



Commissione Centrale

Rome, 16 March 2004

To the Brothers and Sisters
of the Pauline Family

Dearest brothers and sisters,

While we prepare to celebrate the Feast of St. Joseph, a saint very dear to Fr. Alberione, we want to call your attention to the several important appointments that mark the last stage of this year of grace – a year we lived in a spirit of joy and profound gratitude to the Lord. The Central Commission and its various teams have worked intensely during these last months to coordinate and conclude the events proposed and announced in our preceding letters.

Spiritual exercises on the spiritual-apostolic proposal in “Donec Formetur”

To come to a deeper understanding of the heritage passed on to us by Fr. Alberione in *Donec Formetur*, a text that presents the essential features of our Pauline identity, a course of spiritual exercises guided by Fr. Guido Gandolfo, ssp, and Sr. Micaela Monetti, pddm, is currently in progress at the Divine Master Retreat House, Ariccia. Sixty-two brothers and sisters from the five Congregations of the Pauline Family are participating in this intense encounter.

Pilgrimage to our holy Pauline sites

About forty brothers and sisters of the Pauline Family from 20 different circumscriptions will participate in a pilgrimage to the holy places associated with our beginnings so as to rediscover our roots and also the faith with which our “fathers” and “mothers” surrendered themselves to the Lord, thus beginning, in littleness and extreme poverty, the adventure that would propel the Pauline Family to every corner of the earth.

The pilgrimage will begin with a Eucharistic Celebration at the tomb of Blessed James Alberione at 7:00 a.m., 20 March, and will end with a Mass of Thanksgiving at 6:00 p.m., 25 March in the Primo Maestro House chapel, where Blessed James Alberione prayed for more than twenty-five years.

Jubilees of the Pauline Family

As we write this letter, fervid preparations are underway for the celebration of the various jubilees of the Pauline Family. On 19 March, more than 95 jubilarians from our Institutes in every part of the world will gather around the altar in the Crypt of the Queen of Apostles Sanctuary to sing together with Blessed James Alberione a *Te Deum* of gratitude to God for

the gift of the Pauline Family and for the grace of fidelity and perseverance in their vocation. Many of these jubilarians surrounded that same altar decades ago to entrust their lives to the Lord forever. On 19 March they will have the privilege of once more gathering around that altar to thank God for the years that have passed since then, to reaffirm their “yes” to all that the Lord is asking of them today, and to say “amen” to whatever he plans for the future. The Eucharistic Celebration will be presided over by Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for Bishops. After the Celebration, refreshments will be served, offering the participants a festive moment in which to joyously reinforce our Pauline bonds.

Solemn closure of the Alberionian Year: 4 April 2003 – 4 April 2004

30 March – 4 April 2004 will mark the grand finale of our 12-month journey commemorating this unforgettable Alberionian Year:

- on the evenings of 30-31 March and 1 April, a triduum of prayer will be held in the Crypt of the Queen of Apostles Sanctuary. The triduum will conclude the year by reflecting more deeply on several important aspects of the Pauline spirituality;
- on 2 April, at 5:30 p.m., a solemn Eucharistic Celebration to close the Alberionian Year will take place in the Queen of Apostles Sanctuary, presided over by His Eminence Cardinal Crescenzo Sepe, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples;
- on 4 April, the 120th anniversary of the birth of Blessed James Alberione will be commemorated with a festive concert prepared and staged by Pauline singers and composers. The concert will be held in the Church of the Divine Master, Via Portuense, Rome, at 4:00 p.m. Present for the occasion will be special guest Cardinal José Saraiva Martins, Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints.

Commemoration book and video on the Beatification

To preserve and transmit the experience of the Beatification, a special, 200-page book entitled *Blessed James Alberione* has been published to conclude the Alberionian Year. Translated contemporaneously into 5 languages, the text conveys the wonder, emotion and powerful experience of being both Church and Family that we all lived during those unforgettable days and is a keepsake worth preserving for both ourselves and future generations.

To give further life and color to the entire Beatification event and the celebrations that accompanied it, a 102-minute video/DVD entitled *Giacomo, fa' luce (James, Enlighten Us)* is in the final stages of production. At present, the video, scheduled to be released on 2 April, is available only in Italian.

Collection of Pauline Hymns and Songs

One of the last tasks assumed by the Central Commission was that of gathering together the hymns and songs, both old and new, linked to our Pauline traditions. In these last months, the effort was made by our various circumscriptions and Congregations to collect the songs used in our communities in different languages. But because the job turned out to be more demanding than anticipated, the project has not yet been completed. We hope it will be done by 30 June, Feast of St. Paul the Apostle.

Books, supplementary aids and other promotional material

We are sure the Alberionian Year fired everyone with a more intense yearning to get to know and make known to others the personality and activities of our Founder. Texts are not lacking! The home page of the *alberione.org* web site offers an amply array of works by and about Fr. Alberione, as well as texts on the Pauline spirituality available in various languages. It also lists other promotional material (medals, CDs, pilgrim packs, etc.) prepared for the Beatification.

Those who wish to order any of these items should do so through the following email address: alberione.promo@stpauls.it.

The Central Commission

The Central Commission is concluding its beautiful and challenging service of accompanying the Pauline Family through the Beatification events and those of the Alberionian Year.

As its work now draws to a close, the Commission would like to express its sincere gratitude to the Superiors General of the Pauline Family for the trust they placed in us. It was a unique and unforgettable experience for all the members of the Commission and we offer our heartfelt thanks to all our brothers and sisters for their abundant and generous collaboration with us. Once again we experienced the fact that when we are united, miracles can truly be accomplished!

Sincere thanks to each and everyone of you! With deep affection,

Fr Jose Pottayil
Central Commission