



SAN PAOLO

INTERCHAPTER ASSEMBLY OF THE SOCIETY OF ST PAUL

APARECIDA (Brazil) – February 15-25, 2018

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PRESENTATION

Dear Brothers,

the present edition of the *San Paolo – Bulletin* is exclusively dedicated to the Interchapter held in Aparecida (Brazil) from 15 to 25 February 2018. It presents the principal interventions of the Superior General and his Council, together with the General Government's commitments for the next three years and the recommendations of the Major Superiors, Delegates and Representatives of the Circumscriptions.

The days spent in the shadow of the Marian shrine of Aparecida have been marked by a climate of fraternity and sharing, thanks also to the attentive and generous care of our Brazilian brothers. On the part of the participants there was a strong awareness on where communication, the Church, religious life and society are navigating today. We, as Paulines of the present time, are called to “stay”, to “remain” in this socio-ecclesial context with all the richness of our charism.

From this derives the urgency and the commitment to start the “processes of continuous conversion” in our communities, Circumscriptions and apostolic structures. To take root and grow, these “processes” have the person of every single Pauline as “privileged laboratory”. From this, everything begins and depends the missionary renewal and relaunching of our Congregation.

We have also become aware of our weaknesses and shortcomings, despite the goodwill of intentions.

May Jesus Master continue to enlighten us so that we can discover the path that He has chosen and wants us to follow.

The protection of Mary, Queen of the Apostles, the apostolic zeal of St. Paul, the holiness of life of our Blessed Alberione and Blessed Giaccardo accompany us in this journey.

Father Vito Fracchiolla
Vicar General
Coordinator of the Interchapter Preparatory Commission

MEMBERS OF THE INTERCHAPTER ASSEMBLY

General Government and General Officials

Fr. Valdir José De Castro	Superior General
Fr. Vito Fracchiolla	Vicar General
Br. Luigi Bofelli	Councillor General
Fr. Celso Godilano	Councillor General
Fr. Salud Paredes	Councillor General
Fr. Jose Pottayil	Councillor General
Br. Darlei Zanon	Councillor General
Fr. Tomasz Lubas	General Bursar
Fr. Stefano Stimamiglio	Secretary General

Circumscription Superiors, Delegates (D) and Representatives (R)

Fr. Martín Pedro Dolzani	Arg.-Chile-Paraguay Province
Fr. Luiz Miguel Duarte	Brazil Province
Fr. Danilo Medina	Colombia-Ec.-Panamá Province
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Fr. Lázaro E. García Caso	Spain Province
Fr. Tony Bautista (D)	United States Province
Fr. Michael Goonan (D)	Australia Region
Fr. Giuseppe Sciortino (R)	Canada-France Region
Fr. Roberto Ponti	Congo Region
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Fr. Alberto Scalenghe	Perú-Bolivia Region
Fr. Bogusław Zeman	Poland-Ukraine Region
Fr. Francisco Rebelo (R)	Portugal-Angola Region
Fr. Hernando Jaramillo	Venezuela Region

SYNTHESIZED CHRONICLE OF THE INTERCHAPTER

From 15 to 25 February 2018 the Interchapter Assembly of the Society of St. Paul was held in Aparecida (Brazil) with a twofold objective: «*To carry out a verification of the programmed plans by the X General Chapter*», in accordance with the provisions of art. 223 of the Const. and Dir., and «*to address the most urgent problems of the Congregation, in the sense of seeking a relaunching, that is, to see what are the strongest and most urgent commitments that we must take for the next three years*» (Convocation Letter of the Superior General of 20 August 2017).

The works took place in three phases:

- **1st verification phase** (15-19 February), in which the reports of the General Government and the Circumscriptions were presented;
- **2nd illuminative phase** (20 February), in which the main contents of the 2nd International Seminar of the Pauline Publishers (2nd ISPP) were shared, framing them in the wider ecclesial context with particular reference to the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* of Pope *Francis*;
- **3rd relaunching phase** (21-25 February), aimed at identifying the objectives to be pursued on a general and *Circumscription* level.

1. Verification

At 17:00 on Thursday, 15 February 2018, the Interchapter began with the enthronement of the Word in the chapter hall and by singing the invocation to the Holy Spirit by the assembly. In his welcome address, the Superior General, in recalling the pastoral meaning of our mission – strengthened by the Marian place chosen as the venue for this event – and the theological and spiritual significance of the logo chosen for this occasion, invited the Paulines present to renew the commitment to announce with joy, hope and prophetic spirit the Word that saves

and frees us from every evil in the current communication context. Then the actuary (Fr. Stefano Stimamiglio), the persons in charge of communication (Fr. Roberto Ponti with Fr. Alberto Scalenghe) and of the liturgy (Fr. Eustacchio Imperato with Fr. Jose Aripio), the animator of the songs in the liturgy (Br. Luigi Bofelli) were appointed.

During the opening procession of the inaugural Mass presided by the Superior General, all the Circumscription Superiors, Delegates and Representatives have fixed the flags of the nations represented by them in three flag receptacles, sign of the universal character of the Congregation that is united in the symbol of the Word and of the Spirit. The three flag receptacles were subsequently placed in the centre of the chapter hall and have accompanied all the proceedings.

The morning of 16 February was dedicated to the retreat preached by the Archbishop of Aparecida, Dom Orlando Brandes, on the theme of silence. In the afternoon, the Superior General presented his institutional report, followed by that of the SIF on vocational promotion and formation. Both reports were followed by many questions and interactions by the Interchapter fathers.

On 17 February, the report of the CTIA was read, followed by those of the General Officials, the Postulator General, the General Councillor Brother Luigi Bofelli (on "poverty and service of authority"), the Vicar General (on PICSL and on the Dependent Houses) and on the Centre of Pauline Spirituality. After each report, a good amount of time was dedicated to questions and clarifications.

On Sunday morning, 18 February, the capitulars participated in the Eucharistic celebration presided by Mons. Orlando Brandes in the Basilica of Our Lady of Aparecida and televised live by TV Aparecida. This day of rest was also lived communally with an excursion in the locality of Paraty. On Monday, 19 February the works are resumed with all the reports of the Circumscriptions on the following three questions posed by the organizing Commission in the letter of 27 September 2017 signed by the Vicar general: how many have been realized in one's own

Circumscription – at the various levels – the operative guidelines assigned by the X General Chapter or how many are being truly realized? How many have not been realized yet or could not be realized? What are the problems that prevent or make it difficult or even impossible to realize the operative guidelines in one’s Circumscription at the various levels?

2. Illumination

On Wednesday, 20 February, a formative-illuminative day was held in view of the third and final phase of “relaunching”. The Superior General’s report has moved on the main guidelines that emerged from the 2nd ISPP, preceded by the historical trajectory that led from the 1st ISPP to the 2nd ISPP. Then followed, after a brief introduction by Fr. Jose Pottayil, the exposition of the Councillor General Br. Darlei Zanon on the statistics of the apostolate of the Congregation and, care of Br. Zanon and Fr. Stefano Stimamiglio, a brief presentation of the essential contents of the individual reports of the 2nd ISPP. In the afternoon, Fr. Antonio Da Silva (Province of Brazil) presented the main guidelines of the apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, the basic document in which to frame our mission in the wider context of the universal Church.

3. Relaunching

The third and final phase (21-25 February) saw alternating moments of personal reflection, group work and discussion in plenary starting from the draft of the document “Editorial Guidelines. Identity, contents and interlocutors of the Pauline apostolate” (to be approved by the General Council in the summer of 2018), from the contents presented in plenary on 20 February (2nd ISPP and *Evangelii Gaudium*) and a report by Fr. José Arnaiz on the situation of consecrated life given to the interchapter fathers. As a background of this work, the concrete situation of the individual Circumscriptions was considered, whether as priorities or as potentials existing in each of them or as internal struggles for change to happen.

As a result of all this work, on 23 February, the recommendations of the Major Superiors, Delegates and Representatives of the Circumscriptions to the General Government for the next three years were presented and put to the vote, preceded by the presentation of the commitments that the latter assumed in first person to realize in the same period of time (see pp. 61-64). Each Circumscription, in turn, was invited to take on specific commitments to be implemented in the next three years and to present them in the assembly.

Furthermore, during the relaunching phase, other issues relevant to the life of the Congregation were discussed. In particular, on 22 February, the Superior General updated on the situation regarding the revision of the congregational Norm, after all the progress made during the previous mandate, a work that was effectively interrupted with the death of Fr. Silvio Sassi. It emerged that the revised draft submitted to the Manila Interchapter Assembly (14-18 February 2013) had not upset the text of the current Norm nor its structure, which remained essentially unchanged, except for some important reformulations in language and other practical adjustments. The commission should have continued the work by presenting its results, first during the meeting of the Circumscription Superiors (scheduled for November 2014 and not celebrated due to the death of Fr. Sassi himself) and then, through the General Government, to submit it in the X General Chapter for its definitive approval. Concretely, in this last assembly the capitular fathers asked the new General Government to complete the revision of the norms (see Guideline 4.1.1), a task that, however, it has not yet succeeded in fulfilling because of the many other concerns urgently presented in the past three years. Fr. De Castro pointed out that in the meantime new perspectives have emerged that must be taken into consideration, both in relation to the great evolution of communication in recent years – which implies an updated understanding of our charism and of the Pauline apostolate itself – as well as the ecclesiology renewed in the light of the recent magisterium of Pope Francis. After a comprehensive debate, the Superior General announced that the General Government will continue to reflect on this delicate and

important issue and that it will present its results during the next meeting of the Major Superiors, then to agree during that meeting on the proposal to be brought to the XI General Chapter of the Society of Saint Paul.

On 23 February – after the meetings of the Circumscription Superiors, Delegates and Representatives belonging to the geographical areas that refer to CIDEP, GEC and CAP-ESW – the future of these apostolic bodies, the activities of the two of which (GEC and CAP-ESW) are currently suspended, was also discussed. The result of the discussions within the individual groups was presented in plenary. As for CIDEP, the need emerged to restructure, to reform or to re-establish this organization also in the light of the document “Editorial Guidelines” and the results of the 2nd ISPP. With regard to the GEC, its current operational difficulty has been identified, even if in the past some results have also occurred. Its future will depend on finding or not common and shared projects, even at the formative level. Also, the CAP-ESW is currently suspended, even if there are collaborations between the individual Circumscriptions. The continuation of the meetings of the Major Superiors, DGAs and Publishing Directors to tackle common issues and problems, such as the multicultural and multi-religious contexts that characterize the societies and churches of Asia and Oceania, should also be encouraged.

On 24 February it was reflected, first on a personal level and then in the assembly, on the situation of the Congregation in the social, ecclesial, communication, vocational and religious life context to project it towards the XI General Chapter. Numerous proposals for themes to be discussed and possible titles to be adopted have emerged. The Superior General concluded the debate by thanking all the confreres for their contribution to the future discernment of the General Government, the results of which will be communicated during the next meeting of the Major Superiors.

At the end, before the transfer to São Paulo, Fr. De Castro concluded the day with his closing speech.

On Sunday, 25 February, the Interchapter Assembly concluded with the Mass celebrated in the community of *Cidade*

Paulina (São Paulo), presided over by the Superior General. The Brazilian Pauline students and religious were present, along with numerous Sisters of the female Congregations of the Pauline Family.

The congregational event was treated to an appendage on 26 February with a visit by all the interchapter fathers to the FAP-COM (*Faculdade Paulus de Tecnologia e Comunicação*) of São Paulo, with the presentation of the numerous educational and social activities offered by the Province of Brazil and from this promising academic reality which, although still young, is in strong and constant growth.

**REETING OF THE SUPERIOR GENERAL
FATHER VALDIR JOSÉ DE CASTRO
AND INTRODUCTION TO THE INTERCHAPTER**

Dear brothers,

in my behalf and of the General Government, I welcome each one of you, Superiors of the Circumscription, who are taking part in this Interchapter Assembly. I would also like to thank, in behalf of everybody, Fr. Luiz Miguel Duarte, Provincial Superior, for the attention and welcome offered by our confreres in the Province of Brazil on the occasion of our arrival.

We are having this meeting at the feet of Our Lady of Aparecida, whose Sanctuary dedicated to her, reminds us of the many Marian pilgrimage sites in the world. This is an appropriate place for direct contact with the people of God and is useful for awakening in us the pastoral sense of our apostolate. We fit right into this context of being pilgrims for, we too, are “apostles-communicators and consecrated persons” who come to the “Mother’s house” to ask her to teach us to be grateful for the many graces we received from God, just as she did in the “Magnificat”: «*My soul magnifies the Lord*” (Lk 1:46), “*the Almighty has done great things and Holy is his name...*» (Lk 1:49).

To Mary — whom we invoke as Mother, Teacher and Queen of the Apostles — we also want to ask that she help us in the challenge of living and proclaiming Jesus — the Master, Way, Truth, and Life — to all peoples. Under the mantle of her protection, we want to renew our commitment to use all the languages of communication at the service of evangelization, in the footsteps of the Apostle Paul and in creative fidelity to the charism that we have inherited from our Founder, Blessed James Alberione.

Jesus is the living Gospel that we have been called to welcome and to witness to the men and women of today. As “missionary disciples”¹ in the sphere of communication, we want to

¹ Pope Francis, *Evangelium Gaudium*, no. 120.

make His “program of life” ours too, what He himself presented in the synagogue of Nazareth, as the Evangelist Luke recounts: *«The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord»* (Lk 4: 18-19). By letting ourselves be enlightened by the Spirit of the Lord, we are renewing our commitment to proclaim the Word that saves and liberates humanity from all evil with joy, hope, and prophetic spirit in the culture of communication.

In this Interchapter, we wish to renew, in particular, our commitment to the Gospel, in the wake of the X General Chapter, summarized in the general objective (2015-2021) of the Final Document: *«“I do all for the Gospel” (1Cor 9:23). Attentive to the signs of the times, renew the impetus of our apostolic action, converting ourselves, our communities and our apostolic structures, to reach everyone, especially in the periphery, utilising likewise the new languages of communication»*.

We are here in accordance with what our Constitutions ask: *«Three years after the conclusion of the chapter, the general government is to convoke the provincial superiors, the regional superiors and, in the measure that is deemed opportune, persons knowledgeable in the various areas of formation and the apostolate, in order to check with the plans drawn up by the general chapter and to discuss with them the more urgent problems facing the Congregation»*². In addition to evaluating the progress made and transmitting the operational information of the various bodies of the General Government, this is also an opportune time to relaunch the Congregation for the next three years, based on the programmatic orientations of the last General Chapter³ and the needs that the current circumstances require.

This meeting, as it was organized — with its moments of prayer, celebration, reflection, sharing, evaluation and projection — wants to be the best time for dialogue and communion, where we can feel our shared responsibility in carrying out the

² *Constitutions and Directory of the Society of St. Paul*, art. 223.

³ Cf. *Service of Authority. Manual*, no. 172.1b.

service of animation of our Congregation, considering that the most important element of an institution are its members, that is, people: the Paulines, without forgetting the lay collaborators. The Interchapter is a meeting that orients us to look with concern to our confreres and to feel the different realities of our Congregation, with its lights and shadows, situating it in the world in which we live, with its many challenges, especially for the life of the Church and for the “Pauline” consecrated life.

As our Founder used to say, «*To govern is to love; it is an office of charity*»⁴. We know that the service which a Superior of a Circumscription carries out in the Congregation together with his Council must respond to the needs of a given territory with regard to the persons and to all the areas of Pauline life. However, this task cannot be an excuse to close one’s self within the limits of one’s own Circumscription reality. We must certainly look carefully and try to respond to all internal situations, but not to the point of overshadowing the dimension of “collegiality”. No Circumscription is an island; it belongs rather to a body, that is, to a larger and more complex reality that is the Congregation as a whole. The Interchapter is a time of grace to make the exercise of reflecting on the current situation and of planning together our Pauline life.

In this Meeting, we will examine some issues of interest to the whole Congregation, trying to answer at least two essential questions: Where are we? Where do we want to go? Or rather: where are we and where does the Lord wants us to go? In this perspective, we will take the *Priorities* and the *Operative Guidelines* of the previous General Chapter to see what we have done — both at the Circumscription and the general levels — and what we still lack. But we also want to provide a space — certainly a bigger space — for the Spirit of the Lord to act in us and to help us truly realize the ecclesial, congregational, cultural and “communication” context in which we live, and to deepen our identity in this environment in order to see where we have to go.

Regarding the context in which we live in and carry out our apostolate, the first observation, which is obvious but worth re-

⁴ James Alberione, *Explication of the Constitutions*, 1962, p. 329.

peating, is that it is no longer the one in which our Founder and the first generations of Pauline lived. In 1949, when Fr. Alberione maintained that «*peaceful and rapid revolutions occur through the press, radio, cinema, television, aviation, political, social, industrial movements, atomic energy...*».⁵, perhaps he never imagined that, only a few decades later, development has reached such an advanced level, especially in the field of communication, with the advent and development of digital technologies.

We are aware that we live in a constantly changing “communication” environment, where communication takes place through the different languages produced by technologies — analogue and digital — that circulate through multimedia, transmedia and crossmedia strategies. On the other hand, we know that the basis of our apostolate is still the communication made with the traditional press, which we must continue to do, to do well and with quality, mainly where this medium corresponds to the public to whom we address. However, the current conjunctures urgently urge us to open ourselves to means — including new “Pauline initiatives” — and to adapt our publishing to the context of the culture in which we live in.

Associated with this is our identity as publishers. Even if the means evolve and the “communication” environment changes, our identity as “Pauline” Publishers, in the spirit that we have inherited from our Founder, continues in the same way as before. What is rapidly transforming is the very special way of “doing” the publishing today. Regarding this theme, we will have the opportunity in this Interchapter to delve into some aspects of the contents presented at the 2nd International Seminar of Pauline Publishers (2nd ISPP) held in Ariccia last October.

The content of the 2nd ISPP, which was organized in view of updating our editorial guidelines, will help us to deepen what identifies us as “Paulines” in a globalized world where everyone — people and institutions — find themselves immersed in the environment of a communication which is increasingly connected to the network. We note that we often talk about digital reality, but then in practice we still do little with it. And if we do

⁵ James Alberione, *CISP*, p. 1010.

little or nothing, the future will be unforgiving with us! This meeting will be the appropriate time to have your suggestions concerning this reality and also to update the document on the editorial guidelines that, after it has been approved by the General Government, will become a definitive guide for our publishing.

To always have a clear image of our identity — which involves our “being” and our “doing” and which must respond to the challenge of evangelization of all times — is essential because all the other dimensions that are part of our society depend on this awareness. Pauline life: community life, spirituality, vocational pastoral care, formation “for the mission”, organization, economy, etc.

Dear brothers, these various considerations, which I have considered important to mention already in this introduction, will be the object of reflection and deepening in these days following the program that has already been presented. From this meeting, we hope to come up with some concrete proposals that will help us to move our Congregation forward.

We note that we are in the Church, not by ourselves alone but as part of the great project of evangelization — that is the Pauline Family. Within this “marvellous family” and in communion with every Institute that composes it, we want to do our part in the common commitment to live and proclaim Jesus Master, in the spirit of the Apostle Paul, with the fastest and most effective means, to the men and women of our time.

I conclude with a thought from our Founder who, in my opinion, is very appropriate for this occasion: «*Listen to the Congregation everywhere. By isolating ourselves, considering ourselves alone, we put ourselves in a position where charity fades away. No, let the Congregation be listened to, the Church and humanity as well*»⁶. Truly, we can live out these sentiments in this Interchapter.

May we all have a fruitful work!

Aparecida, 15 February 2018

⁶ James Alberione, *CISP*, p. 177.

OPENING HOMILY OF THE SUPERIOR GENERAL

Dear Brothers,

we start our Interchapter exactly at the start of Lent, which is the liturgical period of preparation for the celebration of the Easter of the Lord and, therefore, a favourable time, a time of conversion. Lent is also an opportune time for the rediscovery and deepening of the authentic discipleship of Christ, which presupposes meeting with Him. This meeting, however, cannot be limited to knowing him only from the outside, but must commit us to share life with Him, so as to assume his plan of salvation with all the consequences that derive from it. It is what we have heard from the Gospel of Luke: *«If anyone wants to come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me»* (Lk 9:23).

To take on the burden of the cross of Jesus, means, for the disciple, entering freely in the logic of love which is self-giving, who spends his life for others. Jesus, who comes into this world not to do his will but the will of the Father, teaches us regarding life: either you give it or you keep it jealously for yourself: if you give it, you find blessedness; if you keep it for yourself, you find death. This is the sense of the final addition of the Gospel: *«He who wants to save his own life, will lose it, but he who loses his life because of me, will save it»* (Lk 9:24).

This does not mean that the start of following Jesus corresponds to one choosing death. Exactly the opposite is true: it is a choice for love which definitely reveals itself as a choice for life, the same life mentioned by the passage of the reading taken from the book of Deuteronomy which we have heard today (Dt 30:19). In one's option for Jesus, there is the fundamental choice for love that leads to life.

We are called to love Jesus – who for us is the Master, the Way, the Truth and the Life –, to hear his voice and to let ourselves be touched by Him. Listening is an attitude of fundamental communication and it cannot be ignored in the process of conversion in order to reach Life in Him. Conversion is the necessary way for us if we want not only personal renewal in our following of Jesus,

but also communitarian and apostolic renewal. Let us remember that the evangelical and Pauline concept of “conversion” is: “change of mentality”. It is true that such a process of change can become taxing and can transform itself into a true cross, but it is a pain that purifies, saves and sets free.

It is exactly in this perspective that our last General Chapter finds itself, when it affirms that in order to renew our apostolic thrust in our mission to do all for the Gospel, what is needed is the conversion of ourselves, of our communities and of our apostolic structures. We note that, as a first step, there is always the person. In fact, it is impossible to change the various areas of life if you do not start from the renewal of the person.

In the first place, it is the person, in the deepest part of his being that makes the choice of receiving and giving witness to the Gospel. Thus, it happened with the Apostle Paul, who is our main reference in our mission. The activity of evangelization of Saint Paul is closely connected with the person of the evangelizer. Paul is a “converted” person who allows himself to be enlightened by Jesus, as the glass that allows the light to pass through. And to us, what happens? As our Founder says: *«Even if the sun were resplendent, but if the glass is dim, the light does not pass through. The Gospel is resplendent: “I am the light of the world” [Jn 8:12], but if through us it does not pass well because our hearts or our lives are not in the right places, what shall we have? How much responsibility in the consequences of our life, of our apostolate, in the accounting we shall have to give to God»!*¹.

If we allow ourselves to be enlightened by Christ, it will be possible to keep far away the darkness of individualism, of arrogant behaviour, of indifference, of resignation, of speaking ill of the confrere, of seeing only the negative aspects in persons, in the Congregation, in the Church... If we allow ourselves to be enlightened by Christ, it will be possible to enter into a new life, which does not mean ignoring the problems, but facing them with faith and hope, giving our part to make better the quality of our personal, communitarian and social lives.

Truly, we need personal conversion in order to live in recon-

¹ James Alberione, *Explanation of the Constitutions*, 1962, pp. 235, 236.

ciled communities, an important condition to carry forward our mission so as to respond to the needs of men and women of today. In this sense, Pope Francis² talks of “pastoral and missionary” conversion that cannot leave things as they are. In other words, we do not need a simple “administration”: it is necessary to live in a permanent state of mission.

It is useful to consider the words which Card. Elia Dalla Costa at the *General Congress of the States of Perfection* said long time ago, on 26 November 1950, which however remains very actual and which Fr. Alberione has made his own when considering our specific apostolate using communication: «*Either we look courageously at reality, beyond the little world that surrounds us, and so we see as urgent the need for a radical revolution of mentality and method ; or else in the space of a few years we shall have created a desert around the Master of life; and life shall rightly eliminate us as dead, useless and cumbersome branches*»³.

May the Lord help us, not only to make us aware of this “prophecy”, but also to do something concrete, before it becomes too late. So then, there is no other way except conversion. Needed for us Paulines is personal and communitarian conversion that leads us to a “pastoral and missionary” conversion, in the current culture of communication, so as to answer the challenge of evangelization in creative fidelity to the charism that we have inherited from our Founder.

The Interchapter is a favourable time and one of grace, a time to deepen our reality (personal, communitarian, spiritual, formative, apostolic, etc.) situated in the world wherein we live. It is also a propitious time to evaluate the institutional journey which we have made until now and to relaunch ourselves with bravery towards the future, confirming again our commitment to live the Gospel and to do all to announce it, an itinerary that we are called to do in continuous conversion, if we want to scrutinize a reality that is always new.

Let us entrust ourselves to Mary our Mother, venerated in this place as “Aparecida”, represented by the small statue which

² Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, no. 25.

³ James Alberione, *CISP*, p. 807.

has been “fished out” by the net of three poor fishermen from the waters of the river Paraiba. An interesting detail is that inside the Sanctuary the water is portrayed in some panels and also in the ornament of the stairs that rise toward the altar. As we know, water has so many meanings in the area of faith, in the first place in reference to our Baptism, but also and above all to Christ, who has said: *«If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me, and let him drink who believes in me. As the Scriptures say: From his bosom shall spring forth rivers of living water»* (Jn 7:37-38). Through the hands of Mary, we can drink of this Water to acquire the strength we need to carry forward our life and our mission for the good of the people of God that we are called to love and serve by means of communication and in communication.

Aparecida, 15 February 2018

REPORT OF THE SUPERIOR GENERAL

INTRODUCTION

Since the mandated General Government has assumed the service of animation for the Congregation, it commits itself to keeping in the course with which the X General Chapter has set as its goal: «*I do all for the Gospel*” (1Cor 9:23). *Attentive to the signs of the times, renew the impetus of our apostolic action, converting ourselves, our communities and our apostolic structures, to reach everyone, especially in the periphery, utilising likewise the new languages of communication*».

We recall initially that the General Chapter underlined the aspect that is essential in our Pauline consecrated life, that is, the Gospel – which for us is Jesus Master, Way, Truth and Life – the starting point of our vocation and mission, as it was for the Apostle Paul, for Blessed James Alberione and continues to be for the Church today, an option that was reiterated in the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*. In fact, as Pope Francis affirms, «*whenever we make the effort to return to the source and to recover the original freshness of the Gospel, new avenues arise, new paths of creativity open up, with different forms of expression, more eloquent signs and words with new meaning for today’s world*»¹.

In the light of the Gospel, we want to be attentive to the signs of the times, especially in the field of communication, to renew the momentum of our apostolic activity with faith and enthusiasm in order to reach everyone, especially in the peripheries. This goal, as our general Objective affirms, requires personal conversion, conversion of communities and of apostolic structures.

In this report, we wish to present the operative guidelines of the X General Chapter that, in the last three years, have been put into practice and some other initiatives, which have not been planned

¹ Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, no. 11.

by the last Chapter, but which circumstances have generated, as well as those lines that it still wants to apply.

We will begin our report by dealing with community life-spirituality and with some institutional aspects. Then we will move on to the area of vocation promotion and formation prepared by the General Councillors, members of the SIF, Fr. Salud Paredes and Fr. Celso Godilano; then, we will proceed with the area of the apostolate by the members of the CTIA, General Councillors Fr. Jose Pottayil and Brother Darlei Zanon. In this report are also included the reports of the Vicar General, Fr. Vito Fracchiolla on the Pauline Institutes of Consecrated Secular Life (including the Pauline Cooperators) and on the Houses dependent on the General House.

1. PERSONS, COMMUNITIES AND INSTITUTIONAL ASPECTS

1.1 Community-Spiritual Life: application of the operative guidelines

The X General Chapter has established two priorities regarding community life-spirituality, in which areas are included aspects related to persons and communities. While the first (2.1) motivates *«to build our communities in the spirit of St. Paul in witnessing to a life offered to God, in fraternal communion and in apostolic synergy»*, the second priority (2.2) refers to the double table of the Word of God and the Eucharist as *«the source from where he draws strength to rekindle the gift received in order to increase apostolic vigour and to overcome whatever could create division»*.

It is interesting to perceive that both priorities express the awareness of the importance of spirituality as a way to strengthen the community, especially in making communion grow in view of the mission. In fact, spirituality cannot be seen as a dimension of the consecrated life that is reduced to moments of prayer and celebration, but must extend to all areas, including that of human relationships, the formation and apostolic activities.

With regard to the operative guidelines deliberated to implement the two priorities, except for the guideline 2.2.1, all

have been as subjects of the action either by the Superiors of the Circumscription or by the local Superiors. We perceive that the Chapter wanted to strengthen the indispensable service of animation as a reference point for improving the quality of community life. In fact, together with its Councillors, the Superiors (local and Circumscription) are the first to help the confreres to grow in what is specific to the consecrated life, particularly in the aspects concerning interpersonal relationships and which include attitudes that enhance communication, including listening and dialogue.

Community life and spirituality – the first animation of which is the responsibility of local governments – were also the recurrent themes in the service of animation of the General Government, both during the Visits (fraternal, canonical or verification), or through the programmatic letters (and other letters on specific topics), often concentrated on aspects that relate to interpersonal relationships, essential to carry out the mission.

1.2 The different activities

1.2.1 The annual letters

The X General Chapter has not drawn up a specific operational guideline regarding the annual letters. However, we know that it is present in our tradition that the Superior General, in his capacity as animator of the whole Congregation, also uses this means to carry out his service, developing some theme concerning the Pauline consecrated life.

The first letter was published in the Easter of 2015, with the title, *“I do all for the Gospel (1Cor 9:23). In love, in communion and with courage”*. It was written in the light of the X General Chapter and also of the last letter written by Father Silvio Sassi on the occasion of the celebration of the Centenary of the Congregation entitled, *“Evangelizing in communication with communication”*. Synthetically, the first letter insists on aspects concerning fraternal life, which are essential for carrying out our apostolate.

Starting in 2016, the letters went on to deal with themes inspired by the “four wheels” of the Pauline cart. The first was entitled “*Sanctity, a style of life*” and the second, of 2017, “*Study in view of the mission*”. Both were published on the occasion of Easter and adopted a pastoral language. For 2018 and 2019, two letters have been scheduled, which will address the themes of the apostolate and poverty.

The decision to deepen the four wheels of the Pauline cart was born of the desire of the Congregation to realize itself that in order to “renew the momentum of our apostolic activity” we must also remain firm on the four dimensions of Pauline life, in the spirit received from our Founder, who affirmed: «*The whole man in Jesus Christ, for a total love of God: intelligence, will, heart, physical forces. Everything: nature, grace, vocation, for the apostolate. The cart that runs on the four wheels: sanctity, study, apostolate, poverty*» (AD 100). The letters try to underline some aspects of the “four wheels” and to make an updated reading on these important dimensions of our Pauline life.

1.2.2 Canonical, verification and fraternal Visits

With regard to the Visits to be made by the General Government, our Norm clarifies: «*There are three types of visits (Article 209.1): the “canonical”, coinciding with the change of the Circumscription government, the “fraternal” one, due to the initiative of the Superior General or at the request of a House or a Circumscription, and that of “verification” (Article 209.4)*» (*Service of Authority. Manual. No. 163*).

Meanwhile, even if each visit has its particular characteristic, of whatever nature it is, it is always an important moment of meeting between the members of the General Government with the Circumscriptions, which presents a “pastoral” character and that becomes an opportunity to strengthen the bonds of brotherhood and to promote religious life and apostolic activities.

In addition to the aforementioned and described visits, we also consider the visits during the provincial Chapters and regional Assemblies relevant, which become an opportunity for getting closer and knowing better the Circumscription reality. In

these recent years, in some Circumscriptions, the General Government has also promoted some visits that have focused on some issues concerning specific areas, such as formation, apostolate and economy.

1.2.3 The programmatic letters

It is customary in the Congregation that after the canonical visitation and the subsequent appointment of the Superior of Circumscription, the Superior General writes a “programmatic letter”, based on the report prepared by the General Councillors and after reflection on the situation of the Circumscription within the General Council.

The programmatic letters written in the last three years try not only to give some precise indications regarding the various areas of Pauline life, but also to offer a reflection on the situation of the Circumscription in line with the spirit of the last General Chapter.

Let us specify that it is not the objective of the General Government to say, in these letters, all the things that the Circumscription must do, as if it were to offer ready-made lines of action to be put into practice. If so, there would be no need for a provincial Chapter or a regional Assembly, which is justly the legitimate place where the Circumscription must prepare the project for the period of its mandate. The aim of the programmatic letter is to present some ideas, but above all certain elements to reflect on the local situation, especially in those aspects that need to be improved.

In this sense, the point of reference was not only the local reality but also the objective of the last General Chapter that, in turn, was enlightened by the Pauline motto: “I do all for the Gospel”. In this perspective, the letters insisted on always returning to the Gospel, emphasizing fraternal life, teamwork, organization, transparency in administration, the need to prepare members for the mission. It is then up to the Circumscription Superior to take a cue from the reflections and recommendations to use them in his animation service during his term of office.

1.2.4 The meeting of the Major Superiors (2016)

The General Government organized a Meeting of the Major Superiors in Rome from 22 to 30 June 2016. This event has been planned in such a way as to make its conclusion coincide with the celebration of the Year of Mercy in the Basilica of St. Paul, experienced together with the representatives of the entire Pauline Family.

The Meeting of the Major Superiors was a real moment of communion, prayer and sharing, and it took place in three parts: a) the illuminative phase, in which we listened to two conferences on the theme of the last General Chapter and pastoral care in the pontificate of Pope Francis; b) the listening phase, in which the reports on the Circumscriptions were presented and on how the spirit of the General Chapter is animating our realities; c) the communion and sharing phase, in which the Superiors had the opportunity to dialogue with the representatives of the activities and services offered by the General House.

1.2.5 The Pauline geography

In the first year of office, the General Government began a study of the Pauline geography in South America, which lasted about a year, with the aim of optimizing our presence in this territory, giving a concrete vocation perspective and also with the end of developing our apostolate in a sustainable way.

Considering, initially, the possibility of starting a community in the city of Asunción (Paraguay), the General Government, in 2016, decided – after listening to the members of this Circumscription and counting on its precious collaboration – to restructure the Argentina-Chile-Perú Province transforming it into the Argentina-Chile-Paraguay Province and at the same time creating, after separating the community of Lima from this last Circumscription, the new Region of Perú-Bolivia. Bolivia, with the community of Santa Cruz de la Sierra, belonged to the Venezuela-Bolivia Region, a Circumscription that, with the movement of this community in the newly formed Perú-Bolivia Region, became the Venezuela Region. Cultural, economic and geographical proximity aspects have been among

those that have also favoured the creation of the new Perú-Bolivia Region.

Last year, the General Government began to study the geography of two other Circumscriptions, the Provinces of India-Nigeria-Great Britain-Ireland and Colombia-Ecuador-Panamá. The first, which counts on the generous collaboration of our Indian confreres, is present on three continents (Asia, Africa and Europe). Even if these realities have the English language in common, they are nations with very different ecclesial, social, cultural and economic situations.

With regard to the Colombia-Ecuador-Panamá Province, we recall that this Circumscription involves ten nations. In three of these, we have at least one community (Colombia, Ecuador and Panama); in the others – located in Central America and the Caribbean (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Puerto Rico and Dominican Republic) – we have at least one bookstore.

At the beginning of this journey of discernment, the General Government is insisting that, in order to truly be a “Circumscription”, it is necessary not only to integrate the territory into a common apostolic project, but also the operational capacity to manage the works, like a real organism. We consider it important that, when it comes to a nation, it is important to have a community in which the presence of the Paulines can give human, charismatic and administrative support to this presence.

In other words: it is not enough to be present as a “branch”, but to ask ourselves how to be a living reality, inserted in the local Church, with the presence of apostolic works and with “Paulines” who can put into practice what our Founder said: *«To know the souls, to know the needs, to study the tendencies, to study on which side the souls can be taken, how to multiply the good, what kind of organizations do we want»*.

Beyond these situations concerning geography, we have the case of three Circumscriptions that the General Government, in the last three years, is taking into consideration and that is accompanying closely, trying to provide an orientation not only

with regard to the present but also to the future. We refer to the United States Province and the Canada-France and Australia Regions. The scarce number of members, the lack of new vocations, the problems of old age and health are just some of the aspects that cause concern about the future of our presence in these territories.

We are obviously trying to combine respect and deserved spiritual, human and medical assistance to our confreres weakened by age or illness by revising the structures in view of new projects that can guarantee our presence in these territories. Finally, again regarding our Circumscriptions, the General Government has formalized, with appropriate letters, the renaming of the Mexico-Cuba Province, of the Portugal-Angola Region and of the Poland-Ukraine Region.

1.2.6 The Pauline Family

Regarding our relationship with the Pauline Family, specifically with the female congregations, the most representative event every year is the Meeting of the General Governments.

2016 – XXXIII Meeting of the General Governments of the Pauline Family. From 7 to 10 January at the Casa Divin Maestro of Ariccia. Theme: *Evangelii Gaudium addresses the Pauline Family: fraternal life.*

2017 – XXXIV Meeting of the General Governments of the Pauline Family. From 9 to 11 January, at Casa San Paolo (FSP). Theme: *Evangelii Gaudium addresses the Pauline Family. In communion for the mission: pastoral action.*

2018 – XXXV Meeting of the General Governments of the Pauline Family. From 8 to 10 January, at the Casa Divin Maestro of Ariccia. Theme: *Evangelii Gaudium addresses the Pauline Family: the challenges of the family and the care of creation.*

As a result of the Meetings of General Governments, meetings were held of the General Councillors belonging to the

various areas and of the Officials: formation, apostolate, secretariat and economy. In turn, the Superiors General meet twice a year. With regard to the Pauline Institutes of Consecrated Secular Life (PICSL) and the Association of Pauline Cooperators (APC), this theme will be developed later, as per the Interchapter program. Evidently, the various meetings are already positive initiatives that allow dialogue and the exchange of information. However, it is noted that more needs to be done, mainly with regard to more concrete issues, for example in the field of formation and the apostolate, both at the level of general Governments and at the level of Circumscription Governments.

2. VOCATION PROMOTION AND FORMATION

The interest in vocations and their formation has always been at the centre of the commitment of the General Government. With the passage of time, new formulations and new possibilities for response have been indicated, but always with the concern to keep firm the principles on which to support a solid vocation ministry and integrality in the Pauline formation.

2.1 Applications of the Operative Guidelines

2.1.1 «The General Government, through SIF, establish a revision of the processes of integral formation of Paulines and as a consequence the Circumscriptions update their formation Iter» (Operative guideline 3.1.1).

Upon receipt of the draft of the Iter from the Circumscriptions in view of approval by the General Government, the members of the SIF study and provide, when necessary, timely recommendations to improve the document. At the same time, the SIF uses some formation aids to accompany the processes of integral formation aimed at the mission, including:

- A Guide of SIF for the Writing of the Formative Iter;
- Lines of Action for the Formation of the Formators;

- Lines of Action for the Preparation to Perpetual Profession;
- Proposal while Accompanying the Newly Perpetually Professed Pauline Religious during the First 5 Years;
- Presentation and Valorisation of the Constitutions and Directory for the Formation of the Formators and the Formandi

It is noted that the Iter sent to the General Government for their approval follow the indications of the SIF for the preparation of this document. However, in the evaluation made during the canonical and verification Visits, it is known that, in some cases, they remain more on paper than in practice due to the lack of “trained formators” and members particularly dedicated to formation. Then, there are formators who are overloaded with various apostolic activities (part-time formators or those with other important commitments); moreover, in some Iter there is a lack of harmony with the Circumscription *Apostolic Project*. This fact is serious because formation must be in view of the mission.

Up to now, eleven Circumscriptions have already updated their formation Iter: 8 Provinces and 3 Regions.

- A) **Brazil** (2016-2019), **Colombia-Ecuador-Panamá** (2014-2018), **Philippines-Macau** (2016-2019), **Japan** (2016-2019), **India and Nigeria** (2016-2018), **Italy** (2016-2020), **Mexico-Cuba** (2014-2018) and **Spain** (2016-2020).
- B) **Congo** (2015-2018), **Perú-Bolivia** (2017-2019) and **Venezuela** (2014-2017).

2.1.2 «The General Government study the opportunity to promote periodically in Italy an international programme of preparation for perpetual profession, coordinated by SIF» (Operative guideline 3.1.2).

Following the indications of the General Government, the SIF prepared such programme (the “Preparation Course for Perpetual Profession”), launched it in 2016 with 18 participants and continued it in the year 2017, with the participation of 9 juniors. To accomplish this, several members of the Pauline Family, especially the members of the Society of St. Paul, were involved as

teachers chosen by their respective Congregations. All the members of the General Government also participated as teachers in the two courses carried out so far.

As a general assessment, both groups appreciated greatly the Course. In particular, they treasured the greater knowledge of the Founder, the pilgrimages to Alba and Rome, the history of the Society of St. Paul and the Pauline Family, the *Opera Omnia*, the Pauline mission, the vows, the Pauline spirituality and the Pauline charism, the four wheels and the coexistence among the young. The lack of command of the Italian language is the weakest part of the experience of the young.

2.1.3 «The SIF, co-involving the Persons responsible for the vocation promotion in the Circumscriptions, create and coordinate an international Web site for vocation promotion to strengthen our presence in the new digital languages» (Operative guideline 3.2.1).

The juniors, who attended the Preparation Course for the Perpetual Profession in Ariccia, and the novices, who attend the International Novitiate in Albano Laziale, have created, under the accompaniment of the Responsible of the Congregational website, the *iPaulus.org* website.

2.2 The different activities

2.2.1 Meeting of the SIF members

From 26 to 28 June 2017, for the first time during this General Government's mandate, members of the *International Secretariat for Vocation Promotion and Formation* (SIF) attended the meeting at the General House of the Society of Saint Paul. The meeting, convened directly by the Superior General, involved the two General Councillors and the representatives of the three geographical areas of our Congregation (CAP-ESW, CIDEP and GEC).

The main objective of these days was twofold: reflect and then share the experiences and challenges of the apostolate in the formation area of our Congregation.

The members have experienced three days of demanding work. The following program was followed: the first day was characterized by the illuminative phase. The second day was dedicated to the analysis and evaluation of the priorities and guidelines of the X General Chapter entrusted to the SIF. Finally, the third moment was dedicated to the possible updating of the norms of the SIF (*Statute of the International Secretariat for Vocation Promotion and Formation – SIF –*, and *A Guide of SIF for the Writing of the Formative Iter*).

2.2.2 International Novitiate

The Superior General, with the consent of his Council, has decided to establish the International Novitiate in Albano Laziale (RM) on 19 September 2016, such that it would then be operational from 20 August 2017. The motivations behind this choice are: to provide a better charismatic preparation for future Paulines, to have an international-intercultural experience, to know more deeply the Italian language and the places of Father Alberione. The General Government has decided to have this first experience only with novices of neo-Latin languages, due to its proximity to the Italian language. At this moment, there are a total of 10 novices.

- **Study programme:** the novices have internal lessons with Pauline teachers, all of the Pauline Family, and external lessons in an Intercongregational Novitiate.
- **The different activities:** apostolate, pilgrimages to the places of Alberione and “on the steps of Paul”, etc. A very detailed program has been made to respond to all the areas of the “Pauline cart”. We have sent the program to all the Major Superiors and to the General Coordinators of Formation.
- **Evaluation:** until now, the whole program is proceeding well. Both the novices and the Master, as well as the community, are happy with how the program is taking place.

2.2.3 Particular accompaniment of some Circumscriptions through the Coordinator General of Vocation Promotion and Formation (CGVPF)

This action is carried out above all when the Major Superiors send the formation programs of the Circumscriptions for their approval by the Superior General.

3. APOSTOLATE

3.1 Application of the Operative Guidelines

3.1.1 «The General Government evaluate and support the projects which the Circumscriptions have started or are intending to promote to be present in new territories, especially those of the “periphery”». (Operative Guideline 1.1.1)

One of the important commitments of the General Government in office was to closely follow every apostolic initiative already undertaken in all the Circumscriptions or is in the process of being undertaken especially in view of entering into new areas. This was done through the process of an evaluation of the same from time to time and also by sustaining it economically and through the movement of Pauline personnel when and where needed. Two of the General Councillors who are responsible for the apostolate are directly involved in this process.

3.1.2: «The General Government, through the International Technical Committee for the Apostolate (CTIA), within the second year of its mandate, develop the document Editorial Guidelines of Pauline Apostolate and the Circumscription Governments are to render themselves responsible of its application in the proper pastoral context» (Operative Guideline 1.1.2).

As per the request of the above priority and to update the document of 2005 on the Editorial policies, the General Government after much reflection, discussion and deliberations, decided to involve all the members directly or indirectly in developing a new document defining the Editorial policies of the Congrega-

tion, with special emphasis on the contents and the interlocutors of Pauline apostolate. This was materialized through the 2nd International Seminar of Pauline Publishers (2nd ISPP) in which every Circumscription was involved and which has taken place at the House of the Divine Master, Ariccia from 16 to 21 October 2017.

a) *2nd International Seminar of Pauline Publishers (2nd ISPP)*

The name of the *2nd International Seminar of Pauline Publishers* recalls and gives continuity to the first seminar that the Congregation had celebrated in 1988. A preparatory Committee consisting of 6 Paulines was constituted by the General Government for the organization of the events. In all, there were 75 participants at the 2nd ISPP: 8 Members of the General Government; 19 DGAs; 15 Editorial Directors; 16 Resource Persons from outside and 17 special invitees, both Paulines and members of the Pauline Family. Logistic and secretarial support were provided by the members of Ariccia community and the group of juniors who were participating at the 2nd “Corso” of preparation to the perpetual vows. The programme of the 2nd ISPP consisted of conferences by experts in various fields, round table discussions, group work and sharing of experiences and information.

b) *Revision of the Document “Editorial guidelines, contents, interlocutors of Pauline Apostolate”*

One of the primary objectives of the 2nd ISPP was to update the existing document of our editorial policies, in particular the contents and the interlocutors of our apostolate, using as best as possible the materials produced in the course of the same 2nd ISPP. Such a process is in progress and one of the members of CTIA is coordinating the works with the participation of all the DGAs and Editorial Directors. The final draft of the updated document is expected to be ready by the end of April 2018 and is to be approved by the General Government expectedly in the General Council meeting of June 2018.

3.1.3 «The General Government consolidate St Pauls Biblical Centre so that it could coordinate all the biblical initiatives in the various Circumscriptions» (Operative Guideline 1.1.3).

a) Appointment of the International Coordinator and the Council for St Paul Biblical Centre

Constituted on 4 April 2013, with a Statute '*Ad experimentum*' during the IX General Chapter, the service of St Paul Biblical Centre was reconfirmed by the X General Chapter (Operative Guidelines 1.1.3). On 15 March 2017, Fr. Giacomo Perego (Province of Italy) was appointed Coordinator at the International level for a term of three years. He has three responsibilities to carry out: revision of the Statute, to prepare a Pastoral Biblical Project for the Congregation, its accomplishment. Fr. Paulo Bazaglia (Province of Brazil), Fr. Roger Wawa (Region of Congo) and Br. Hansel Mapayo (Philippines-Macau Province) will collaborate with him as Councillors.

b) Revision of the Statute of St Paul Biblical Centre

On 8 November 2016, the revised Statute was approved and published and thus the first objective was realized. The next phase was to concentrate on the *Pastoral Biblical Project* of the Congregation. To this end, it was considered important that we begin the elaboration of the pastoral project with an International Assembly that would see the participation of Representatives from each of the Circumscriptions: this would make it necessary that they be nominated. The Circumscription Superiors in consultation with their respective DGAs were asked to identify one of the Confreres who could take up such a responsibility. Within the span of three months' time, all Representatives were nominated even though all of them may not be fully aware of the responsibility that awaits them.

c) First Assembly of the SPBC at Cinisello Balsamo (May 2017)

The First International Assembly of the St Paul Biblical Centre took place at Cinisello Balsamo, (working office of the SPBC) from 24 to 28 May 2017. The Assembly had two important objectives: to define the identity of a Pauline Biblical Centre and to gather different points that would converge in the Pastoral Bib-

lical Project. This will be based on the biblical roots of our charism, on listening to the reality of today from the different Circumscriptions, on our vision for tomorrow, etc.. During the Assembly, in harmony with the invitation of Pope Francis, it was resolved to dedicate one Sunday of the liturgical year to the Word of God (cf. *Misericordia et Misera*, no. 7), a kind of a “Feast of the Word” which can leave us for a week or month dedicated to the Bible as it is being done in some of our Circumscriptions. There emerged certain common orientations that really touch on various dimensions of our Pauline life such as editorial, formation, pastoral, spiritual and ecclesial. A separate section on the website *www.paulus.net* was dedicated to it, while the International Coordinator will contribute regularly with a stimulus of reflections within the section “In dialogue”.

d) *Approval of the Congregation’s Pastoral Biblical Project*

After having been evaluated by CTIA, the Pastoral Biblical Project of the Congregation was approved during the General Council meeting held from 13 to 15 November 2017. The challenge at this point is to translate it into our life and apostolate.

e) *Renewal of the structures and operations of SOBICAIN, Madrid*

A new Director for SOBICAIN in the person of Fr. Abramo Parmeggiani was appointed, transferring him from the Region of Venezuela to the Province of Spain in January 2017. Along with his appointment, certain operative guidelines were also given so as to facilitate the entire process of the proposed renewal and reorganization of SOBICAIN. Besides, CTIA from its part would follow and assist the process as and when required.

f) *Animation and accompaniment visits to SOBICAIN (Madrid)*

The CTIA in the person of its President made two visits to SOBICAIN within the period of six months on the request of the Director in view of facilitating a smooth transfer of responsibilities from the outgoing Director to the incoming one.

g) *The SPBC and the Community of Saint Egidio*

Through the SPBC the X General Chapter has concretized the following recommendation: «*Through St Paul Biblical Centre,*

together with the community of Saint Egidio, we become promoters within the entire ecclesial community of a World Day of the Word of God, involving adequately all the Circumscriptions (such a day can be an occasion for appreciating one of the foundations of our mission, encouraging others to know, to read, to spread and to interiorize the Bible in the liturgical, pastoral and apostolic context)». After different meetings with the community of Saint Egidio and with the Pontifical Council for New Evangelization, the proposal for a “Day of the Word” was declared by Pope Francis in the closing document of the Year of Mercy – *Misericordia et Misera*. In a letter signed by the Superior Generals of the Pauline Family, the proposed date for the celebration was fixed for the last Sunday of September. Different suitable animation materials were offered to the Circumscriptions in order to facilitate this celebration as an ecclesial event.

3.1.4 «The General Government, through the International Technical Committee for the Apostolate (CTIA) and the International Secretariat for Vocation pastoral and Formation (SIF), establish guidelines of pedagogical identity which would become reference point for the Study Centres promoted by various Circumscriptions and promote mutual collaboration» (Operative Guideline 1.2.1).

The second priority in the area of Apostolate requests that we strengthen our apostolic commitment in becoming formators in the field of communication and the Bible. The operative guidelines proposed to realize this priority refers to the Pauline centres of studies, their identity and the possible collaboration among themselves. CTIA along with SIF has taken two concrete steps as to respond to the Chapter’s request, namely to organize a meeting of the Directors of the different existing centres in São Paulo-FAPCOM and the preparation and approval of the document concerning the identity of our institutes.

Considering the request of the X General chapter, the General Council in its meeting of March 2016 had constituted a commission consisting of the four Directors of the Study Centres active

in the Congregation: COMFIL (Mexico), FAPCOM (Brazil), SPICE (India) and SPSF (Philippines). The said commission was coordinated by a General Councillor and was tasked for facilitating mutual collaboration, drawing *Guidelines of pedagogical identity* and, finally, giving to all Pauline Centres for Communication Studies (CPSC) a clear Pauline identity that is common and specific.

a) *Meeting of the Commission for Pauline Centres for Communication Studies, Sao Paulo (February 2017)*

The Commission for Pauline Centres for Communication Studies had its first ever summit at FAPCOM (*Faculdade Paulus de Tecnologia e Comunicação*), São Paulo, Brazil from 15 to 18 February 2017. The members of the commission were Br. Darlei Zanon (General Councillor), Fr. Antonio Iraildo Alves de Brito (Director of FAPCOM), Fr. Dominic Savio D'Silva (Director of SPICE), Fr. Norman Melchior Peña (Director of SPSF) and Fr. Rafael Espino Guzmán (Director of COMFIL). The Superior General, Rev. Fr. Valdir José De Castro, was present at the various sessions.

All conferences and input-sessions were followed by group discussion and personal study. As a result of the profound reflection and scientific approach to Pauline Centres of Communication Studies, the commission prepared a document that deals with list of short-term, medium-term and long-term planning and goals that the Centres have to achieve through mutual collaboration and exchange programmes. The members also drafted the guidelines to implement the project *Monitoring Global Communication Dynamics*.

b) *Approval of the document "Principles of pedagogical identity and basic operational choices for Pauline Centres for Communication Studies"*

This document is based on some fundamental assumptions – charismatic, academic, pedagogical, organizational and structural – that truly support the CPSC. The document, realized

from the “Integral Pauline” perspective, seeks to promote a significant and specific presence in the academic-university field, by making CPSC true promoters of thought, reflection and of critical thinking, suitable to train people capable of communicating effectively and to make them creative professionals who are competent and able to transmit values to all, and making all “in love of Truth”.

In this sense, the document proposes itself as a common foundation essential to all the Pauline Centres for Communication Studies in the world, active or in prospect. This document is also a qualified and authoritative orientation to all the Paulines who collaborate in other institutes or universities, defining the main characteristics of the Pauline influence in higher education. It was finally approved by the General Government on 6 June 2017.

3.2 Other activities

The General Government at the beginning of its mandate had nominated two of the General Councillors as responsible for the apostolate in the Congregation with the specific responsibility of following and accompanying the apostolic activities of the entire Congregation and keeping the General Government informed of the same. Besides, knowing the actual situation of every Circumscription, they would make concrete proposals and practical suggestions to the General Government in the form of animation and through personal visits and presence in the Circumscriptions.

3.2.1 Appointment of the Members of CTIA and its three meetings

Bearing in mind the Congregational norms and in view of coordinating the apostolic activities at all levels, the General Government in its meeting held from 11 September 2015 has reconstituted CTIA (International Technical Committee for Apostolate), a body of the General Government, in order to promote and coordinate on the international level the apostolic activities of the Congregation, by nominating two members from the

General Councillors and five members from the different Circumscriptions for a term of three years. One of the General Councillors was appointed the President of CTIA.

From September 2015 until January 2018, CTIA had three meetings held in Rome. The day-to-day activities of CTIA are followed by the two General Councillors.

3.2.2 Commission for evaluating “Paulus APP” and subsequent decision

This was a project initiated by the previous General Government but due to unforeseen circumstances and situations beyond our control, the project could not be completed as per the established schedule. From April 2015, the two Councillors in close collaboration with three confreres – Fr. David Pushpa Raj (India), Fr. Sergio Vences (Mexico) and Fr. Tacdoro Ludovico (Philippines) – took up the work, reviewed what has been done already, and identified what is yet to be done.

After a careful evaluation and to avoid further problems in the future, the *ad hoc* commission suggested to close the project. The same was suggested by the members of CTIA, in their meeting on 11 February 2016. After a careful evaluation, on 2 March 2016 the General Government decided to interrupt the project for economics and strategic reasons.

3.2.3 Frankfurt Book Fair (2015, 2016, 2017)

One of the principal activities of CTIA during the year is the organization of the annual Frankfurt Book Fair in the month of October. The current team of CTIA has organized three fairs (2015, 2016, 2017). In 2016, CTIA worked in a new stand design, in a way to have a more updated, modern and comfortable space in the Fair. Besides, months ahead of every event, CTIA offers various secretarial services by way of information concerning the fair, assistance for travel and accommodation arrangements, etc. At the conclusion of every event, an oral and written evaluation is taken from the participants in view of a much better organization for the next fair.

3.2.4 Guadalajara Book Fair (2016)

On an experimental basis, CTIA took the initiative to coordinate and organize the participation of all participating Circumscriptions in Mexico at Guadalajara Book Fair in the year 2016. This was done mainly in view of studying the possibility of making the event an important moment of getting together of all CIDEP Editors and Directors of Marketing every year to get and make the best out of our participation and a moment of apostolic formation.

3.2.5 Seminar for CAP-ESW “Pauline mission”, Mumbai (February 2017)

A four-day Seminar of the CAP-ESW (*Conference of Asia Pacific - English Speaking World*) Circumscriptions, organized by CTIA with the theme “*Pauline Mission Among People of Different Faiths and Cultures*”, was inaugurated on 14 February 2017 at the SSP Provincial House, Mumbai, India. Participants from six member countries (USA, Australia, Philippines, Japan, South Korea and India) were present at the Seminar. Two of the General Councillors represented the General Government at the Seminar. The scope of the seminar defined by the Superior General was that «*a seminar of this nature and with such relevant theme together with such a wide participation from all the Circumscriptions of the CAP-ESW Region is a beautiful opportunity for you to reflect together, to listen to one another and to look forward to identify and formulate new initiatives oriented to people of other faiths and cultures in a spirit of mutual collaboration and support among your various Circumscriptions*».

At the end, a document with proposed actions at three levels was drawn up by the assembly: General Government level, CAP-ESW Circumscription level and individual Circumscription level, with a proposed evaluation at the end of twelve months. The same was presented at the General Council for its approval. As was requested by the Seminar, CTIA did an evaluation among member Circumscriptions to follow up the implementation of the outcome.

3.2.6 Revision of the “*Manual for the Application of the Logo*” (4 April 2017)

After 25 years of the creation of the ST PAULS Logo, welcoming the suggestions from different Circumscriptions and in response to many gaps, especially with the coming of the net and other digital instruments, CTIA has updated the *Manual for the Application of the Logo*, initially published in paper format in 1992 and, successively, in CD-ROM and on the website. Apart from the practical indications put at the disposal on the easier and universal use of the *Manual* (in pdf format), we have felt the necessity of valuing the use of our logo at international level, underlining how the graphic and symbolic element represents us both on the institutional level and in every type of apostolic activity. After a serious work of evaluation and updating, the current version of the *Manual* has been approved in the General Council meeting of 7 March 2017 and successively published on our website *paulus.net*.

The new *Manual* responds partly also to the recommendations of the X General Chapter which was asking «[the Superior General and his Government to] propose to the Circumscription Governments operative guidelines for our presence on the social network, evaluate its actualization periodically to avoid any abuse or wrong use of our Institutional identity (apostolate and Formation)».

3.2.7 Revision of the “*Methodological Guide for preparing the Apostolic Project*”

In the first meeting of the new team of CTIA, from 8 to 11 February 2016, the members felt the need of revising this *Guide* to make it more simple and concise and consequently facilitating and accelerating the preparation of the Apostolic Projects in the Circumscriptions. In the light of the many suggestions received, the new *Guide* was revised and approved on 8 October 2016.

3.2.8 Intercontinental Organisms

The coordination of apostolic works of general interest as well as the act of promoting, stimulating, checking on the apostolic coordination in the Circumscriptions belongs to the General Government. The Government has been, therefore, very attentive to this aspect of its service, primarily by re-enforcing and following up the various existing intercontinental Organisms and also creating new ones as per the requirement of a particular time.

a) *General Assembly of CIDEP, São Paulo 2015*

The X General Assembly of CIDEP was held from 8 to 14 November 2015 in São Paulo, Brazil. The Assembly had an extraordinary character as it was held after the extraordinary General Chapter celebrated in the months of January – February 2015. Present at the Assembly were the Superior General, two Members of CTIA and General Councillors, one representative of SIF, the Executive Secretary of CIDEP, all the Major Superiors and DGAs of CIDEP Circumscriptions. Starting from the General Chapter, the Assembly did reflect on the theme “*I do all for the Gospel*”, always looking to translate them into concrete projects in the Latin American context.

The Assembly formulated and approved the *Plan de Acción 2016-2018* for the next three years. Towards the end of the Assembly, the Superior General announced that Fr. Andrés Monroy will be the new Executive Secretary of CIDEP and who will operate from Bogotá.

b) *Suspension of the activities of GEC and CAP-ESW and entrusting its coordination to the CTIA in an experiment basis*

Keeping in mind the objective of our X General Chapter, it was the constant concern of the General Government from the beginning of its mandate to follow up «*renew the impetus of our apostolic action, converting ourselves, our communities and apostolic structures*». There was a general feeling among both superiors and members of the Circumscriptions that nothing much was happening as far as GEC and CAP-ESW were concerned, although both Organisms have a well-defined Stat-

utes and organigram. The General Government, through CTIA, reviewed the functioning of both CAP-ESW and GEC through personal contacts and through the means of a questionnaire among the Major Superiors and DGAs of all member Circumscriptions. In the light of the discussions and the results of the questionnaire, the General Government in its Council meeting held from 29 February to 2 March 2016 decided to suspend the operations of these two Organisms for a period of two years ending with the forthcoming Interchapter. During this two-year period, both CAP-ESW and GEC and its activities would be coordinated by CTIA. One of the initiatives that CTIA undertook during this period was to organize the International Seminar “*Pauline Mission*” for the CAP-ESW Circumscriptions in Mumbai in February 2017.

c) *Brief evaluation the continental apostolic Organisms CIDEP, CAP-ESW and GEC*

Organization, especially at international level, is something very fundamental for Pauline apostolate. In spite of the insistence of the Founder and the necessity of our times, the general impression is that we do not give sufficient importance to this aspect of our apostolate. The initial enthusiasm and fervour with which our existing Organisms were created at various times continues to fade away little by little. The reasons could be many: ignorance among the members concerning the scope, the structures and their mode of functioning; lack of initiative, interest and commitment on the part of those responsible (Major Superiors and DGAs) to promote our apostolate among our Circumscriptions through the help of such Organisms; lack of continuity and consistency from the part of those responsible; high cost and less return. One of the prevailing thoughts among the members is that while we need such Organisms, these should be very simple and functional structures. At this juncture, the prophetic words of the late Fr. Silvio Pignotti become both a challenge and a warning: «*Certain apostolic works, and even certain Circumscriptions, will go into an irreversible coma unless we soon come to collaborate at an international level...*».

4. PAULINE INSTITUTES OF CONSECRATED SECULAR LIFE (PICSL) AND ASSOCIATION OF PAULINE COOPERATORS (APC)

4.1 Aggregated Institutes

The PICSL or “Aggregated Institutes” are the work proper of the Society of Saint Paul and the sense of this affirmation is still to be discovered by us Paulines, both in their specific nature of “secularity” and in their belonging as an integral part of the Pauline Family.

4.1.1 The 2016 Statistics

Here is a summary of the personal situation of the PICSL updated as of 2016.

Institute of Jesus Priest

Novices:	26
Temporary professed	29
Perpetually professed:	<u>197</u>
Total:	252

Institute of Our Lady of the Annunciation

Novices:	13
Temporary professed:	32
Perpetual professed:	<u>401</u>
Total:	446

Institute of Saint Gabriel Archangel

Novices:	4
Temporary professed:	13
Perpetual professed:	<u>32</u>
Total:	49

Institute of the Holy Family

Novices:	150
Temporary professed:	368
Perpetual professed:	<u>2038</u>
Total:	2556

4.1.2 Applications of the Operative Guidelines and Recommendations to the Superior General

The operative guideline 5.2.1 of the X General Chapter asks that the Superior General provide for the updating of the Statutes of the PICSL. In this regard, we asked two experts on the subject, who advised against intervening on the revision of the Statutes in order not to lose their at-present nature, as conceived by the Founder. Given this uncertainty, it was decided to intervene and update only the "Directory" and not the Statute.

In the second recommendation to the Superior General² the latter is asked to «*close definitively exemptions and concessions ad tempus which have been granted in some Circumscriptions to substitute the Pauline Delegate responsible for the PICSL with a lay Delegate of the same Institutes*». This situation existed, to our knowledge, only in the Italian Province, where the Delegate of the Saint Gabriel Archangel Institute was represented by a layman. This situation was regularized by appointing a Pauline priest in his place.

4.1.3 The different activities

4.1.3.1 What has been done during these 3 years towards the PICSL

In this three-year period, as per the Statute, the appointment of the Delegates of the various Circumscriptions was made at the proposal of the respective Major Superiors. In addition, the candidates of the various Institutes for perpetual Profession were admitted, granted the indulgences to leave the Institute and the dispensations from the age limits, always as per the Statute.

In the visits to the Circumscriptions, the PICSL Delegates were also met, with whom a frank discussion was established on the problems, organization, animation, training and management of the Institutes.

² Cf. Acts of the X General Chapter, p. 73.

4.1.3.2 Evaluation on the part of the Delegates

The following considerations are presented to the Society of St. Paul by the Delegates:

- * the wealth that the Institutes represent for the Society of St. Paul has not yet been understood;
- * there is little knowledge and mutual respect;
- * concrete projects of the Pauline Family are lacking;
- * the Paulines are guilty of self-reference;
- * it is necessary to dispel the idea that the commitment of the Holy Family is only on the spiritual level;
- * there is room to get together at the level of vocation proposal;
- * pay attention to the integral formation, with a renewed vocation sensitivity.

4.2 Association of Pauline Cooperators

The Pauline Cooperators have played an important part in the birth and development of the Pauline Family. The Centenary of their birth, which closes on 30 June this year, is a moment of awareness of their value and reason for reviving this Association, rediscovering their original identity as desired by our Founder and responding to the needs of today's man. At present, there is a single Statute *ad experimentum* for all the Cooperators who belong to the various Congregations of the Pauline Family and will expire in January 2019. We recall that, alongside the single Statute, each Congregation has produced its own Directory that applies the principles of the Statute to their specific reality.

4.2.1 The 2016 Statistics

We cannot get statistics on the Cooperators, also because where they are present they are called "Pauline Cooperators" (referring to the Society of St. Paul and the Daughters of St. Paul), "Pauline Cooperators-Friends of Jesus Master" (Pious Disciples of the Divine Master) and "Pauline Cooperators-Friends of the Good Shepherd" (Sisters of Jesus Good Shepherd). We emphasize that, despite the aforementioned different denominations, there is an agreement whereby every name

other than “Pauline Cooperators” must be preceded by the same expression “Pauline Cooperators”.

4.2.2 The different activities

On 30th June 2017, within the Centenary of the Pauline Co-operators, its opening was celebrated both in Rome and in the various Circumscriptions. Furthermore, the International Meeting of the Pauline Cooperators is being prepared, which will take place between Rome and Alba from 18 to 27 May 2018.

5. DEPENDENT HOUSES

5.1 General considerations

Currently the houses dependent on the General House are 5: “Divin Maestro” House of Ariccia, “Don Giacomo Alberione” House of Albano Laziale, Community “Canonico Chiesa” of Rome, Community of the Vatican and Monaco House of Bavaria (Germany).

For each one a clear identity and configuration was defined and a protocol of this identity was elaborated, shared with all the members of that House (Community). Each community has then elaborated a project of community life.

5.2 “Divin Maestro” House of Ariccia

A year after the beginning of the General Government’s mandate, all the confreres have been replaced to give the Community the precise identity that the General Government had identified for it. In fact, the House has now been given a more explicit identity and face of a house for welcome and prayer, as well as a place for conventions. Moreover, since 2014 it has welcomed every year at the beginning of Lent the Spiritual Exercises of the Holy Father and of the Roman Curia.

From September 2017 to early December 2017, the structure has also become a formation house, having welcomed the group of juniors who attended the *2nd Preparation Course for Perpetual Profession*.

In order to meet these multiple needs, in this last year the heating and hot water production system was completely rebuilt, which was now seriously obsolete and no longer up to the present standard.

5.3 “Don Giacomo Alberione” House of Albano Laziale

Also in the “Don Alberione” House in Albano, all members have been replaced.

The identity of the House is that of a formative community. From September to December 2016, it hosted the group of juniors for the *1st Preparation Course for Perpetual Profession* and, this year, from August 2017 to August 2018, the International Novitiate, which sees the presence of 10 novices.

To make the House of Albano a welcoming one, the rooms were re-painted, the electrical and telephone system was redone, the Wi-Fi network was installed and the ground floor was restored, the walls of which, being in contact with the ground, had gone completely rotten.

5.4 “Canonico Chiesa” Community of Rome

The mission of the “Canonico Chiesa” Community is that of service to the General Government and to the Congregation. In fact, there are confreres who serve for the General Government. Similarly, as a service to the Congregation, confreres from some Circumscriptions who are sent to Rome by their Major Superiors to obtain an academic degree are hosted.

It is a variable community as to the number of presences. In the year 2017-2018, the community is composed of 14 confreres: 8 perform services for the general government and 6 are students. Previously the community took meals in the refectory of the House of Rome (Province of Italy). For April 2016, however, it takes its meals in a refectory apart from the Generalate, while some meals and moments of prayer and feast are shared together with the confreres of the General House.

This community, like the others, also has a life project and a proper program.

5.5 The Vatican Community

In the Vatican community, there are 4 confreres, two of whom work in the Vatican telephone sector. In particular, one of them, Brother Andrea Mellini, is in charge of this sector. Our community has a good reputation in the Vatican for the exemplary performance and professionalism of our confreres, a circumstance that represents a note of merit in consideration of the environment in which they operate.

It is very important for the Society of St. Paul to keep this presence in the Vatican.

5.6 The Monaco House of Bavaria (Germany)

The General Government is studying the future of this presence on German soil. For now, there is only one confrere present, who provides pastoral services in the Archdiocese of Munich and who, in addition to producing some small editorial products, will be active in the organization logistics of our participation in the Frankfurt Book Fair in direct coordination with the CTIA.

Aparecida, 16-17 February 2018

INTRODUCTION OF THE GENERAL SUPERIOR AT THE PRESENTATION OF THE 2nd ISPP

The *2nd International Seminar of Pauline Publishers* (2nd ISPP), held in Ariccia from 16 to 21 October 2017, was organized by the General Government (care of CTIA) to reflect on Pauline publishing, in view of the update, requested by X General Chapter¹, of the Document “Editorial Guidelines, Contents, Recipients of the Pauline Apostolate”, approved by the General Government on 16 November 2005.

The realization of the 2nd ISPP was opportune, not only to respond to a practical objective, but also to encourage a reflection on the publishing world in the current communication context, considering the changes that have taken place in recent decades, especially with the advent of digital technologies and online communication.

This meeting — attended by the General Government, the General Directors of the Apostolate, the Publishing Directors and some Paulines and members of the Pauline Family who are involved in an editorial apostolate to some extent — took place 29 years after the 1st Seminar (1st ISPP), which was the beginning of a new international reflection on the Pauline publisher.

In this talk, I will make some considerations, which I consider opportune, on the 1st and 2nd International Seminars of Pauline Publishers and I will also present a brief reflection on the theme: “Thought, action and organization in the logic of the Gospel”.

1. THE 1st INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR OF PAULINE PUBLISHERS

There is no need to make a detailed summary of the 1st ISPP at this time. I just want to underline that this Seminar, held at Ariccia and Milan from 17 September to 2 October 1988, dealt

¹ Cf. X General Chapter, Operative Guidelines 1.1.2.

mainly with some issues pertaining to the situation of the Pauline publishing at that time,² in which we realized the need to open our apostolate to multimedia and to improve the organization (at the Circumscription and international level)³. Among the practical results of this 1st Seminar we can point out the creation of the International Technical Committee for the Apostolate — CTIA (1988), of the international Organisms by geographical area (CIDEP - 1991, CAP / ESW and GEC - 1992) and of the new logo (1991).

Continuing the reflection made in that Seminar, the VI General Chapter (Ariccia, 15 March-16 April 1992), decided, in the Priority III, «*to enlarge our sphere of communication of the Gospel, by means of a global multimedia project that, through the planning and the national and international coordination of people and means, reaches everyone, especially the poor, the distant, the great masses*». In one of the operational guidelines, the Chapter was asking that «*the General Government provide for the drafting of a “Manual of Authority in the Society of Saint Paul” that defines the areas, expiry and competences of every Canonical Authority and Delegated Authority— Superiors, Directors of the Apostolate and of Formation, Secretaries, Administrators, etc.—with methods of management and control both for the apostolic and formative contents, and for the administration.*

² The 1st ISPP is still a point of reference for the reflection on our apostolate, omitting, obviously, the statistical data and the communicational and ecclesial contexts of that time. For the deepening of the concept “Pauline Publisher” it is worth reading, from the Proceedings of the Seminar, the articles: *Introduction to the International Seminar for Pauline Publishers of the Society of Saint Paul* (Fr. Renato Perino), *The Concepts of Publishers—Publishing—Publication of Don Alberione* (Fr. Giancarlo Rocca) and *How the publishing house of Fr. Alberione was born and how it developed* (Fr. Franco Pierini).

³ «*Organization is a key word in Alberionian language. In the very brief Abundantes Divitiæ alone, for example, the word occurs at least ten times. It is an insistence that begins to appear in his writings from the moment when the foundations have become sufficiently solid, and to be able to progress they need to be organically linked at national and international level*» (Renato Perino, *Saint Paul living today. The “novissima verba” by Fr. James Alberione on the mission of the Pauline Family* (http://www.paulus.net/doc/archiviostorico/successori_2.pdf).

The definitive text is to be submitted to the Chapter Assembly for approval»⁴. Let us remember that the *Manual of Authority* was approved *ad experimentum* in 1995 and, definitively, in the General Chapter of 2004, with the title: *Service of Authority in the Society of Saint Paul. Manual*.

Two other decisions of the VI General Chapter worth highlighting were the realization of the “International Seminar on Pauline Formation for the Mission” (Ariccia, 12-23 October 1994) and the “Seminar on Jesus, the Master” (Ariccia, 14-24 October 1996). Furthermore, a round table discussion on “Apostolic organization and multimedia in the light of the third priority of the VI General Chapter”, was held in Alba from 7 to 9 October 1992. From this meeting emerged the letter of the then Superior General, Fr. Silvio Pignotti, with the title “Regarding the Third Priority”, which was a document of orientation and programming, sent to all the heads of the Circumscriptions.

This document refers, with some practical consequences, to various topics especially concerning the organization: «*The mission is at the centre of everything; all and everything for the apostolate; training for the mission; culture of the entrepreneurial organization working with projects, objectives, function manuals, organization charts; ordinary canonical authority and delegated canonical authority; organization at the general level (CTIA), linguistic / continental and of Circumscriptions (Director General of the apostolate); collaboration of the laity and with the Pauline Family; to assume multimedia. The corporate model of reference for the Pauline apostolate remains that of Italy (Periodici San Paolo) and partly of Latin America*»⁵.

After some length of time, we can ask ourselves: what are the concrete results of all these goals? In a very succinct analysis we can say that, without doubt, especially after the 1st ISPP, the Congregation (considering the different Circumscription realities) has made significant progress in the organizational aspect, for example in establishing the figure of the Director General of

⁴ VI General Chapter, Operational Guideline 15.

⁵ *The Pauline publisher: 1914-2014*, speech prepared by Fr. Silvio Sassi († 14.09.2014) for the Frankfurt Book Fair, 7-13 October 2014, published in the San Paolo, Year 90, no. 447, January 2015.

the apostolate (with his Council), in the elaboration of the Apostolic Project of Circumscriptions, estimates and budgets, organization chart and function manuals, etc.

On the other hand, the Congregation experienced some «*limits in planning capacity in the face of the transition from mass media to multimedia and to web communication; confusion of roles on the one side and the other between the heads of ordinary and delegated authority; little attention to changes in the methods of diffusion and, above all, in market research and analysis of the actual results of our products, etc.*»⁶. It should also be noted that, in general, the Circumscriptions have failed to elaborate an *Iter* of Formation attuned to the Apostolic Project, causing a deficit of Paulines prepared for our specific mission. With regard to the necessary harmony between apostolate and spiritual life, we might raise some doubts, asking ourselves whether we have succeeded in integrating spirituality-prayer-community life-formation-mission, making the Gospel the light for our life as a whole.

2. THE 2nd INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR OF PAULINE PUBLISHERS

What mainly emerges from the 2nd ISPP is the reality of the changes that have come about in the culture of communication in the last two decades, especially with the development of digital technologies and online communication. To study in depth and understand this phenomenon is extremely necessary for us, who have this area as an integral part of our charism. It is within this reality in profound transformation that we are called to proclaim Jesus Master, Way, Truth and Life, that is, to penetrate all human thought and knowledge with the Gospel, not only talking about religion, but speaking of everything in a Christian way⁷.

Knowing the communicational context in which we must develop our pastoral care is essential, because this not only allows an updating of our apostolate, but also because the changes that occur rebound, to a certain extent, in all dimensions of Pauline

⁶ Silvio Sassi, *Meeting of the Directors General of the apostolate of Europe*, Rome, General House, 8-10 June 2009. Report presented on 9 June 2009.

⁷ James Alberione, *AD* 87-88.

life: in community and spiritual life, in vocation ministry and in formation, in organization, in administration and in the economy but also in the methodology of work, in our relations with society and, finally, in our lifestyle.

With regard to Pauline publishing in this new context of communication, I want to indicate three aspects that appeared in the 2nd ISPP and which, I think, it is important to underline, so that they may receive attention during the presentation of the contents of that Meeting.

2.1 The identity of the Pauline Publisher today

The first aspect that should make us reflect, due to changes in the field of communication and which we have investigated in the 2nd ISPP, concerns the identity of the Pauline. «*The recurring emergence of the question about our identity is certainly a source of consolation, both because we need to ask ourselves often about what we are or what we ought to be, and because our young people want to know precisely their identity within the Religious family to which they are incorporated*»⁸. So, the question arises: how should we be present with our “Pauline” identity in the current communication environment and even more so in digital networks?

We are convinced that the Pauline «*finds his own identity in following Christ to the point of identifying his life with his own, in the footsteps of Paul who could say: “My life is Christ” (Phil 1:21, cf. Gal 2:20)*»⁹, assuming this commitment in the context of the “Pauline” consecrated life, in conformity with what the Constitutions propose. To situate Pauline identity in this perspective necessarily supposes to refer to our vocation as “publisher”¹⁰, in the light

⁸ Raffaele Tonni, *Letter from the Superior General “Identity of our religious life”*, 8 September 1975.

⁹ Renato Perino, *St. Paul living today*, op. cit.

¹⁰ It is necessary to keep in mind the evolution, in the Congregation, from the idea of “authors” to that of “publisher”. Cf. Silvio Sassi, *Il Paolino Editore 1914-2014*, op. cit. It is useful to read also the article *The Editing*, by Fr. Valentino Gambi (*San Paolo*, February 1955) and the conference on *The Italian Publishing Office and installment sale*, transcribed in *UPS III*, pp. 146-179.

of the sense that our Founder has given to this term: «*Heavenly Father ab æterno is the Publisher of the Son ...; the Divine Son, Publisher of the Gospel ...; the Holy Spirit is the Author and the Publisher of the Holy Scriptures ...; imitate God, Writer and Publisher. Mary is the Publisher of the humanized Word ...; the Church is the Publication and Publishing house...; Mary is also Mother, Teacher and Queen of Publishers and Publications*»¹¹.

In this perspective, every Pauline is called to be a “publisher”, that is, someone who has something to “say” and “offer” regarding the Gospel. This recalls for and evidently brings into play personal testimony, both as a “man of communication of the Gospel” and using all forms of communication to proclaim it to all peoples.

Even our Congregation as a whole, as Fr. Alberione teaches us, is a “publisher”¹². All sectors of the apostolate form the Publishing House. For example: «*The book centre reflects the entire St. Paul Institute. It is the point of contact between the Institute and the people; it is the centre of diffusion of all the initiatives of the Pauline apostolate. It is the Publishing House of God*»¹³. Evidently, it is not just a “publishing house”, but a “house” that brings a new style of apostolic life and a new way of evangelizing inserted into the culture of communication. In conclusion, the question we have to ask ourselves is: how do we present ourselves and act as “Paulines” in today’s constantly changing communication culture?

¹¹ James Alberione, in *Vademecum* no. *919

¹² «*Basically, it seems that evolution has shown the existence of two different editorial guidelines: the first one, by Fr. Alberione, of a popular character, linked to the priesthood as a guarantee of authenticity, made within the institute, and that develops from the origins of the institute until about 1950; the second one, which begins after 1945 and which also considers the dissemination of texts by others, as is done for the diffusion of the thought of the Pope, of the bishops, of the Fathers of the Church. [...] Today, it is clear, the preaching is no longer linked to the priest and it is obvious to consider preaching, at least in a broader sense if not on a par, also the diffusion of the thought of others, be they priests or laymen*» (Giancarlo Rocca, *The concepts of Publisher-Publishing-Publication in Don Alberione*, in *Proceedings of the International Seminar on Pauline Publishers*, Ariccia-Milan 17 September-2 October 1988).

¹³ James Alberione, *UPS IV*, p. 162.

2.2 The content of the message

The 2nd ISPP showed that the future of publishing, in the universe of digital communication towards which all the media today converge, is not only in technology but, very clearly, in content. This reality, among other things, makes us think about the level of attention we give to our formation, both the initial and the ongoing one. To what extent do we give importance to study in the sense of “studiousness”? Are we offering “integral formation” to our young people, preparing them to produce contents and thus to carry on the mission with a “Pauline colour”?

Unfortunately, *«the emphasis placed on corporate functioning has, almost paradoxically, overshadowed the reflection on the contents: how being inspired by Saint Paul characterizes the contents of our publishing»?*¹⁴ Attention to contents is fundamental as a first step in order to adapt it later to the various communication platforms. As already explained by Fr Alberione in his time, *«the word “publication” has many applications: publication of the periodical, publication of the one who prepares the script for the film, who prepares the program for television, who prepares things to communicate through the radio. “Edidit nobis Salvatorem” says the Liturgy»*¹⁵.

Although the 2nd ISPP has emphasized the digital environment, we note that printing is still the means of communication in which our mission grows much and also sustains us economically. On the other hand, we cannot forget radio and television, which are still channels that have a significant presence in many realities and that we cannot discard. The question, regarding the contents, becomes more radical: are we prepared to offer such “contents” on any platform that presents itself as a new opportunity?

It is therefore necessary to think seriously about the formation, to prepare the Paulines in the various areas of the sciences that concern our mission: the Bible, Communication, Theology,

¹⁴ Silvio Sassi, *The Pauline Publisher: 1914 – 2014*, op. cit.

¹⁵ James Alberione, *Sermons of the Founder 5*, 1957, p.137.

Sociology but also Psychology, Pedagogy, Administration, etc. In the context of Communication, we need Paulines also prepared to carry forward the Pauline Centres for Studies in Communication. Four of these are already in full operation, while the Circumscriptions that are planning the construction of similar centres must now prepare Paulines to take up this specific apostolate. Finally, we cannot forget the harmony that must exist between *Formation Iter* and the *Apostolic Project*.

2.3 Human relationships

We are a “Pauline” publishing, which needs “Pauline publishers”, not “in theory” but fully integrated into the social and ecclesial reality to bring “contents” that respond to the need of the people who seek God. The 2nd ISPP has given emphasis on the aspect of “human relationships” as a first requirement to prepare and convey contents.

This is a fully Pauline attitude, recalling for example, that the Apostle Paul, before writing his letters, had a direct relationship with his recipients. Our Founder was already referring to this aspect of the publisher’s work: «*The Editorial office studies the current needs of the Church and the society; it writes and inspires competent writers, directing and organizing their work for the good result, according to the spirit and the letter of the Constitutions*»¹⁶.

Creating relationships with the recipients is fundamental, also because communication today becomes more and more on the internet, that is, relational. In this regard, we can recall the words of Pope Francis in *Evangelii Gaudium*, when he speaks of the need for a profound missionary renewal of the Church: «*The first step is personal dialogue, when the other person speaks and shares his or her joys, hopes and concerns for loved ones, or so many other heartfelt needs. Only afterwards is it possible to bring up God’s word, perhaps by reading a Bible verse or relating a story, but always keeping in mind the fundamental message: the personal love of God*

¹⁶ James Alberione, *UPS III*, p. 131.

who became man, who gave himself up for us, who is living and who offers us his salvation and his friendship»¹⁷.

The declaration of the X General Chapter reaffirms that «*we are Church and we want to be a Congregation that goes out with the Church*», bearing in mind that «*going out towards others to reach the human peripheries does not mean running towards the world without a direction and without meaning*»¹⁸. For us Paulines it is not a question of wasting our energies with personal projects, where everyone does what he wants, but of going out starting from a pastoral project that is an expression of the Congregation, which organizes resources of people and means in a complex project that considers people, initiatives, contents, means, recipients but also human relationships, team work, contact with the ecclesial and social world. With regard to this argument, it is also good to remember that it is necessary to seek communion and collaboration with the institutions of the Pauline Family in the area of spirituality, as well as in apostolate, formation, vocation promotion...

“Organize the good”, Fr. Alberione insisted, but considering the persons, avoiding falling into «*a depersonalization of pastoral care that leads to pay more attention to the organization than to people in such a way that they are enthused more by the “roadmap” than the journey itself*»¹⁹.

For us Paulines, the first places of contact with our recipients are our bookstores, which cannot only become points of sale but, as Fr. Alberione said, «*a centre of culture, source of diffusion of holiness, as temples of your sanctification and of the world*»²⁰. Spreading of “holiness”, not a market where everything is sold, as if it were a bazaar.

In the reflections made during the 2nd ISPP it emerged that we cannot forget other places of contact with the people, today present in the Congregation: the Pauline Centres for Studies in

¹⁷ Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, no. 128.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, no. 46.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, no. 82.

²⁰ James Alberione, *To the Daughters of St. Paul*, 34, p. 87.

Communication, the conferences on various topics related to Communication or other topics (organized in some Circumscriptions), courses on the Bible (for example, those organized by SOBICAIN); the cultural centres, the Biblical Festival, the Bible Quiz, the International Centre for Family Studies (CISF), etc.

3. THOUGHT, ACTION AND ORGANIZATION IN THE LOGIC OF THE GOSPEL

After the realization of the 2nd ISPP, and considering also the many initiatives that were born in the Congregation after the 1st Seminar, I see it opportune to deal with a theme that mainly concerns the people — the Paulines — who have to carry out the various projects. It is true that Fr. Alberione insisted on organizing the apostolate. In fact, we all know how it is necessary to pay attention to the organizational, administrative and economic aspects, and to material and professional resources, etc. However, we must pay attention to everything, be attentive also to the market situation, but at the same time, be very cautious, so that the market itself does not “eat” us, as it has done with many “companies” all over the world.

Our Founder was already warning that *«the Congregation must never lower itself to the level of an industry, of a trade; but always remain at the human-divine level of the apostolate, exercised by the most rapid and fruitful means, in a pastoral spirit... Those who lower themselves to the level of an industrialist, or of a merchant, would contribute to a fatal deviation. Not negotiation, but evangelization»*²¹; *«there was no need for a religious institute to create industry! You do not need people consecrated to God to do business!»*²². These warnings were repeated and repeated by all the Superiors General. It is urgent to listen to these warnings coming from our Founder before it is too late!

We all know that a “radically” corporate model, when adopted for a Circumscription (and here I refer specifically to human

²¹ James Alberione, *CISP*, 808-809.

²² James Alberione, *Haec meditare II*, 8 (1948), pp. 173-174.

relationships, which are an essential reality in any institution), creates a split between those Paulines that are valued within the corporate structure and those who, while wanting to exercise the Pauline apostolate, are kept out. Experience has shown us that the search for a “completely” effective and efficient organization with an unbridled emphasis on professionalism causes a religious institution more damage than good.

When we observe this situation, we find that one of the reasons that damages the religious institution is the fact that we tend to see life and mission more in the logic of the market than in the logic of the Gospel. In this perspective, the first area to suffer is that of human relationships, because it gives way to the possibility of generating tensions and ruptures: relationships are no longer those between brothers but become more similar to those that exist between the boss and the subject; the fundamental work in synergy gives way to competition; the focus is on efficiency and not on giving a life to the mission; the contents of the publications are not so much based on “pastorality” as on saleability (even though it is necessary to pay attention to this aspect for the survival of our apostolate), etc.

It takes a lot of attention to internal human relationships. It is worth reflecting on what recently Pope Francis said to the consecrated persons: *«Today’s frantic pace leads us to close many doors to encounter, often for fear of others. Only shopping malls and internet connections are always open. Yet that is not how it should be with consecrated life: the brother and the sister given to me by God are a part of my history, gifts to be cherished. May we never look at the screen of our cell phone more than the eyes of our brothers or sisters, or focus more on our software than on the Lord. For whenever we put our own projects, methods and organization at the centre, consecrated life stops being attractive; it no longer speaks to others; it no longer flourishes because it forgets its very foundations, its very roots»*²³.

It takes balance! Another problem is regarding the difficulty, seen in some Circumscriptions, to include in the Apostolic Pro-

²³ Pope Francis, *Homily in the Mass: Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, XXII World Day for Consecrated Life*, 2 February 2018.

ject all the initiatives, not only those that are within a corporate structure, but also the other Pauline activities that could be very well integrated into the whole of the Project itself. We had already spoken about this with the Directors General of the apostolate on the occasion of the 2nd ISPP.

We have reminded, at that time, that the role of the General Director, as a delegated authority, is not only that of the management of human and material resources, but also one of animator, promoter of a communication that humanizes and fosters team work and unity in the apostolate. If the function of a General Director were only that of a “manager”, he need not have been necessarily be a Pauline. This service is rightly assumed by a Pauline so that he can bring the “Pauline colour” even in human relationships, in our structures, in the methodology of work, etc.

It is opportune to consider what the first article of our Constitutions states: *«With a free response to the appeal of the Holy Spirit, we decided to follow Jesus Christ, and to consecrate ourselves totally to him. In order to be a sign and witness of his love, we have come together as his own in a fraternal communion of life, in the Religious Congregation of the Society of Saint Paul»*²⁴. This presupposes being enlightened by the Gospel!

In the Gospel Jesus tells us: *«You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many»* (Mt 20:25-28). The Gospel is the only way to save the sense of religious life and to begin a journey towards true humanization.

The VIII General Chapter produced a beautiful Declaration entitled “A Preferential Apostolic Option: Humanizing to Christianize”, which, at a certain point, states: *«Since there are evident signs of a very strong crisis of humanity in our world today, our mis-*

²⁴ *Const. and Dir.*, Art. 1.

sion of evangelizers will assume as a preferential apostolic option the commitment to humanize society»²⁵. We recall that the humanization of society begins by humanizing it from within — that is, starting from the persons and structures that are at the service of evangelization.

In this sense, it is necessary that prayer and the Eucharist, which are part of our daily life, enter into our real life, penetrate human relationships: «[...] *Worship or prayer on the one hand is one of the fundamental duties towards God, on the other hand it is an indispensable means for obtaining the graces necessary for eternal salvation. To saturate our whole life, the press, preaching, education, with this conviction will be a great merit, a vivifying light, an indispensable virtue*»²⁶.

It is urgent to seek a balance between spirituality, formation, apostolic life, organization and appreciation of people. Will it be possible? In this journey, the role of the Circumscription Superior and his Council is fundamental. They must be the first to work in animation and help the confreres on their journey to “humanize to Christianize” the Congregation — in the light of the Gospel — so that, as a true “Pauline publisher”, it can play its part in the humanization and Christianization also of society.

Aparecida, 20 February 2018

²⁵ VIII General Chapter, *Declaration: “A Preferential Apostolic Option: Humanize to Christianize”*.

²⁶ James Alberione, *CISP*, p. 29.

PROGRAMMING OF THE GENERAL GOVERNMENT

This section presents the commitments made by the General Government regarding some operational guidelines that have not yet been put into practice and with reference to other initiatives that have arisen from the reflection made during the inter-chapter Assembly. There are also the recommendations to the General Government of the Circumscription Major Superiors, Delegates and Representatives, born of their personal reflections. Even if some ideas are repeated, we present them here in an integral form because, to a certain extent, they highlight the areas in which the General Government will have to put its attention in its service of animation of the Congregation until the end of its mandate.

COMMITMENTS OF THE GENERAL GOVERNMENT

1. Community-Spirituality-Pauline Family Area

Insist on the community as a place of experience of God and of fraternity, which finds in the Word and in the Eucharist the strength to create synergy in view of the mission.

- Insist on the animation of the Circumscriptions, so that each community has a project with a clear “Pauline” identity that knows how to involve its members in the various community, formative and apostolic activities.
- With reference to the 3.1.4 operational Line of the X General Chapter, study the possibility of starting in Paris an international community of perpetually professed students.
- Reinforce the international dimension of the Congregation through the exchange of confreres, according to the needs evaluated by the Superior General.
- Give continuity to the study of the geography of the Congregation, particularly in reference to the Circumscriptions of India-Nigeria-Great Britain-Ireland and Colombia-Ecuador-Panamá.
- With regard to the Pauline Family, look for collaboration in the field of vocation promotion, formation and the apostolate.

To celebrate the 100th anniversary of the death of Maggiorino Vigolungo and the Pauline Vocation Year (25 January 2019 – 25 January 2020).

2. Vocation Promotion and Formation

- Organize, in the light of the 2nd ISPP, a second “Seminar on Formation for the Mission” in the autumn of 2019.
- After this Seminar, organize a week of formation in each geographical area of the Congregation for the formation of formators.
- Prepare animation tools for organizing and celebrating the Pauline Vocation Year.
- Make known the figure of Maggiorino Vigolungo in the centenary year of his death (2018) through suitable materials prepared by the SIF, as a model to be proposed to young people for the promotion of the Pauline vocation.

3. Apostolate

- Finalize the document “Editorial Guidelines. Identity, content and interlocutors of the Pauline apostolate” (Operative line 1.1.2).
- Complete the drafting of the document “Formation Programme for Paulines and lay collaborators in the apostolate” (Operative line 1.2.3).
- Update the documents “Criteria for St Pauls multimedia developments” and “Guidelines for the preparation of the Procedures Manual”.
- Give continuity to the work of the commission for the Pauline Study Centres in Communication, promoting their mutual collaboration.
- Give continuity to the study of the identity and operation of the international bodies of the apostolate (GEC, CIDEP, CAP-ESW).
- Give continuity to the study on updating the Norm of the Society of Saint Paul.

4. Dependent Houses

- Consolidate the identity of each community.

5. Pauline Institutes of Consecrated Secular Life

- Systematize and organize the PICSL archive in the Generalate.
- Together with the SIF, develop general common lines on the formation of the members of the PICSL in the various stages.
- Develop a practical handbook for the Major Superiors and the PICSL Delegates regarding their service of animation and guidance.
- Prepare a ritual valid for the various formation stages.
- During the General Government visits, promote animation meetings with the Delegates and members of the PICSL.
- Continue the study of the norms proper to the PICSL.

6. Pauline Cooperators

- Proceed with the revision of the Statute.
- Develop the sensitivity of the Paulines towards the Pauline Cooperators.

7. General Bursar's Office

- Accompany the Circumscriptions in the analysis of the budgets, providing the information that is considered useful for their work.

8. General Secretariat

- Proceed with the reorganization of the current and historical archive of the Congregation.
- Prepare and send to the Secretaries of Circumscription a Vademecum on their activity in reference with the General Secretariat.

9. Pauline Spirituality

- Evaluate and rethink the structure and service of the Centre of Pauline Spirituality.

- Offer suitable aids through the Postulation in order to help the Circumscriptions to spread the knowledge of the figures of the Pauline “saints”.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CIRCUMSCRIPTION MAJOR SUPERIORS, DELEGATES AND REPRESENTATIVES

- Our group is very grateful to the General Government for its spontaneous and a non-hierarchical approach. The relationship of mutual exchange between the General Government and the Circumscriptions is quite evident. The direct presence of Fr. Valdir José De Castro in several Circumscriptions has created a sense of positivity within the Congregation. We hope that the General Government will continue to encourage all Circumscriptions to progress even when the horizon does not seem to offer us so much hope.
- Reactivate the Centre of Pauline Spirituality.
- Revitalise the Study Centres.
- Organize an international seminar on formation to get in tune with the reflections and the lights that came to us from the 2nd ISPP regarding the formation of the Paulines.
- Redefine or restructure the international bodies so that they contribute to being a true multimedia publisher.
- Prepare materials of accompaniment for spiritual exercises and monthly retreats.
- Encourage animation by the Councillors General during visits to the Circumscriptions.
- Provide abstracts/summaries of the documents produced by the General Government.
- Promote a “Project Africa” in order to coordinate and increase our presence on that continent at a missionary and apostolic level.
- Make available animation aids, through the Centre of Pauline Spirituality, for the Aggregated Institutes and Pauline Cooperators.

FINAL ADDRESS OF THE GENERAL SUPERIOR

Dear Brothers,

we are concluding the work of the Interchapter Assembly, which was indeed a “time of grace”, a strong time of fraternity, sharing, prayer, and evaluation of the journey made by our Congregation especially in the last three years, a time of reflection on the current situation and planning for the future. In these days, close to the Shrine of Aparecida and experiencing the maternal protection of the Virgin Mary, we have been able to see closely the signs of the lights and shadows present in our personal, communitarian, congregational, ecclesial and social life.

After having seen together more profoundly the important aspects of the reality of our Congregation, we recognize our “weakness in everything” and wind up this meeting in the certainty that we will not be able to overcome our limits and face the challenges of evangelization today if we will not let ourselves be guided by the Spirit of the Lord.

As “apostles-communicators and as consecrated persons” we want, first of all, to entrust ourselves to the hands of Jesus Master, Way, Truth and Life. In fact, we have repeated many times in this Interchapter that, without meeting Him, we will not find the light for our journey. As disciples and missionaries of Jesus Christ we want to walk united to him, so that we can listen to him – considering that “disciple” is he who listens! – and assume a style of life that leads us to bear witness to the Gospel with authority in the culture of communication, so that our interlocutors may have life in him: «*I am the Way, the Truth and the Life*» (Jn 14: 6).

In fact, only in the encounter with Jesus can we overcome the temptations of individualism, of the divisions within our communities, of the logic of the market that leads us to competition, the feeling of resignation, etc. Only in the encounter with the Master will we find the strength and the hope to live fully our Pauline vocation.

With these sentiments, and in the missionary dynamism that

prompted the Apostle Paul and Blessed James Alberione, we want to continue firmly in the wake of the objective of the X General Chapter: «*“I do all things for the Gospel” (1Cor 9,23). Attentive to the signs of the times, renew the impetus of our apostolic action, converting ourselves, our communities and our apostolic structures, to reach everyone, especially in the periphery, utilising likewise the new languages of communication*».

I present below some ideas that I consider important to bear in mind at the end of our Chapter Assembly, after which each of us will return to his office bringing with him the experiences of these days, to give continuity to his service of animation of his Circumscription.

1. A constant point that emerged in the reflections of these days was that each of us begin to do everything for the Gospel, first of all through his personal testimony, in his human relationships with the confreres of the community and with the laity who collaborate in our apostolic works, and with openness to multiculturalism. We hope that the twofold table of the Word of God and of the Eucharist, which we celebrate every day and which builds up the community, may not be reduced to a formal moment of prayer, but may become for all of us the source to draw on in order to revive the gift received, to increase apostolic strength and to overcome what creates division¹.

Let all the Paulines be involved in this journey, both those who actively live the different commitments (community, apostolic works, vocation ministry, formation, administration, animation of the Pauline Institutes and Cooperators, etc.) as well as those who live the apostolate of suffering due to illness.

“Doing everything for the Gospel” is to live also in a human and material collaboration, in a concrete solidarity among the Circumscriptions, seeking the good of our mission that has the whole world as parish.

2. We have recalled that, in order to “renew the momentum of our apostolic activity”, as stated in the objective of the last

¹ Cf. X General Chapter, *Priority 2.2.*

General Chapter, it is necessary to convert ourselves, our communities and our apostolic structures. We are aware of this necessity, which becomes an indispensable condition for arriving at a new life in every sense. As the first animators of your Circumscriptions, I invite you, dear Superiors and Delegates, to approach our confreres who are entrusted to you with a message of “conversion”, a conversion that is born from the encounter with the Gospel, which is Jesus himself. Insist, above all, on the conversion not only of the heart, but also of the mind, which is fundamental for carrying out the work of evangelization with our specific charism.

Concerning this, our Founder already warned: *«Do not be narrow-minded, little, and having only a restricted vision. Feel and try to help among the houses. With a small and narrow mentality, it is doubtful if there is a vocation, because life becomes selfish and we can see only ourselves and a small circle of people around us. [...] Big heart! Heart of the Apostle, heart of Jesus! Widen the heart!»*² Let us ask the Master for an open mind, to help us to scrutinize the signs of the times, within the Church, in the culture of communication, in the society, etc.

3. We have seen the need always to return to reflect on the Pauline identity. The importance of recovering the sense of the Pauline as “publisher” was emphasized in this Interchapter beginning from the theological vision we have inherited from Father Alberione: that we can all rethink and value our identity from the point of view of the “publisher” (which essentially consists in giving Jesus Master, Way, Truth and Life to the world, in the style of St. Paul), driven by an incarnate spirituality, bringing the message of salvation to all, especially the distant and the poor.

In this vision, and having in mind the current complex communicational reality, the question we must ask ourselves, perhaps, is not so much “How to evangelize in the culture of communication, today?”, but “What is our ‘Pauline’ identity in the

² James Alberione, *Spiegazione delle Costituzioni* (1962), p. 83.

universe of communication?”, which has become a vital space open to all people. Let this question concerning our identity become object of constant reflection.

4. In spite of the constraint of time, we have taken into consideration the 2nd *International Seminar of Pauline Publishers* held last October. We recalled that the 1st ISPP was centred on the need for a greater openness of our apostolate to “multimediality” and the dimension of “organization”. We realized that behind these two fronts there was a model of communication prevalent at that time (1988), which originated from a transmitting centre generally known and directed one-way to usually unknown recipients. Obviously, it is a system that has still not disappeared.

The 2nd ISPP (2017) showed us, however, that with the arrival of digital technologies on the net communication does not depend so much on a broadcaster as on a receptor, on his decision to accept the other. In other words, communication can be reciprocal and will only be effective when we make sure that the other welcomes us, that our otherness is “incorporated”. We have seen that consequently a radical change is necessary with regard to the structure that is based on the one-way traffic of the transmitter towards the receiver.

The 2nd Seminar of Publishers has helped us to see more deeply that the communication world, especially with the arrival of digital networks, is radically changing the world of human relations, and this calls us to be attentive, daring and creative in our mission.

5. The document “Editorial Guidelines”, to the draft of which you have offered valuable suggestions, will be the guide for the apostolate of the whole Congregation after its approval by the General Government. All of you are now warmly invited to circulate this document – together with the content of the 2nd ISPP – in your Circumscriptions and to animate our confreres to put into practice its guidelines, so that renewal does not remain just a word (or a document...) but, turn into a reality.

Evidently, it is not enough to have a document in hand. We need to open ourselves to the Spirit, to guide us where He wants. In this regard, I remind you of an interesting passage from the Document of the Special General Chapter: *«The Congregation, like the Church, must continually renew itself and purify itself in the Holy Spirit (GS 21); not only that, but it must continually ask itself what the Spirit says to it as little church (cf. Ap. 2ss). Remaining in this way listening and available to the creative and operative presence of the Spirit, we must open ourselves to the charism that the Founder has transfused into the Congregation, welcoming it in a vital and dynamic way, so that the inevitable tensions between past and present, between tradition and renewal, between structures and charisms become a push for progress towards the goals of our vocation and mission»*³. Let us all listen attentively to the voice of the Spirit of the Lord and search for the signs of his presence in our journey!

6. During this Interchapter we all felt the desire – as the Declaration of our X General Chapter puts it – of wanting to be an outgoing Congregation with the Church⁴, a Congregation, disciple of Jesus and, therefore, missionary. In this perspective, it is urgent to overcome the danger of a “self-referential” Congregation to make it ever more “missionary”. As Pope Francis makes it clear in an affirmation very similar to the thought of our Founder, *«pastoral care in a missionary key requires abandoning the comfortable pastoral criterion of “it has always been so”*». To this statement, he adds: *«I invite everyone to be bold and creative in this task of rethinking the objectives, structures, style and evangelizing methods of their communities»*⁵.

In this movement of “going out”, we can put into practice our 2nd ISPP which has highlighted two actions that must be part of the “Pauline Publisher’s” job, namely, that of not only providing “content”, but above all of “creating relationships with our interlocutors”.

³ Special General Chapter, no. 44.

⁴ Cf. X General Chapter, *Chapter Declaration “To evangelize today in joy as apostle communicators and as consecrated persons”*.

⁵ Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, no. 33.

Let this be a motivation to further enhance the new initiatives that are born in the Congregation, such as, the Centres of Studies in Communication, the cultural centres, the book centres as real centres of evangelization and culture, the Bible courses organized by SOBICAIN, events such as the Bible Festival and Bible Quiz, etc. May we be really able to move ahead in this journey of openness!

7. The aspect of the “organization” of our apostolate has certainly been highlighted in this Seminar, but we have been warned of the danger of reducing apostolic works to “companies” like many others, that is, to purely industrial and commercial entities. It is urgent to ensure that the logic of the market does not take the place of the logic of the Gospel in our apostolic structures and in personal relationships. Teamwork in synergy, that is, “thinking together”, is an essential way to meet the difficulties of all kinds, including economic ones. In this perspective, we can read and put into practice what the priority 4.1 of the X General Chapter says: *«Act professionally and in accordance with the Pauline poverty in all the areas of our administration and to work in teams to safeguard transparency, co-responsibility and accuracy»*.

Still in the area of organization, we want to mention the international bodies and Organisms (CTIA, CIDEP, CAP/ESW, GEC) that, at this time, are redefining their structure and their style of operation, so that they can continue, in a more effective way, to help our Circumscriptions in the apostolic collaboration.

8. We will go out from this Seminar with a greater awareness that in order to renew the momentum of our apostolic mission we must also invest in the preparation of our members. It is worth remembering that the Interchapter of New Delhi, held in 2001, already noted that in our Congregation persists *«a mentality that is reluctant to change and unmindful of the necessary updating, that reinforces the “status quo”*. In some cases we are gathering the fruits of a colourless and generic formation, lacking in the study of the Founder and of our charism: little appreciation of consecrated life, problems of Pauline identity, individualism, weak sense of belonging,

*little enthusiasm and even little love for the Congregation»*⁶. How long will we remain at this same point? So, we insist that it is essential to invest in the formation – initial and permanent – of our members.

Looking at the formative aspect of the Congregation, we see that it is urgent to set up an integral Pauline formation that leads to a real process of human-spiritual growth, of apostolic commitment and of “Paulinizing”: to be “*Paulinized*” in order to be “*Christified*”. The SIF is the body of the General Government that will be close to the Circumscriptions to accompany them, so that the “Pauline colour” may be present in the *Formation Iter* as well as in the practice.

The decision to organize the 2nd Seminar on formation for the mission, two years after the 2nd International Seminar of Pauline Publishers, will be an extraordinary opportunity to reflect on the reality of formation in our Congregation and to look for concrete solutions for a “formation for the mission” in an increasingly globalized and ever-changing world.

9. Pastoral care for Vocation has been also a theme present in our Interchapter, which proves to be an issue to be tackled with care, patience and creativity. It is already an age-old problem that was a matter of concern every time. In 1972, the then Superior General, Fr. Luigi Damaso Zanoni, wrote: «*Today there is a general crisis of vocations. This is a reality that we cannot ignore, but we cannot either quietly take refuge behind this excuse, to escape from our responsibility. If there are more difficulties, we must have more faith, pray more, be more authentic witnesses of our religious life: poorer, more humble, more supernatural*».⁷ This advice is still valid!

Evidently, we need a Pastoral Care for Vocation addressed to the young people of today, called “millennials”, young people whom the Lord continues to call to work in his vineyard.

⁶ Pietro Campus, *Letter of the Superior General “The service of authority”*, 31 May 2001.

⁷ Luigi Zanoni, *Year of Prayer for Vocations, San Paolo*, December 1972, no. 12.

Certainly, the next Synod of Bishops, which will take place in October 2018 and which will have as its theme “Youth, faith and vocational discernment”, will offer indications that will help us to deepen and to deal with this reality. The Vocation Year 2019/2020 – decided in the last Meeting of the General Governments of the Pauline Family and we will live it precisely at the level of the Pauline Family – will also be very appropriate and for which we will have to make every effort necessary so that it may produce many fruits.

10. In our works we also realized that we are not alone in the Church, but we are part of the Pauline Family. The challenge to seek closer collaboration with the female Congregations continues, both in the field of vocation ministry and in that of formation and of the apostolate. With regard to the Pauline Institutes of Consecrated Secular Life, let us remember that they are “work proper” of the Society of Saint Paul. Therefore, we must value them; their members must be accompanied by us with every care; their vocation must be continuously fostered. Let us give due importance and proper promotion to the Association of Pauline Cooperators, which celebrates hundred years of its history.

* * *

Dear friends, may all of us in our animation service be able to look forward with hope, trying to help our confreres to overcome any kind of resignation to the problems of today, a feeling that is invading consecrated life in recent decades – and that is also present in some areas of our Congregation – and which has been the object of reflection by Pope Francis several times. On one of these occasions he said: *«Jesus, proclaiming the Beatitudes, shakes that negative prostration called resignation that makes us believe that we can live better if we avoid problems, if we flee from others, if we hide or confine ourselves into our comfort zones, if we fall asleep in a tranquillizing consumerism»*. We need to overcome *«that resignation that leads us to isolate ourselves from everyone, to divide us, to separate us, to make ourselves blind to the life and suffering of oth-*

ers».⁸ Therefore, we need to begin evangelization starting from our own communities, an evangelization that generates mercy, joy and courage.

May each one of you carry out the service of animation in your Circumscription with faith, love and hope, with the same hope that the saints have been able to treasure in their hearts, as the very saints of the Pauline Family who have preceded us have shown.

May Jesus Master, through the intercession of Mary, Queen of the Apostles – who is venerated as Our Lady of Aparecida in the Shrine here near to us – be the light of our life, so that we can walk with apostolic zeal, in the footsteps of the Apostle Paul and of Blessed James Alberione.

Finally, we sincerely thank:

- each of you, participants in this Interchapter, for everything you have said and shared.
- the Province of Brazil, in the person of its Provincial Superior, Fr. Luiz Miguel Duarte. Thank you for your fraternal welcome and for your human and material contribution!
- Fr. Silvio Ribas De Oliveira and the junior Guilherme César Da Silva, who assisted us with their valuable work in the secretariat.
- the team that organized the Interchapter: Fr. Vito Fracchiolla (Coordinator), Fr. Jose Pottayil and Fr. Salud Paredes.
- the Secretary General, Fr. Stefano Stimamiglio, and the members of the General Council.
- the translator, Fr. Angelo Colacrai.
- our confreres around the world, the Pauline Family and our collaborators who have accompanied us with their prayers.

Aparecida, 24 February 2018

⁸ Pope Francis, *Homily in the Holy Mass for Peace and Justice*, Santiago, Chile, 16 January 2018.

CLOSING HOMILY OF THE GENERAL SUPERIOR

The episode of the Transfiguration (Mk 9:2-10), narrated in the passage taken from the Gospel of Mark that we have heard today, fits very well in the conversion itinerary proposed by Lent. The disciples Peter, James and John are led by Jesus apart on a mountain, by themselves, where they live an experience that eventually turns out to be a step further in their understanding of the nature of Jesus himself and of his identity.

The transfigured face, the shining garments, the cloud and the voice that they listen to reveal that the journey of Christ towards the Cross hides a paschal meaning. This man, walking right towards the Cross, is in reality the risen and glorious Lord. In this revelation is the presence of Moses and Elijah to draw the attention of the disciples. Moses, as we know, represents the Law, Elijah the prophets. In other words, all of Scripture attests that Jesus is the expected Messiah.

The Gospel of the Transfiguration puts energy, gives wings to our hope: evil and darkness will not win; this is not the destiny of Jesus nor of humanity. However, it is not enough to contemplate the glory of Jesus, we must listen to him. In order for men to find the light, they must let themselves be illuminated by his Word. The Father has only one Word that fully reveals him: *«This is my Son, the beloved: listen to him!»* To the disciples of Jesus of yesterday and of today the Father asks them to listen to Jesus, so that by listening to Him they may become like Him, they will learn from Him to be sons of the Father.

Listening is what defines the disciple. The disciple is the one who listens! Rightly, it is in this perspective that Bishop Orlando Brandes, Bishop of Aparecida, spoke to us in the retreat that he preached at the beginning of the Interchapter. He spoke of the need for silence in order to “listen”, to have a quality communication with God, with others, with oneself. Mons. Brandes observed that today there is a lot of noise in the Church and that this makes it difficult to listen to the voice of the Spirit of the Lord.

Evidently, since the Church is composed of men and women, we can say that, in truth, there is a lot of noise in the very heart of people. In addition to the noise, it seems to me that there is also a lot of distraction, so much lack of concentration, attitudes that in turn generate individualism and narcissism. The fascinating world of new digital technologies also has its downside if we do not know how to use them correctly. So, if we do not listen to the Lord, where will we go? If we do not listen to him, what will we say?

During these days of the Interchapter, other than allowing ourselves to share the journey of the Congregation in a special manner in the last three years, it has also given us an opportune time to listen: listen to the Lord, listen to one another, listen to the Church, listen to the society, listen to the people of God, listen to the culture of communication... In this attitude of listening, especially regarding the Congregation, we could see signs that speak to us of lights, shadows, perhaps even darkness. However, they cannot scare us, but rather lead us to face them with the power of love and mercy that Jesus, the Master, gives us.

Now, having finished the Interchapter that we have lived under the gaze of the Virgin of Aparecida – a powerful time of experience of God and of fraternity –, we must descend from the “mountain” and go to the plain with the same faith of Abraham, as we have heard in the first reading (Gen 22:1-2). We must return to our service of animation, which can have no other reference except the Gospel, that is, Jesus himself, our Master, Way, Truth and Life. To descend the mountain to put into practice a style of evangelization all inspired by the Apostle Paul and our Founder, Blessed James Alberione, that starts from within our vital environments, an evangelization that leads us to our conversion, to the conversion of our community and our apostolic structures, as our last General Chapter affirmed. An evangelization that helps us to overcome every kind of self-reference and resignation, that leads us to go out, with love, joy and audacity in the culture of communication, using all the means at our disposal.

In fact, as our last General Chapter declared, *«we are the Church and we want to be with the Church a congregation which “goes out”*,

“on the way” to place ourselves beside to the “new Macedonians” (cf. At 16:9) who appeal to us: the crowds of today without a shepherd, the forgotten minorities, the excluded ones, those suffering from every infirmity, those socially marginalized, the youth who are not listened to or the victims of modern addictions, the unemployed and the immigrants, those who hunger for bread and truth, those who have excluded God from their lives, those who have lost the meaning of life...»¹.

We want to make this journey in communion with the whole Pauline Family, with the female Congregations, with the Pauline Institutes of Consecrated Secular Life and with the Pauline Co-operators who, this year, celebrate the centenary of foundation. We are all called to evangelize in “creative fidelity” to our Founder, bearing in mind that the ideal expressed in these words evokes a fidelity not so much to the inherited past as to the future. Fidelity is more synonymous with courage, vigour, imagination, boldness that is not fear, dread, routine, repetition.

We wish to continue our Eucharist with a heart grateful to the Lord for this Interchapter and to thank, in a special way, the Province of Brazil for what it has done for the successful outcome. We also thank all our Pauline confreres and the brothers and sisters of the Pauline Family, who accompanied us with their prayer. May the Lord help us put into practice the decisions we have made.

Let us finish our reflection with the words of our Founder, who tells us: *«Strive to strain forward every day, never stop, neither on the path of holiness, nor in the work of the apostolate. Forward! Always strain forward!»*. This is what we want to do. We want to walk in hope, having in mind the words of Paul of the second reading we have heard: *«In the certainty of Jesus who died, rather, who is risen, who stands at the right hand of God and intercedes for us!»* (Rm 8:34).

Amen!

Cidade Paulina, São Paulo, 25 February 2018

¹ X General Chapter Declaration *“To evangelize today in joy as apostle communicators and as consecrated persons”*.

INFORMATION ONLINE

www.paulus.net

To download the reports and other documentation related to the Interchapter, you can consult the “Interchapter Assembly” entry in the reserved area of the website www.paulus.net or contact the General Secretariat: seggen@paulus.net

Let us remember that the institutional website www.paulus.net contains some data reserved only for members of the Society of St Paul. Access can be done from an internet browser. To request for the password, contact Fr. Ulysses Navarro at the following email address: information.service@paulus.net

To send information to be published send an email to: darlei.zanon@paulus.net

For assistance:

- Fr. Ulysses Navarro: information.service@paulus.net
Tel. (+39) 06. 5978.6717
- Fr. Stefano Stimamiglio: seggen@paulus.net
Tel. (+39) 06.5978.6617 - Fax (+39) 06.5978.6602
- Br. Darlei Zanon: darlei.zanon@paulus.net
Tel. (+39) 06.5978.6615

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Società San Paolo - Casa generalizia
Via Alessandro Severo, 58 - 00145 ROMA
Secretary General: seggen@paulus.net
Tel. (+39) 06.5978.6617 - Fax (+39) 06.5978.6602
www.paulus.net - information.service@paulus.net

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