these servants  
Who have been chosen for ministry.  
Let us pray that they may be fruitful  
to the work entrusted to them,  
proclaim Christ to the world,  
and so, give to our Father in Heaven.

*The Celebrant invites the congregation to stand and stretch their hands towards the candidates as he prays. He invites the Assistants to place their right hand on their leader's shoulder, as a sign of their support to them in service.*

**Prayer:**       **Celebrant:** *(continues with hands raised)*  
Lord God, source of all goodness and light,  
you sent your only Son, the Word of Life,  
to reveal to mankind the mystery of your love.

Strengthen our brothers and sisters  
who have been chosen for ministry.  
Grant that as they meditate constantly on your Word  
they may grow in wisdom and faithfully proclaim it.

As they now receive the sign of the cross  
that marks and sets them on their mission,  
may their lives be more in conformity  
with the cross of Christ.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

**All: Amen**

### **Signing of the Forehead**

**Celebrant:** *(addressing all the candidates)*  
Receive the cross on your forehead.  
It is Christ himself who now strengthens you  
with this sign of his love.  
**Lay leaders: Amen.**

*The Celebrant then goes around signing the forehead of each candidate and giving each a cross; the Assistant pins it on for them or puts the threaded cross around the neck of their leader.  
(An appropriate song may be sung, especially if there are many candidates.)*

**All the Leaders return to their seats.**

**PROFESSION OF FAITH** *(You may use the Nicene Creed - projected overhead, or done in dialogue form).*

### **PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL**

The Parish Liturgy Team should write the general intercessions and ensure that they include at least one petition for the newly commissioned Lay Ministers and their Ministries particularly with reference to the Parish **or use the one below:**

#### **Celebrant:**

Dear brothers and sisters, on this Laity Sunday, as we celebrate the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, pillars of the Church's mission, let us pray for all lay faithful, called to share in their apostolic zeal by proclaiming Christ in the world.

**Response:** *Lord, graciously hear our prayer.*

**For the universal Church and for our Holy Father, Pope Leo IV, Bishops, Priests Religious and Laity:** That, inspired by the courage of Saints Peter and Paul, the Church may boldly proclaim the Gospel through the witness of both clergy and laity. *Let us pray to the Lord.*

**For the leaders of the world:** That they may courageously uphold truth and justice, even when challenged by adversity and opposition... *we pray to the Lord.*

**For the newly commissioned Lay Ministers and their ministries:** That the Holy Spirit may guide and strengthen them in their service, so that through their witness, many may encounter Christ in the Word, in the Eucharist, and in the love of the Christian community. Let us pray to the Lord.

**For our families and communities:** That they may be schools of faith, love, and service, nurturing the laity's formation for life and mission in today's challenging world. *Let us pray to the Lord.*

**For our departed loved ones in the Parish:** That they may rejoice forever in the communion of saints, having faithfully laboured in the vineyard of the Lord. *Let us pray to the Lord.*

**Pause** for personal intentions..... *Let us pray to the Lord.*

### **LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST**

**Preparation of Gifts** (Hymn to be taken during the collection and procession of gifts)

**Eucharistic Prayer (as usual)**

#### **Concluding Rites**

Final prayer and blessing. (Taken from the special blessings in the Missal)

Final Hymn

*(The Celebrant could encourage the lay faithful to join the cell or association of their choice, informing them about the enrolments that will happen after Mass)*

