

XXVIII Meeting of the General Governments of the Pauline Family  
Ariccia, Italy 7-10 January 2010



*Dear Sisters and Brothers,*

This year too we received the gift of being able to get together at Ariccia for the annual meeting of the General Governments of the Pauline Family—an appointment that prolonged in time the wealth of the Pauline Year and that we lived in a spirit of gratitude for the precious heritage passed on to all of us by our Founder: “To be St. Paul alive today.” Paul is truly an inexhaustible apostle; an *apostle and mystic*, and it was this perspective of his fascinating personality that we focused on during these days.

Our meeting gave us the chance to not only study and reflect together, but also to evaluate, program and even make a joyous pilgrimage in spite of the rain. We wanted to live this pilgrimage in a fraternal spirit, taking advantage of this time together to offer our best wishes to our Pauline brothers, who are preparing to celebrate their 9<sup>th</sup> General Chapter and conclude their term of office. What place was more suitable for our pilgrimage than Pozzuoli, the seaport near Naples where the Apostle Paul stopped for a week on his adventurous journey to Rome? We retraced his footsteps physically by following a piece of the Via Appia, the main artery of Imperial Rome—a road Paul traveled in chains, apparently defeated, but with new evangelization projects already budding in his heart.

Below is a more systematic account of the fruit of our days.

***Paul, Mystic and Apostle***

In continuity with the theme we reflected on last year, Bible scholar Antonio Pitta offered us a number of tips for reading Paul’s many-faceted personality so as to grasp the features of his mysticism, which was marked by a personal relationship with Christ (cf. Ga. 2:19, 20; Phil. 1). This mysticism did not consist of exceptional experiences but of normal, everyday ones, lived in a communal and ecclesial context.

Like our Father St. Paul, we feel compelled to continue the progressive and dynamic process of conformity that leads us to live *in Christ* and truly become apostles. There is no “before” and “after”: the deeper the experience of Christ, the more one feels the urgency of mission. Revelation and communication, mysticism and apostolate, are the inseparable dimensions of a single experience.

***Fr. Alberione: Interpreter of Paul, Mystic and Apostle***

PDDM Sr. Micaela Monetti’s well-constructed talk centered on the characteristics of Pauline mysticism as these are revealed in Fr. Alberione’s life and some of his writings: *Donec Formetur Christus in Vobis* (1933), *Abundantes Divitiae Gratiae Suae* (1954), and *Ut Perfectus Sit Homo Dei* (1960).

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It was very interesting to discover how the Founder invites us to read St. Paul in his existential unity as a *mystic and apostle*, and how Alberione's life can be read taking as a point of departure some of the fundamental characteristics of Paul's mysticism, namely: the primacy of grace; history as the place of divine revelation; the Trinitarian and ecclesial dimensions of the Christian experience; communion with the Lord; the awareness of having been chosen by God; living "in Christ"; faith and the eschatological dimension, and suffering embraced for the sake of the apostolate. Even Primo Maestro's extraordinary experience of "naked faith" during his serious illness back in 1923 reveals his profound harmony with the Apostle.

We are all very conscious of the mandate we received from both Paul and Fr. Alberione to live and give Jesus Christ, Way, Truth and Life to the world. We must live in Jesus Christ to the point that he alone "lives, thinks, works, loves, wills, prays, suffers, dies and rises again in us" (cf. DF 64).

### ***Information from the Various Congregations***

In keeping with what is by now our time-tested style, each Congregation then told the rest of us about some of its current initiatives or others that will be carried out in the near future. Among these, we would like to entrust to the prayers of the whole Pauline Family the upcoming General Chapter of the Society of St. Paul, which will be held in the Divine Master Retreat House in Ariccia, Italy. The Chapter, which begins on 25 April, will focus on the theme: "*Rekindle the Gift You Have Received. Creative Fidelity to a Hundred Years of Pauline Charism.*"

### ***Centennial of the Foundation of the PF***

We are already looking ahead to a very important event: the Centennial of the Foundation of the Pauline Family (20 August 2014), which will offer us a wonderful chance to celebrate the "abundant riches" the Lord has poured out on us throughout our history and share this wealth with the Church. Like the Beatification of our Founder, the Centennial is a unique opportunity for us to get to know and make known Fr. Alberione and the Pauline charism, involving the laity, communicators and young people in this gift of grace that took root nearly a hundred years ago in a small Piedmontese zone known as the Langhe and that today has grown into a huge tree that reaches all the world's continents.

We have programmed a three-year period of preparation for this event, which will officially begin on 20 August 2011 and end on 20 August 1914.

### ***Course of Formation on the Charism of the Pauline Family***

The "Charism Course," now in its 13<sup>th</sup> year, is at this point a well-developed fruit of the meetings of the General Government. To date, this course has formed 329 sisters and brothers (including one Gabrielite), from 35 different countries and various Institutes of the Pauline Family. In these years, the course has progressively improved on the levels of content and organization and has fostered the growth of a common sense of *Family* in our "Pauline world."

The members of the Course's General Management and Executive Teams were presented with observations and suggestions to help this initiative respond ever-better to its pre-set goals and to the situations of its students.

We leave the Divine Master Retreat House with hearts that are more "Pauline," fired by a greater desire to "do something" for the masses of humanity in every part of the world entrusted to our care as apostles of the Gospel.

May St. Paul enable us to continue our journey in "his spirit" (cf. AD 93). May he help us come to an ever-clearer grasp of our identity and enrich our every action, effort and initiative with great apostolic fecundity.

With affectionate best wishes in Christ, Master and Shepherd,

**THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE XXVIII MEETING  
OF THE GENERAL GOVERNMENTS OF THE PAULINE FAMILY**

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