

Rekindle the gift you have received.

Creative fidelity to hundred years of Pauline Charism

Fourth group work – morning of 28th April 2010

PROCEDURE OF WORK

Theme: **NEW REALITY OF COMMUNICATION AND EVANGELIZATION**

Aim: To integrate the reflection on our charism considering the present reality of our commitment to evangelization.

To be kept in mind: This group work concludes the phase of deepening and leads us to chapter reflection. The image of a **Pauline**, who lives and works in a community formed in view of a mission is completed by considering the various aspects of our commitment in evangelization.

Group 4 – English

Place of meeting: **Hall Canonico Chiesa (C)**

Br. Dominic Calabro	– Delegate, United States of America
Fr. Nestor Candado	– Regional Superior, Australia
Fr. Varghese Gnalian	– Provincial Superior, India-Nigeria
Br. Hansel Mapayo	– Delegate, Philippines-Macau
Fr. Maggiorino An S.	– Regional Superior, Korea
Fr. Jose Pottayil	– Vicar general
Br. Walter Rodríguez	– General councillor
Br. Blaise Thadathil	– Delegate, India-Nigeria
Fr. Kenji Yamauchi	– Provincial Superior, Japan

I. Group meeting

The group will come together in the hall assigned to them immediately after the introduction in the chapter hall. The results of the group work will be presented in the chapter hall at 11.30. It is recommended to finish the group work around 11.00 so as to have some time for interval and that the reporter can prepare the presentation.

Steps to be followed:

- The reporter of the group will present the synthesis of the conclusions of the three previous group works and hand over the synthesis to the members of the group.
- Personal reading of the contribution prepared by the Preparatory Commission. During the reading, each one may write down certain reflections on:
 - 1) How do we respond today to our vocation as evangelizers;
 - 2) What is the role of Paulines in the world of communication today; what position do we occupy in the Church and in the society in the field of communication;
 - 3) Important aspects of our commitment in communication which are absent in the contribution of the Preparatory Commission.
- Every member of the group presents the fruit of his personal reflection.
- Discussion follows.
- The group will try to synthesise the work of the three preceding days forming a definition for the following:
 - 1) Pauline as an apostle in the world of communications today.
 - 2) Pauline community in the world of communications today;
 - 3) Pauline apostolate in the world of communications today;

II. INTRODUCTORY CONTRIBUTION

1. Apostles in communication and with communication

Benedict XVI in his message for the 44th World Communications Day (16 May 2010), speaking about the presence of presbyters in communication, warns them against the risk of a dictated use mainly by the mere need of making oneself present and of considering wrongly the web only as a space to be filled.

The Pope stresses that “the priest present in the world of digital communications should be less notable for their media savvy than for their priestly heart, their closeness to Christ. This will not only enliven their pastoral outreach, but also give a ‘soul’ to the fabric of communications that makes us the ‘web’.” He continues writing that “consecrated men and women working in the media have a special responsibility for opening the door to new forms of encounter, maintaining the quality of human interaction, and showing concern for individuals and their genuine spiritual needs. They can thus help men and women of our digital age to sense the Lord’s presence, to grow in expectation and hope, and to draw near to the Word of God which offers salvation and fosters an integral human development.”

To us Paulines, the words of the Pope remind us what blessed James Alberione said about our apostolate. The activity of Pauline does not consist only in the

divulcation of good works, but in the communication of divine life welcomed, lived and testified with commitment of mind, will and heart. Paulines are apostles who evangelize in communication and with communication.

2. The subject of Pauline commitment in communication

One of the important features of our apostolate is its great openness towards collaboration with many persons who are not members of the Society of St Paul: priests, religious men and women with their special charisms, the laity and people of different faiths. Fr. Alberione spoke, first of all, of the collaboration within the Pauline Family, but today the autarchic model of Pauline apostolate is definitively outdated because of the economical and technological changes which led to the globalisation of market and to the extreme specialization of technological processes related to creation, production and diffusion of traditional media products and because of the evolution of communication towards interactivity and interconnection.

Collaboration with others, on the one hand, is not only necessity, but also a providential opportunity for us become more responsible, more open towards others and to become more aware of the dignity of every human person.

2.1. The means of action: Our apostolate today is primarily made effective with the means of communication which effectively shows our commitment in communication. The entrepreneurial form and the presence of the external collaborators can, however, create the danger, feared by Fr. Alberione, of the apostles becoming businessmen and evangelization becoming business. To avoid this threat, we must remember that the means of communication which is at our service, does not coincide automatically with evangelization and that in order to arrive at our missionary aim, we must be always careful to use the efficiency of communication from the point of view of apostolic finality of our works. Our laity collaborators must be clearly instructed on the objectives of our works and must be sustained by the formative programmes for a better awareness of the objectives of the Society of St Paul and its spirituality. Laity must be involved in planning and in decision making and can also have roles of directing in relation to Paulines, but the organization and the decisive processes must ensure Pauline identity of the work. Entrusting the laity the role of greater responsibility and direction, we must sustain them in their initiatives with Pauline formation, witness of religious life and promotion of apostolic values of the congregation.

In entrusting creative and directing roles, it is important to remember the teaching of Fr. Alberione on the particular value of women collaboration, which with another type of sensibility ensures greater growth of the apostolic activity of men.

2.2. Other forms of apostolic presence in the world of communication. The radius of the Pauline apostolate is often expanded by the collaboration in the works of the institutions of media communication which permits us to make known our spirituality to vast horizons. Our collaboration manifests our openness and

solidarity with the church and the whole world and permits us to learn from others and thus to enrich the congregation and the Church. Collaboration with external activities must have clear apostolic objectives and must be carried out in union with the Pauline community.

Our animation and support of persons immersed in communication help them to live their faith more fully and to carry out their work as a particular charism at the service of others. This apostolate also permits to promote the Pauline mission and spirituality and helps us to undertake works of greater dimensions.

2.3. Living members of the society and of the Church. All forms of Pauline commitment in communication must be open to the collaboration with other ecclesiastical and secular institutions. John Paul II wrote in 2005 that communication today manifests “a providential opportunity in order to reach people everywhere, overcoming barriers of time, of space and of language, forming in this process, more diverse the contents of faith and offering to anyone who is in search safe havens that allow them to enter into dialogue with the mystery of God revealed fully in Christ Jesus” (*Rapid development*, 5). He reminded, however, that communication needs redemption which purifies and renews the communicative capacity of the believers and that permit them, first of all, to grow in communion among themselves and to manifest the universal character of the people of God (*Ibid.*, 6). In order to renew Pauline Apostolate to make it more incisive, it is necessary to overcome the mentality of competition and challenge in relation to other initiatives, especially those of the Society of St Paul and of the Pauline Family and of the Church.

Pauline initiatives in communication must also be integrated in the larger project of the pastoral action of the Church. The personalization and individualization of communication today makes it even more important the educational role directed towards the users of the media. The apostolate of communication must integrate itself in the formative project which includes family, parish, school and civil society.

3. The content of Pauline Apostolate

In our apostolate, we follow essentially the indication of Fr. Alberione to transmit the integral Christ, (dogma, morality and religion), with special emphasis on Catechism, sacred Scripture, common doctrine on different aspects of Christian life according to the tradition of the Church. In keeping with the hierarchy of the contents desired by Fr. Alberione and with what is reaffirmed by the VIII General Chapter *the preferential apostolic option: humanise to Christianize*, the General government has indicated as *editorial priorities*: Bible, family and communication, which must be assumed in the geographic-linguistic apostolic projects and in the *apostolic project* of each circumscription.

The congregation also follows that indication of Blessed James Alberione to not to limit ourselves to explicit proclamation, but to “speak of everything in a Christian way”. The validity and relevance of this is confirmed by Benedict XVI in his recent message for the 44th World communications Day: “With the Gospels in our hands and in our hearts, we must reaffirm the need to continue preparing ways that lead to

the Word of God, while being at the same time constantly attentive to those who continue to see; indeed, we should encourage their seeking as a first step of evangelization”.

4. The recipients of Pauline apostolate

Blessed James Alberione stresses the importance of the activities directed towards the people who are distant from the Church and to the educated class of people who have a greater role in the formation of people. With his presentation of the new possibilities of digital world Benedict XVI reminds us the indications of Fr. Alberione: “a ministry in the digital world (...) because it brings us into contact with the followers of other religions, non-believers and people of every culture, requires sensitivity to those who do not believe, the disheartened and those who have deep, unarticulated desire for enduring truth and the absolute. Just as the prophet Isaiah envisioned a house of prayer for all peoples (cf. is 56:7), can we not see the web as also offering a space—like the “Court of the Gentiles” of the Temple of Jerusalem—for those who have not yet come to know God?” (Message of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI for the 44th World Communications Day, May 16, 2010).

It is, however, necessary to remember that to ask ourselves of the recipients of our mission does not mean merely to choose the category of persons, but to intent and to know how to use the instruments which permit us to have an adequate knowledge and this enables us to see their necessities, concerns and characteristics.

5. The specific atmosphere of Pauline apostolate

Our specific apostolate is carried out in the world of communication which today is not restricted only to certain ecclesial institutions, but is a fundamental apostolic dimension of the whole church. Our specificity, however, resides in considering communication as the main activity and the fundamental aspect of our identity. For us Paulines, communication is the place of experience of faith in view of offering it to others in diverse ways of present day communications.

6. The reason for our commitment

Our apostolate in communication is the experience of faith which finds in Christ the Master who illumines, transforms and animates all the dimensions of human life. Pauline is not simply a Christian committed to communication, but an apostle who lives, thinks and witnesses the Christocentric faith of Saint Paul.

In his homily on the occasion of the closing of Pauline Year (28 June 2009) Benedict XVI presented Saint Paul as a master of truth that leads to charity and of charity that makes true: “Paul is not only concerned in our personal rectitude nor with the growth of the Church alone. (...) The ultimate purpose of Christ’s work is the universe—the transformation of the universe, of the whole human world, of the entire creation. Those who serve the truth in love together with Christ contribute to

the true progress of the world. (...) Christ, his life, his suffering and his rising was the great leap ahead in the progress of humanity, of the world. Now, however, the universe must grow in accordance with him. Where the presence of Christ increases, therein lies the true progress of the world. There, mankind becomes new and thus the world is made new”.

Welcoming the originality of Saint Paul in his experience of faith which manifests itself in love is the necessary condition to carry out Pauline apostolate. For Fr. Alberione, the supreme example of the spirituality of apostolate in the form expressed by Saint Paul is the Virgin Mary, who becomes the Queen of Apostles, as one who welcomes, contemplates and gives Jesus to the world.

7. The apostolic resources

Evangelization needs apostles. Formation of members who are capable of carrying out Pauline mission and of adapting ourselves to the change of the world of communication is of vital importance. In world of globalisation, formation, especially that of specific formation, requires a coordination which takes into account the necessities of the congregation at the continental and global level. Apostolate in the new communication requires openness to newness, which is typical to young persons. However, the congregation cannot fulfil its commitment without constant effort to utilize and involve persons of every age, according to their capacities and possibilities.

Being open to new vocations and entrusting the problem of vocation to the Lord of the harvest, we must remember to present with clarity our identity without running the risk of presenting a Pauline model which does not correspond to the reality. Especially, it is necessary to present well the meaning of Pauline Priesthood which is not oriented towards a life of Parish Ministry but towards a Ministry of communication.

8. Openness to newness and to the future of communication

The effort to adapt ourselves to the new and changing needs of communication does not mean a rejection of the past. The spiritual, apostolic, formative and financial resources of the Society of St Paul constitute a secure foundation for a renewal in the creative fidelity to the charism received from the Founder.

At the level of communication, it is necessary to remember that the technological and cultural changes differ according to the place of mission of the Society of Paul. Adapting our apostolate must be also integral and must take into consideration all the wheels of “Pauline Cart” and especially it requires the coordination of formative and apostolic project.