

**Intercollegiate Commissioning Mass
September 5, 2018**

“Today’s young people are longing for an authentic Church.” These words come from the Pre-Synodal gathering in March this year. Young Catholics gathered in Rome and joined the discussion online during the Pre-Synodal gathering informing the discussions that will take place at the Synod in October. This is a strong statement, one we must never forget. We are here to be an authentic Church, an authentic people. We are here to be authentically missionary disciples of Jesus Christ. My sisters and brothers it is an honor to be with in commission the leaders who will guide this authentic encounter with Christ in your communities and campuses.

God has given us a great gift in the reading from St. Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians. I invite each of you, especially you who are called to serve as leaders in our ministries among your peers, to hear these words of St. Paul and make them your own: “Thus should one regard us: as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.” This is your identity in the Church. You are faithful followers of the Lord, and you are temples of the Holy Spirit. My friends, you have been called to witness to Christ in the midst of his Church. You are servant leaders in his Body, and you are stewards of his mysteries. I want to thank you for your openness to serve your brothers and sisters in this beautiful way.

But this carries with it some deep responsibilities, of course. Jesus’ path is not an easy one. Following the Lord requires us to accompany people in their greatest joys, but also through their

deepest struggles and pain. We willingly open ourselves up to criticism and critique. When we take a stand in such a foundational way, this is something we should expect. Jesus promised us eternal life, but he also promised us the Cross. In today's Gospel we see another example of people critiquing Jesus, because they were too absorbed by their own insecurities and shortcomings. This is something that will come for each of you, my friends. But we should not be afraid. We have the power and witness of the Church – which will not be overcome no matter how hard the darkness comes for it. This is that beautiful and good old wine that Jesus lauds today. But we also have the power of the new wine of salvation. We can never forget the reason for our faith and our joy. This will make us ready to meet people where they are and share our joy and life with them, bearing their crosses with them and conquering any darkness.

My friends, your peers cry out for an authentic Church that stands as a holy steward of the mysteries of Christ. You have said yes to sharing that authentic witness. Do not be afraid. Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. He is the light of the world, and no darkness can conquer him. We are his servants, and he is always with us. Remember the words of the psalm as you start your ministry this year: "Trust in the Lord and do good." My fellow servants of Christ, may we together be authentic witness and stewards of the mysteries of God.