**COMMISSIONING & BLESSING OF NEWLY ESTABLISHED PARISH PASTORAL ASSEMBLY**

Since the Parish Pastoral Assembly is a ministry of service to the entire parish, it is most appropriate that new members are introduced to the parish community. This is best done by commissioning new members to the Assembly within a Sunday Eucharist. This is an important way of connecting the Assembly with the community and for the parish to recognise, accept, support and pray for all members of the Assembly.

*Anning, C. (2007). Handbook for Parish Pastoral Councils. Third edition. Faith and Life. Archdiocese of Brisbane. Australia. (p.28)*

*The commissioning should take place after the homily, before the Creed.*

**Parish Priest:**

My dear friends, we have come to commission you into a specialized ministry of Christ’s holy church. Christ alone is the source of all Christian ministry, through the ages calling men and women to serve.

By the Holy Spirit all who believe and are baptized receive a ministry to witness to Jesus as Saviour and Lord, and to love and serve those with whom they live and work. We are ambassadors for Christ, who reconciles and makes whole. We are the salt of the earth; we are the light of the world.

Following his resurrection and ascension, Christ gave gifts to the church. These gifts were that “some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.” (Eph. 4:11)

Today we come before God, the Almighty- Father, seeking his blessing on your ministry as members of the Parish Pastoral Assembly.

**Parish Priest:** I invite those who have been chosen to serve our community as members of the Parish Pastoral Assembly to stand.

*Names of Parish Pastoral Assembly members are read out by the Parish Priest or a member of the out-going Parish Pastoral Assembly*.

**Parish Priest**: You have been called from this parish community to serve as a member of the Parish Pastoral Assembly. Will you accept the responsibilities of parish leadership that we place on you?

**PPA members:** We will.

**Parish Priest:** Will you strive to be more like Christ so that you will be better able to serve his people?

**PPA members: We will**.

*The Parish Priest addresses the Assembly members as he prepares to bless the Bibles.*

**Parish Priest:**

The Bible is the inspired word of God. As Catholics, we believe this is the book of the Church, the sacred literature of God’s people. Our church encourages us to read and reflect frequently on the pages of this book so that we may be continually formed into committed disciples of Jesus Christ and cooperate in his mission and the work of evangelisation. May the Word of God always inspire and direct you in your ministry, that the Lord who begins the good work in you, will bring it to fulfilment.

*The Bibles are now blessed and presented to each member of the Parish Pastoral Assembly.*

**Parish Priest:**

Saving God,

you have revealed your life and your love

through the lives of our ancestors in the faith.

From Abraham and Sarah, Moses and David,

to Mary and Joseph, to Peter and Paul,

you have spoken your word and called your people to fuller life.

We honour your presence in these Scriptures,

and we pray that the words of this sacred book

may become more deeply the living word of God,

forming our thoughts, desires, and actions.

We ask your blessing on these Holy Bibles ✠ in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

*The new members of the Parish Pastoral Assembly are invited to publicly declare their commitment to service in their parish.*

**Parish Priest:** I invite the members of the Parish Pastoral Assembly to express their commitment through the words of their pledge.

**PPA Members:**

We are grateful for the trust placed in us and we accept this ministry within our community. We pledge ourselves to serve our parish with joy, love, and enthusiasm. We will work to build the life of the Christian community in our parish and diocese. We will strive to be conscious of the needs of all our parishioners and to make Christ present for everyone, following his example as one who served. We ask your prayerful support, encouragement, and insights as we commit ourselves to serve this community.

*The Parish Priest now blesses the new Parish Pastoral Assembly.*

**Parish Priest:**

Ever-living God,

you gather us together as [name of parish] Parish

to carry the Gospel of Christ to all people.

Bless ✠ the members of this Parish Pastoral Assembly.

Let your Spirit enlighten their minds and guide all their actions,

that they may be renewed in faith and united in love

bringing to fulfilment the work of your Church

to your greater honour and glory.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen

*The newly commissioned members of the Parish Pastoral Assembly return to their seat and join the assembly in the Profession of Faith.*

**Prayers of Intercession.**

*A selection of these, or similar prayers may be included in the parish’s general intercessions of the Mass.*

**Parish Priest:**

We are gathered to intercede for the faithful of our parish. Let us open our minds and hearts to the presence of the Spirit and pray for their needs.

1. For the members of our Parish Pastoral Assembly; may they prayerfully carry out their duties, witnessing to the presence of Christ with joyful hearts. Lord, hear us.
2. For all gathered here; that we may live out our baptismal promises and reach out with compassion and care to those in need. Lord, hear us.
3. We pray for the members of our Parish Pastoral Assembly. May they always discern the will of God in responding to the needs of those whom they are called to serve. Lord, hear us.
4. May our Parish Pastoral Assembly listen to the needs of the people and respond wise and prudent decision for the good of the community. Lord, hear us.
5. May our parish be open to the ideas of others and foster a spirit of cooperation which brings us together in unity as brothers and sisters in Christ. Lord, hear us.
6. Through our participation in the Eucharist, may your Holy Spirit unite us in the service the Gospel. Alert us to the needs of your community and bless us with the resolve to be responsive. Lord, hear us.
7. Help our Parish Pastoral Assembly cultivate a spirit of openness which encourages all our parishioners to offer their gifts for the building up of the Body of Christ. Lord, hear us.
8. For those who believe they have nowhere to turn. May our parish assist them in seeking out the help they need, realising they are not alone in this world. Lord, hear us.

**Parish Priest:**

Gracious God, may your Holy Spirit inflame our hearts, enliven our hope and open out minds, so that together with our brothers and sisters in faith we may recognise you in the Scriptures and in the breaking of bread. May your Holy Spirit transform us into one body and lead is to walk humbly in a spirit if service, love, justice, faith and joy, as witnesses of your resurrection, through Christ our Lord. Amen.