

DEAR JESUS

Dear Jesus, help me to spread your fragrance
everywhere I go.

Flood my soul with your spirit and life,
Penetrate and possess my whole being so utterly,
That my life may only be a radiance of yours.

Shine through me, and be so in me
That every soul I come in contact with
May feel your presence in my soul.

Let them look up and see no longer me,
but only Jesus!

Stay with me and then I shall begin to shine
as You shine,

So to shine as to be a light to others;
The light, O Jesus will be all from you;
none of it will be mine;

It will be you, shining on others through me.

Amen.

- **Blessed Cardinal Henry Newman**

Published Quarterly by

Alberione Spirituality Centre (ASC)

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ASC Tidings

"Live Jesus and give Jesus to the World"
(Bl. James Alberione)

Look
Inside

E-Journal of the
Alberione Spirituality Centre (ASC), Bangalore



Vol. III No. 3

July 2015

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EDITORIAL

ADORATION OF JESUS THE DIVINE MASTER IN THE MOST BLESSED SACRAMENT

The life of a disciple of Jesus the Master must be a life lived in Him rooted in the Holy Eucharist. With St. Ignatius we must be able to say, “To withdraw from creatures and repose with Jesus in the tabernacle is my delight; there I can hide myself and seek rest. There I find a life which I cannot describe, a joy which I cannot make others comprehend, a peace such as is found only under the hospitable roof of our best Friend. Jesus in the Tabernacle protects me against all my enemies; against the evil spirits, the world, my own wicked passions and evil inclinations. He is my support in weakness, my comfort in suffering, my weapon in combat, my refreshment in heat, food for my hungry soul, my stimulus when I am exhausted— He is my heaven on earth. Jesus in the Tabernacle is my riches in poverty, my defence in calumny, my crown in misfortune. Jesus in the Tabernacle is my God and my All! “

Without the Holy Eucharist, earth would seem to be empty, the temple of God desolate, the soul cold, the heart desolate. This earth is a vale of tears where you weep and sigh! It is a Mount of Olives where you drink the bitter chalice of life. Here you cannot remain alone—alone with people who are careless and indifferent in your suffering; you need Jesus! The saints have found heaven on earth before the Blessed Sacrament. At the foot of the altar, they enjoy true happiness, a foretaste of heavenly bliss.

When Jesus gives himself to us in this Sacrament of love, we possess him as holy Simeon did when he held him as an infant in his arms; as Magdalene did when she caressed and kissed his feet; as St. John did when he sat by his side and rested on his chest. Verily,

with the Most Blessed Sacrament, heaven has come down to earth! God dwells with his love in this vale of tears; he becomes your companion in exile, your confidant in suffering, and your comforter who refreshes with strong hope the heart that craves for happiness. He dwells among us that our sojourn may not be unbearable and that we may not foolishly seek peace and joy on earth, where only disappointments and sorrows abound.

Perpetual adoration is an angelic ministry and mission, an act of profound faith and fervent love toward the Most Holy Eucharist. It brings priceless blessings on mankind for time and eternity. When our hearts, lost in temporal affairs and anxieties, are about to slumber and grow cold in the love of God, awaken it through the Blessed Sacrament. Nourish a great devotion toward this sublime mystery. It will bear magnificent fruits, richest blessings. If you are one of the zealous adorers of Jesus the Divine Master in the Blessed Sacrament, you are indeed a specially privileged person!

Dear Friends of the Divine Master, try always to draw nearer to this great Mystery, to your Master and Lord in the Most Blessed Sacrament. Imitate Blessed James Alberione and Blessed Timothy Giccardo who laid before the Sacramental Throne all their cares of body and soul, all their desires and petitions, all their hopes and fears. Each time they did so, they received help and grace in richest measure. By renewed fervour, show that you are thankful for the great love the Divine Master has for you. Show it by visiting him frequently and keeping him company in adoration, thanksgiving, love and petition. Say not that you have no time. Answer now to your Master's question: "Can you not spend an hour for your Lord and God?"

Let us foster, dear friends, a tender devotion to the Eucharist; let us seek this "Heaven on earth". Jesus our Divine Master who is the

Way, the Truth and the Life will then be our **All**, our greatest treasure. He will comfort us in life, sustain us "in death, and show us his unveiled beauty in eternity and reward us with everlasting happiness in heaven.

– **Fr. Vincent Gnarackatt, SSP**

BLESSED JAMES ALBERIONE SPEAKS:

““The Pauline Family was raised up by St Paul as a means of continuing his work. St Paul is alive once more in the many members who are part of it. We did not choose St Paul. It was he who chose and called us. We must do what he would do if he were alive today. And if he were alive, what would he do? He would fulfill the two great commandments as he knew how to do so: loving God with all his heart, strength, and mind, and loving his neighbour unsparingly. This because he lived Christ: ‘Christ lives in me.’

“He would use the greatest pulpits of modern progress: the press, film, radio and television to announce the unparalleled message of love and salvation found in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. St Paul made himself our ‘mould.’”

Paul's Pearls—7

A PAEAN TO LOVE

Two detectives are discussing a young murderer who is being shielded by an elderly aunt: 'I know it,' said one "She we'll forgive him without question, whatever he's done to her and however high we hang him. And he knows it. It's no use you blaming her. She can't help herself. She's only a vehicle. That's Disinterested Love, chum, a force, like nuclear energy. It's absolute".

In the last issue of ASC Tidings we briefly dwelt on the first quality of love: Love is patient. The second quality listed is: Love is kind (1 Cor 13:4). Kindness has several cognate words such as mercy, meekness, mildness, gentleness, compassion, etc. Pope Francis has declared The Year of Mercy (From 8/12/15 to 20/11/16). In his bull of Induction (dtd. April 2015) of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, the Pope points out: "Patient and Merciful." 'These words often go together in the Old Testament to describe God's nature' (Misericordiae Vultus --The Face of Mercy, no. 6). Here he refers to his Episcopal motto: miserando atque eligendo (chosen by mercy). Compassion is a close cousin of kindness. Jesus Master exhorts: "Be compassionate as your heavenly Father" (Lk 6:36). Its parallel in Mathew is "Be perfect as your heavenly Father" (5:28). Both synthesize and conclude the Beatitudes, the Magna Carta of Christianity, Jesus' blueprint for our happiness--present and permanent. The inference is: unless we are compassionate as the Father we cannot be perfect and, the more we are perfect as the Father the more we will be compassionate as well. Though unachievable, it has to be an ever striven-after goal. For, perfection consists in love, compassionate, kind love.

This is the message of Jesus' major parables such as the Good Samaritan, the good shepherd, above all the prodigal son and of other parables, precisely called parables of mercy. The scene of the last judgement is the definitive seal on it. It is a powerful, yet frightening, warning too. Unless you become like....There is urgency and inevitability.

The very second encyclical of St John Paul II was Dives in Misericordia (Rich in Mercy). Pope Francis in the above bull clarifies why Pope John Paul highlighted, to the surprise of many, the fact that we had forgotten the theme of mercy in today's cultural milieu. We live in a culture of hatred and death. If it was true then, it is now much more--frighteningly and menacingly--true. What characterizes our style of life and culture is sheer cruelty. It stamps, worse, mercilessly snubs life, all forms of life, from even before the womb to beyond the tomb! (foetuses as fodder, abhorrent abortions, merciless mercy killings, etc, etc.)

To merely bemoan this phenomenon is to shed crocodile tears. So: hard-hearted vs tender-hearted; cold-hearted vs warm-hearted: the choice is ours.

Just a few hints on growing in kindness:

- Occasionally have innocent pranks with children and be immersed in their natural, divinely blissful company.
- Under a shady bough, perching on a black boulder by a brook enjoy gratefully, absolutely freely the pristine pure silvery water playfully, peacefully flowing endlessly prancing over and dancing around and between the ever-wet, washed-white pebbles.
- Plant a sapling and affectionately tend its tender tendrils to trace its track up a tree-top.

- Refraining from cruel jokes and eminently wasteful, plentiful gossips, offer a kindly smile, an empathetic word, a helping hand to whom--you should know; who else would?
- Sneak into a green garden and snatch a scene of the variegated colourful panorama of dancing flowers and waving plants, listen to the enthralling, twittering orchestra of our two-winged brothers and sisters. Again, at no cost.

Nature nurtures. Kindness of heart flows from the breast of Mother Earth as we nestle, repose in her lap. To be unkind to this gentle, patient Mother is to be unkind to all the rest. For many a reason, ecology is the primary school of life, and one who doesn't attend this wise school will not only be unkind and cruel, but illiterate for all life. Nature silently, kindly leads to kindness, gentleness etc. This is the Royal Way—there is none other—to be merciful/compassionate as the Father. After all we are created in his image. Pope Francis almost pleads: “Show the merciful Face of the Father.” This is truthful, wholistic, serene spirituality and effective evangelisation, a sane way to maturity and save one's as well as others' humanity.

- In a more religious vein, Visit--as frequently and as long as possible-- our Divine Master who invites us: “Come to me when you are...and learn from me for I am meek and humble of heart.
- Pray contemplatively the Rosary, experiencing the warm, maternal embrace of the Woman a dying Man gave us as Mother, his last precious Gift.

And gradually unawares, the meekness of the Master and the mercy, motherliness Mary Queen of Apostles may seep into the hardened hearts of Disciples and the inhuman/indifferent hearts of her children. In the process, we may become, painfully yet

profitably, compassionate and perfect as the Father, learning to forgive 70x7 times. All kinds of addictions (substance, social media, certain cherished, fondled habits/passions, etc.) are injurious to Adoration and terribly threatening to formation/transformation. My personal experience is: the Chapel invariably has been my bed-room (sleeping), reverie-room, reading room etc. Spiritual reading, common celebration of the Divine Office may not necessarily and always be conducive to Adoration. Praying the Rosary contemplatively can lead to Adoration. But common recitation of the Rosary may not, as it may fail to harmonize with one's own spiritual rhythm and growth.

Good manners, courtesy according to St Francis de Sales is half way to holiness. Refinements of character, graciousness, goodness etc are best absorbed from the Abba-appointed Master/Teacher in Adoration. In adoration except adoration everything else at worst is crutches, at best props. Discernment is needed to discard what, when and above all why. Mary of Bethany, with empty hands, heart full, sitting silent at the Master's feet, despite her sisterly sinister snide, is a good model. And the Master approved, appreciated and perpetuated her adoration/contemplation. Here degrees and diplomas are pathetically powerless. This may account for the roughness, tempter-tantrums etc. of some consecrated persons.

The onus and choice rest squarely--and frighteningly-- on each one's shoulders. The fundamental principle of Pauline formation is that Christ be formed in us (cf. SSP Constitutions no. 90). St Paul confidently asserts: It is not I but Christ lives in me. ‘The heart of Paul was the heart of Christ’ observes St John Chrysostom.

What claims can we make—humbly and confidently?

Other Pearls:

- Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another –Eph 4:32.
- Clothe yourselves then as is fitting for God’s chosen people, holy and beloved to him, with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience - Col 3:12.
- One can pay back the loan of gold, but one dies forever in debt to those who are kind--Malayan Proverb.
- To give pleasure to a single heart by a single kind act is better than a thousand head-bowing in prayer--Saadi.
- One man practising kindness in the wilderness is worth all the temples this world pulls--Jack Kerouac

– **Fr Joe Narivelil**

PRAYER FOR THE JUBILEE YEAR

(Pope Francis has composed a special prayer for the Jubilee Year of Mercy for the Church to pray every day)



Lord Jesus Christ, you have taught us to be merciful like the heavenly Father, and have told us that who ever sees you sees Him.

Show us your face and we will be saved. Your loving gaze freed Zacchaeus and Matthew from being enslaved by money; the adulteress and Magdalene from seeking happiness only in created things; made Peter weep after his betrayal, and assured Paradise to the repentant thief.

Let us hear, as if addressed to each one of us, the words that you spoke to the Samari-tan woman: “If you knew the gift of God!” You are the visible face of the invis-ible Father, of the God who manifests his power above all by forgiveness and mercy: let the Church be your visible face in the world, its Lord risen and glorified.

You willed that your ministers would also be clothed in weakness in order that they may feel compassion for those in ignorance and error: let everyone who approaches them feel sought after, loved, and forgiven by God.

Send your Spirit and consecrate every one of us with its anointing, so that the Jubi-lee of Mercy may be a year of grace from the Lord, and your Church, with renewed enthusiasm, may bring good news to the poor, proclaim liberty to captives and the oppressed, and restore sight to the blind.

We ask this through the intercession of Mary, Mother of Mercy, you who live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit forever and ever. Amen.

“A SYMPHONY OF JOY”

The Life of Mother Maria Scholastica Rivata, First Pious Disciple of the Divine Master

A Stylistic Presentation prepared by

Christin Jezak, Pauline Cooperator,

and

Sr. Tiziana Dal Masetto, PDDM

I was still a young child, and life seemed to be all roses and flowers. Loved by good parents, and surrounded by the most attentive care, the happy days passed quickly. With my silver voice, I filled the house with joyful cries and tormented mother with many questions. Oh! Beloved Mamma! Those days were too beautiful, and trials came to visit this little thoughtless creature. And the first came with a great suffering! After a brief illness, my beloved mother died. Who can understand it? Only those who have experienced it can understand this intense pain, this misfortune, to lose someone so dear! But how does one recover from such heartbreak? Less than a year later, I received my First Communion and encountered the Divine Master who would change my life. Oh most intimate life!

Father always desired the best for me. There was a young man, Andrea, who wished for my hand in marriage. Father said, “He is a good young man and he also has means; you may have a happy life with him.” When I pondered marrying Andrea and saw him after our Sunday Mass I experienced a sudden fear. Filled with this fear, I rushed home. Entering the house, I hurried to my room in which there was a beautiful statue of the Sacred Heart. I stood before the Sacred Heart and told Him: “Lord, you alone are my all. You are

my everything!” I descended the stairs and went to my father to tell him: no, I will not accept his hand.

From that moment forward, I began to do more spiritual reading, which led me to read St. Therese of Lisieux’s *Story of a Soul*. This book instilled in me a strong desire to enter the religious life. My continued hunger for books led me to the great apostle of modern times-- Blessed James Alberione’s bookstore. After searching for a book one day, he asked me, “When are you coming to St. Paul?” That same day, in the marketplace I ran into my good friend Eufrosina, who had already joined Alberione’s order of religious women for St. Paul. She also invited me to visit with her contagious enthusiasm. At the age of 24, I knew this was the place I wanted to be.

Fr. Alberione knew my Divine Master Jesus and introduced me to a way of life spent for Him and the people of our times. He gave me a special book called *Women of the Gospel*. He knew the need for people who will proclaim the Good News with their lives like the women who followed Jesus and announced the Resurrection. In 1923, Fr. Alberione gathered all of us Sisters in the kitchen and announced, “Set aside, Orsola and Matilde for a mission I will entrust to them. Observe silence, silence, silence!”

This special mission developed into the Pious Disciples of the Divine Master on February 10, 1924, which consisted of myself and seven others. It was then that I took the name of Sr. Mary Scholastica. I promised to strive each day to become a disciple ever more in accordance with the desires of the Divine Master and Mary Most Holy, to live their life in an intense Eucharistic, priestly, liturgical apostolate which encompasses my entire being, mind, heart, will and energy.

There were many trials to gain the official approval of the Pious Disciples of the Divine Master. This caused me much heartache

and humiliation for many years ... There was even a time that I was sent to Egypt to spread the Gospel! Finally, on Holy Thursday, April 3, 1947, we received approval by the Church through a decree signed by the Bishop of Alba soon followed by the Pope's approval on January 12, 1948. After all these years, we were finally official! My heart was filled with so much joy!

From this moment I was transferred to Argentina as a missionary to live a life of hiddenness, silence and prayer. I sacrificed myself like a little grain of wheat. My prayers were planted in the earth to help grow this precious Congregation and spread it worldwide. Upon returning to Italy in 1963, I continued to live my life to the end. I embraced the whole world through my Eucharistic Adoration. I loved being an intercessor for my Priests and for the apostles of the Word of God with the Media, even for the conversion of politicians and many other needs ...

My passion has always been my Eucharistic Divine Master burning within my heart like the Sun. This is my story lived in the service of charity and longing to unite myself to HIM in the eternal dance of the heavenly joy.

About the Authors:

Christin Jezak, *Pauline Cooperator*, is an actress at Hollywood. As a Pauline mystic in the world, she wants to make the word of God alive and life transforming in the world of entertainment.

Sr. Tiziana Dal Masetto, PDDM, serves as a spiritual director. Her specialty is the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. Based in Los Angeles, she is dedicated to serving Christ by sustaining his ministers, the priests, in their path to holiness.

PAUL: THE SUFFERING SERVANT FOR CHRIST

There are moments in life when we are terribly discouraged on account something that has happened to us. It brings sufferings and untold miseries. In such moments it is difficult to believe that we will not be put to the test or made to suffer beyond our strength. In fact we feel that it is beyond our limits, we even say I cannot take it any longer. There is no one who is exempted from some painful disturbances. It could be the death of a loved one, an accident, financial setbacks, loneliness or illness. We know that suffering is not a new phenomenon; it an age old reality which baffled philosophers of all times. Suffering began with the existence of human beings itself.

We live in a world in which everyone wants to be recognized and appreciated. No matter what one's status in life, a philosophy of self-assertion seems to rule the world today. In today's world no one wants to suffer. The sad thing about suffering is that people become bitter, rough, rude, jealous and even angry and the list goes on. Against this background Paul stands as a stalwart in Christianity as a model to declare that suffering is meritorious. The same man who caused sufferings to the followers of Christ became the man who suffered on account of Christ. He suffered willingly for Christ to the intensity to which he caused suffering for others. Being a strict Pharisee, he was an enemy of Christians and persecuted them without any hesitation. The Acts of the Apostles testifies that Saul was breathing threat against the disciples of the Lord, not only threat but also murder. He consented to the murder of Stephen. It all started with the Damascus experience when a powerful man was made powerless. But God had great mercy on and purpose for Paul. In fact the Damascus experience turned him into a dynamic, tireless force for the spread of the Gospel in the gentile world.

Paul had a series of trials and tribulations in his life. But overpowered by the Damascus experience, Paul considered everything worth for

his cause. St Paul's teaches us that if we endure suffering we will be raised to the glorious ranks of the apostles and saints. The secret of his endurance was his centrality in Christ. After his conversion he gave prime place to Christ and His Gospel. Everything else he counted as loss for the worth of knowing and preaching Christ. The thought of Christ energized and enveloped his thoughts, words and action and even dreams. His passion for Christ translated into passion for humanity compelled him to preach the Gospel at his own risk knowing that it entails sufferings.

In ordinary situations of life we know that how agonizing and painful it is to face the very people who have hurt us. Paul though rooted in the Jewish religion, its customs, laws, practices and regulations, and discarding his guilt and shame, fights for the Christians for whom he was once a nightmare.

It is said that one's childhood experiences have a tremendous influence on the life of a person. Paul in his early life itself was brought up in Judaic tradition. He could not tolerate any one following any other belief and traditions. He convincingly preached it and vehemently opposed all that was not according to his conviction.

In ordinary situations of life it is not so very easy to give up familiar ways and trodden paths with. To give up and accept something new instead is painful. It was not easy for Paul to accept the new way all of a sudden. In fact Paul had an interiorizing experience. He took two years to understand what was happening to him. He went to Arabia and spent time in solitude and he was given an understanding of the Gospel in its fullness which he never knew before. Later on when Paul began his preaching the Christians and even the apostles did not understand him fully. Paul had to face the pain of being rejected and the agony of non-acceptance. He could defend himself saying that he had met the risen Lord and narrate his conversion experience, and confidently he could claim that the

Gospel he preached was not of human origin rather it was given by a revelation of Jesus Christ Himself. However the accomplishment of the mission entrusted to him was not an easy task. He himself speaks of the sufferings he had to endure: the lashes, shipwrecks, stoning, imprisonment, and flogging, danger from rivers, seas, wilderness, bandits, gentiles, hunger and thirst and troubles from his own brothers and sisters etc.....

In addition to his physical suffering, Paul experienced a sort of mental agony from which he wanted to be delivered--a natural desire of any human being who has the will to live. He ardently

prayed that Christ remove this agony from him. But Christ had a greater purpose: "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor 12:9). Paul considered his

weakness a fertile soil for the manifestation of Christ's power over him. The sufferings did not deter Paul from the love of Christ; rather, he says, who shall separate him from the love of Christ. In identifying himself with Christ, he painfully realizes that he does not do what he wants but does the very thing he does not want to do.

Being an excellent community builder, Paul had great concern about the churches he raised, nourished and cherished. The division in the churches caused him pain and it distressed him. But the attitude he possessed in the face of all these is commendable: "the word of God is not in chains"! Paul's sufferings remind us that if the spiritual legacy left behind by the Master were that of suffering, his disciples too will have a share in it. If Christianity grew into a world religion it is because of the untiring efforts of Paul and the sufferings he endured for the sake of Christ and his Gospel.

– Sr Jessy Jacob DSP

STS PETER AND PAUL:

Symbol of Christian Unity amidst Diversity

On the 29th of June the Universal Church celebrates the Solemnity of the martyrdom of the apostles Peter and Paul. Tradition holds that both were martyred during the reign of Nero who ordered the burning of Rome to give way to his grandiose plans, and then laid the blame on the Christians. Ancient Christian iconography depicts the fateful day—June 29, 64 (AD): Peter and Paul fraternally embracing each other and being led separately to their respective places of martyrdom. Paul, a Roman citizen, was beheaded along the Appian Way. Peter was crucified upside down at Vatican Hill where now stands St Peter’s Basilica.

Peter and Paul were very much united in their common vision and mission, but they were much different in their life. Peter was a Galilean fisherman while Paul was a cosmopolitan Jew educated as a Pharisee in Tarsus and in Jerusalem. Later Peter was concerned with the Jewish Christians whereas Paul spread the faith in Gentile lands. Peter was seen as a leader of the “institutional” Church—Jesus builds his Church on Peter-Rock. Paul was more of a charismatic leader without wielding any temporal power!

A very important lesson of this feast of Peter and Paul is: Christian unity in the midst of diversity. Early in her history, Christianity had always been diversified, even divided into factions. Paul was a witness to this (1 Cor 3:21-23). Division remains with the Church even today. There are Catholics, Orthodox Christians and Protestants. Some believers are charismatics, others are traditionalists. By celebrating one feast for the apostles Peter and Paul, the Church invites us to look beyond the issues that divide and differentiate us, and to focus instead on the deeper source of unity:

our common mission and ministry. In this unity of mission and ministry, there is need for the institutional leadership of Peter and the charismatic vitality (without wielding hierarchical power!) of Paul’s vision and mission.

– **Fr. George Chathanatt, SSP**

LAUGH WITH BL. JAMES ALBERIONE

An Apostoline sister confides her difficulties to the Primo Maestro: “Primo Maestro, I don’t know where to turn my head to!”

“Turn to the Tabernacle”, was his ready reply.

* * * *

To the young novices, Primo Maestro once said: “Some persons pray only when there is a grand feast and once the feast is over, the saint is cheated; but in our case it is we who are cheated, it is I who am cheated”

* * * *

“Is it OK during recreation to joke and narrate anecdotes to make sisters laugh”, asked a Sister Disciple.

“Certainly! At times a joke is better than a sermon to serve the Lord cheerfully, replied Primo Maestro.

NEWS FLASH:

The Retreat and the entry to the novitiate

We the novices Bishnu Diggel, John Chrispin, Ezekiel. S., Nelson nova, Precioustone, RahulBasumatary and Siril Kumar A, are really blessed to have the great gift of vocation to the Society of St Paul. Seven of us sacred to God as the seven sacraments are beginning a life in more intimate union with Christ.

We had five days of retreat from 22nd May to 27 May 2015, at Benedict Ashram kengeri in Bangalore. Fr.Vincent Gnarackat preached the retreat aligning us to the tune of God with the calm and quiet Ashram. Fr.Vincent shared his understanding and God's will on the topics such as the importance of life and living, the gift of vocation,



*The New Novices with Fr. Vincent Gnarackatt
who directed their retreat*

the religious life, the vows, community life and the apostolate. He also shared his own experiences and the life of saints which really inspired us. He said "If you are a religious priest you must become a saint."

On 30th May 2015 we entered into the novitiate which was very beautiful experience for us. The celebration began with the candle procession to our community chapel. That followed a Para-liturgical service. We promised to live the life that Congregation of the Society of St Paul is living; following the vows and living the gospel according to the rule of our Congregation and the Church.

Fr. Michael Raj, the provincial happily admitted us into the Novitiate and exhorted us to live on the promise we have made. He gave us some tips to make a good Novitiate as exemplary novices. He also introduced Fr. Aji as our novice master which brought joy among us. The entry to the novitiate was a great and memorable moment.

May the Father and the Son shower abundant blessing on us and the Holy Spirit fill us with his seven gifts, as seven of us make our first steps to Religious life.

– Ezekiel. S. (Novice)

Experience of First Profession

With immense joy and happiness we share our feelings of the day of our First Profession in Bangalore. We all are happy to become part of Society of St. Paul, to be a missionary of the mass media in a concrete way. Yet we wait for the joy "until Christ is formed in me" trusting in his providence and grateful to him for what he has accomplished in us.

We made our first profession on 31st May 2015 according to the norms and rules of the constitution of the Society of St. Paul our congregation. It was really a great experience for us to know how much God loved us and cared for us during the course of our formation period. He, who prepared us, led us to an unexpected experience that we could be challenged in all through our rough and

tough situations, in order to form us into His image. And finally we could say joyously, 'Yes to the Lord'. We now feel content and



*The newly-professed Brothers with Fr. Michael Raj, the Provincial;
Fr. Aji John, the Novice Master; Fr. Thomas M.J,
the Vocation Director; Fr. George Chathanatt, the out-going Superior
and Fr. Varghese Gnaliam, the New Superior*

relaxed in the Lord. We desire to be more like Christ. Yes, to say more truthfully, in our total commitment towards Jesus the Way, Jesus the Truth and Jesus the Life was everything in our stages of formation.

Making the public vows was an inspiration for us to be more faithful to God, who called each one of us by name and entrusted us the mission given to our beloved founder, Blessed James Alberione to save the souls of many through the 'Mass Media'. We surrendered ourselves to this congregation in the hands of Fr. Michael Raj, the provincial superior of India Nigeria, Great Britain, and Ireland province.

The retreat we had before the profession, guided by Fr Devasia Puthiyaparambil helped us to understand the need for a Christified self in our formation and mission. The grace and blessings we received in the retreat was completed when we felt the experience of the Holy Spirit during the profession and celebration. We are proud to say that we have found the origin in God and satisfaction in Him. God, who chose us out of His love, shared His very life to us on that day (31.5.015) for His glory and sanctification of the world.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to each one, who came across to help us in various stages of our formation. And especial thanks to Fr. Aji, who gave us full freedom to discern our vocation during the course of our Novitiate. It is he who helped us to discern the will of God at the right moment. Thanks to one and all our beloved teachers and supporters.

- Novices, 2014 -2015

EVER ONWARD DAUGHTERS OF ST PAUL

CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS!!

One Hundred Years of Service to the Church and to the People of God

Through Modern Means of Communications

The Daughters of St Paul, Bandra, celebrated the centenary of their foundation at St Theresa Church, Bandra, Mumbai at 10 am on the 28th of June 2015. The solemn Hoy Eucharist was presided over



*Solemn, Concelebrated Jubilee Mass Presided Over
by His Eminence Oswald Cardinal Gracias, Archbishop of Mumbai*

by His Eminence Oswald Cardinal Gracias of the Archdiocese of Mumbai and concelebrated by the members of the Society of St Paul, SVD priests and priests from the surrounding places.

The Daughters of St Paul popularly known as Pauline sisters is founded by Fr James Alberione (now blessed) in Italy on June 15, 1915 with a specific charism of proclaiming the Good News through the mass Media of Social Communication. Commemorating this event, the sisters express their gratitude to God almighty for the countless people who help them and whom they help through the ministry of the printed word and audio visual materials. The sisters recall the hundred years of their existence in the Church with its specific apostolate of printing, publishing, distribution of good literature and media materials, expansion of the institute, blessings in terms of



*Sisters Singing Praises to the Lord
as They Celebrate the Centenary Day*

members, zeal, enthusiasm and apostolic initiatives. Established in India in 1951, the sisters follow the courageous path traced out by their courageous, visionary founder Blessed James Alberione who

was more than fifty years ahead of his time. Branched out into 15 communities and 18 outlets of Pauline Book and Media Centres for diffusion of books, Audio Video CDs, DVDs, booklets, pamphlets, the sisters pursue the vision envisaged by their charismatic founder and reach out to millions of people in the length and width of the country. They promote all that is true, good and wholesome in each



Participants in the Jubilee Mass

religion and culture. Imbibed with the spirit of St Paul 'to become all things to all' their centers are home for young and old, rich and poor, literate and illiterate and of all religions.

After celebrating its hundred years of existence, the heart throbbing question that stirred up the mind of Blessed James Alberione "Where is the Humanity Moving" is the catch-word of every Daughter of St Paul even today, for she knows that here lies a fertile soil for service. They have learned the hard way through abundance of tough times which makes them stronger and enduring. In the

ever progressing and fast moving media world the Daughters of St Paul live a life of committed service to humanity, with the Spirit of Mother Thecla, (co-foundress of the Daughters of St Paul) "Ever Onward Daughters of St Paul. It reminds them that they have yet a glorious history to be written and a great mission to be accomplished in these challenging times.

The celebration of the Eucharist concluded with the spontaneous outbreak of the Joy welling up in their hearts with an action song and a short video presentation both depicting the work and activities of the Daughters of St Paul.

- Sr Jessy Jacob, DSP

OUR MISSION

In a Multireligious Context

The Gospel of Matthew concludes with the words of Jesus sending his followers on the mission: “Go therefore and make disciples of *all nations*, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, *I am with you always, to the close of the age*” (Mt 28: 19-20). Just before his Ascension, Jesus said, “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and *you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth*” (Acts 1:8).

Our mission therefore is not limited to any particular time or place. Missionary thrust, commitment to the service to the Gospel, is an essential aspect of Christian living. And this mission is addressed to all people of all cultures, ethnic groups, races and religions. We offer them the Gospel message, not because we want to be successful, but because it responds to a deep need of all people.

All Christians, all pastors and all missionaries are bound to spread the Good news of Jesus. St Paul writes to Timothy, “I charge you... proclaim the message and, welcome or unwelcome, insist on it. Refute falsehood, correct error, give encouragement – but do all with patience and with care to instruct” (2 Tim 4: 1-2).

Pope Paul VI, in *Evangelii Nuntiandi* divides the addressees of evangelization into five groups (Nos 51-56):

1) *The distant.* Those who do not know Christ or his Gospel yet. No doubt, preaching to the people of other faiths should be our first priority. But the temptation is always there to be too much occupied with our own community rather than with other people.

2) *The Christianized.* Those who are baptized but live completely outside the sphere of Christian living. Either they know nothing about the faith, or know only what they learnt in childhood.

3. *The faithful.* These are the 99 sheep within the flock. They need to be supported and cared for as they are exposed to threats and trials. But outside the flock there are 901 (very great number) who need to be attended to.

4) *The non-believers.* They include the atheists, the rationalists etc. They hold that God is superfluous or burdensome or unreal.

5) *The non-practicing.* A great number of the faithful who, in general, have not disowned the faith or baptism, but do not live according to faith and baptism.

In a multi-religious context like ours where a non-Christian culture prevails, evangelization is not easy, but not without hope. The evangelizer has to stay close to the people and pronounce in their life the right word at the right time and in the right manner. Understanding people of different backgrounds and accommodating to them is therefore a must. That is a challenge. St Paul’s missionary heart made him do that. *He accommodated himself to people in all kinds of different situations, so that by all possible means he might bring some to salvation* (1 Cor 9: 22). The love of Christ pressed him on (cf. 2 Cor 5:14).

Paul is convinced that God chose him and set him apart and revealed His Son to him so that he should preach Jesus to the gentiles (cf. Gal 1:15-16). That is to say, Paul believes he has a mission to the non-Jews, people of other faiths.

Paul uses a typical expression “to put on Christ” (gal 3:27) to indicate thinking, willing and doing things like Christ who came for all people. To put on Christ is the same as “to put on the whole ar-

mour of God” (Eph 6:11). This openness of Paul to the whole world and to all peoples and to their different cultures and traditions is an important point on which every missionary, especially in our country of many religions, needs to imitate him.

Obviously, the word of the cross is folly to many (1 Cor 1:18), and many will oppose it, and even persecute its messengers. But the Holy Spirit gave courage to Paul, to be disposed to do everything, even to offer his life, in order to make Christ known. The apostles and missionaries of our times too need to cultivate a keen consciousness of their mission, and make themselves all things to all people (cf. 1 Cor 4:9-13; 9:19-23; 2 Cor 11:22-29). Paul was committed to use the best means available to him for bringing the good news of Jesus to as many people as possible. He was willing to take every trouble and to be despised for the sake of the Gospel. Genuine zeal demands this spirit of sacrifice. The cross cannot be missing in the life of the Christian, more so in the life of a missionary.

In our confusing times when the Christian faith is not only opposed but also ridiculed and persecuted in many quarters, it is a challenge to remain faithful to Christ, and a bigger challenge to preach the faith. Right from the beginning Christians and Christian faith had to face such experiences. As the Lord himself said, “A servant is not greater than his master; if they persecuted me, they will persecute you, too” (Jn 15: 21).

At the same time, when we are troubled by such experiences, we should remember the blessing the Lord has pronounced on us, “Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you and speak all kinds of evil against you because you are my followers. Be happy and glad, for a great reward is kept for you in heaven” (Mt 5:11).

The best way to proclaim the good news of Jesus is to bear witness to him – witnessing through the example of life, witnessing through prayer, witnessing through service and witnessing through word.

As Vatican II says, the Catholic Church rejects nothing which is true and holy in other religions. “She looks with sincere respect upon these ways of conduct and of life, these rules and teachings which, though differing in many particulars from what she holds and sets forth, nevertheless often reflect a ray of that Truth which enlightens all men” (*Nostra Aetate*, 2).

The Church therefore exhorts her children: “prudently and lovingly, through dialogue and collaboration with the followers of other religions, and in witness to Christian faith and life, acknowledge, preserve and promote the spiritual and moral goods found among these men, as well as the values of their society and culture” (*Ad Gentes*, 9).

As for multi-religious context, India is the best example in the world. Our country is home to seven major religions. According to the 2001 Senses of India, they are the following, with percentage of Indian population: Buddhism (0.8%), Christianity (2.3%), Hinduism (80.5%), Jainism (0.4%), Sikhism (1.9%), Zoroastrianism (c. 60000) and many smaller religions and sects. Each religion has its own set of beliefs, traditions and practices. The missionary in India has to be well versed in them as they are prevalent in his or her area or work, besides knowing the local language well.

In India we have not yet come to a stage where local Christians are able to profess and practise their faith without any cultural alienation. Keshab Chandra Sen (1838-1884), leader of the Brahma Samaj, pointed out that Jesus was an Asian. He argued that Jesus being no stranger to Indians, they recognized in him what is best in themselves; so Christianity in Asia must take on an Asian garb. With P.C. Mazoomdar he founded the *Hindu Church of Christ*. He wanted the true Asiatic Christ without any western appendage. An Indian Church, fully faithful to Christ and fully rooted in Indian culture, is yet to be realized.

In 1969, after the first National Consultation on the Church in India, our bishops in their joint pastoral letter wrote, “The Church in India, if it is to be true to its essential mission, must be a Church rooted in Indian soil, thoroughly at home in her various languages, culture and way of life, intimately sharing the joys and hopes, griefs and anxieties of the Indian people, and acknowledged by them not as foreign but very much as their own.” It is imperative that the Indian Christians deepen their knowledge, understanding and appreciation of Indian culture. In all that does not come into conflict with our faith, we Christians should conform ourselves to the prevailing social and cultural milieu.

Then we shall be communicating in a manner understandable and acceptable to the people, through the language of words, signs, symbolic actions, dress, food, drink, etc. St Paul was fully aware of this need, and he adapted fully to the culture and life-style of the people to whom he preached. I conclude with his words which are clear and doubtless in their purpose:

“I am a free man, nobody’s slave; but I make myself everybody’s slave in order to win as many as possible. While working with the Jews, I live like a Jew in order to win them; and even though I myself am not subject to the Law of Moses, I live as though I were when working with those who are, in order to win them. In the same way, when working with Gentiles, I live like a Gentile, outside the Jewish Law, in order to win gentiles. This does not mean that I don’t obey God’s law; I am really under Christ’s law. Among the weak in faith I become weak like one of them, in order to win them. So I become all things to all people, that I may save some of them by whatever means are possible. All this I do for the Gospel’s sake, in order to share in its blessings” (1 Cor 9: 19-23).

– **Fr George Kaitholil, ssp**

SERMON ON

St. Paul, the Apostle

The Apostle Paul, as most of you probably know, is known as the apostle to the Gentiles. Actually, his missionary work among the Gentiles was just one of several reasons why Paul was a controversial figure, viewed with great suspicion by the original Twelve, the apostles who formed Christ’s inner circle during his ministry on earth. And, no wonder. Paul, or Saul, as he was originally known, was a man so committed to the orthodox (small “o”) faith of his people, that, out of that commitment, he zealously persecuted the first Christians (Acts 8:3). In fact, his conversion experience occurred while he was on the way to Damascus in order to ferret out more Christians from the synagogues there (Acts 9:1-3). And, then, there’s the manner of his conversion and call by Christ himself. To whom else did Christ appear after his ascension in order personally to commission him as his apostle? When Saul tried to join the Christian community, no one wanted anything to do with him. Ananias actually argued with God (Acts 9:13-14) when the Lord told him to seek out Saul, who was waiting for Ananias to heal him of the blindness he suffered during his encounter with Christ on the road to Damascus. Of course, the Scripture words it all very nicely and respectfully, but the basic tenor – in colloquial speech – would be, “Are You nuts? Why don’t You just tell me to slit my throat?” But, Ananias went.

Then, when Paul – as he called himself after his conversion – began preaching the gospel in Damascus, he totally confused people, Christians and non-Christians alike. In

fact, it took the Jewish leaders a while to catch on that he really had switched sides. Once they caught on, though, it didn't take them long to realize that they needed to take this guy out; he was proving entirely too successful. So, word gets to Paul that there's a price on his head. The Christians in Damascus sneak him out over the city walls in a basket, and he makes his way to Jerusalem (Acts 9:23-25). You'd think that word of his conversion would already have reached the church there. Maybe it had, but people had very vivid recollections of Paul's support for the stoning of the deacon Stephen; they weren't inclined to be suicidally naïve. So, when Paul tried to join the Christian community in Jerusalem, everyone was afraid of him and wanted nothing to do with him (Acts 9:26). It was as if a known former KGB agent had tried to approach the underground Orthodox Church in the days of the communist Soviet Union. You can imagine how welcome he would have been. Such was also the case with Paul. As a matter of fact, Barnabas had to stand up for him and convince the apostles that Paul really was one of them now. Of course, once he was accepted and began preaching the gospel, it didn't take long before he gained the confidence of the Church and the enmity of the civil and, especially, the religious authorities in Jerusalem, just as he had done in Damascus.

So, Paul wandered around for a while with Barnabas. It was while they were working with the Christian community in Antioch that yet another dispute arose. At this point, everyone accepted Paul as a true Christian as opposed to a wolf in sheep's clothing. The issue this time wasn't about Paul himself, but about his approach toward Gentile converts. Paul's opponents and critics, non-Hellenized Jews

from Judaea, charged that, unless Gentile converts were circumcised, they would not be saved (Acts 15:1). In other words, in order to be Christian, they had to be Jewish. Paul and Barnabas sharply disagreed with them; when it became obvious that no one was budging, they all travelled to Jerusalem to bring the matter before the Church there and to receive from "the apostles and elders" (Acts 15:6) an official decision.

At the council in Jerusalem, the Judaeans Christians won support from those Christians who were of the sect of the Pharisees; like the Judaeans, they believed that the community must remain Jewish – i.e., the converts must be circumcised (Acts 15:5). However, Paul found an unlikely ally in Peter. Originally, the Apostle Peter had been of the same mind as his fellow Judaeans. But, Peter had had his own little conversion experience via a vision of clean and unclean animals that God had sent him shortly before he was contacted by the Gentile centurion named Cornelius (Acts 10). So, Peter took to heart God's lesson, and applied it not only to Cornelius but also to the situation in which Paul found himself. Therefore, Peter stood up and defended Paul; this time he believed him because he, too, had been given a specific mission to Gentiles by God directly.

(To be Continued...)