



Rome, 10 January 2013

CONCLUDING MESSAGE

XXXI MEETING OF THE GENERAL GOVERNMENTS OF THE PAULINE FAMILY

“The Pauline Family: a Letter of St. Paul to the People of Today”

St. Paul House, Via San Giovanni Eudes, 25, Rome, Italy

7-10 January 2013

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

At the end of our 31st Annual Meeting of the General Governments of the Pauline Family, we raise our hearts in a hymn of thanksgiving for all that took place in these days. Once again we experienced the freshness, grace and beauty of being a Family called to live today the compassion of Jesus, Master and Shepherd, toward contemporary humanity. We adopted an attitude of listening to him in our reflections and sharing of ideas, looking with hope to the future.

This gathering was also an occasion for us to extend a very warm welcome to the new General Government of our Apostoline Sisters.

Moving toward the Centenary of the Foundation of the Pauline Family, our assembly focused on the perspective proposed for this third year: *“Onward!” so as to be, as a Family, a prophetic presence in the world of communications.* We spent these days allowing ourselves to be questioned by the signs and provocations offered us by the contemporary world.

On our first day, we listened to the enlightening talk of Fr. Gianbattista Zanchi, PIME Superior General, who presented the theme, *“A New Evangelization for the Third Millennium: Prospects, Possibilities and Challenges.”* Fr. Zanchi shared with us his wealth of experience as a “field missionary” and confronted us with a question posed by the poet Thom-as S. Eliot: “Is it humanity that has abandoned the Church, or is it the Church that has abandoned humanity?”

He underscored that the new evangelization “is carried out by saints, that is to say, by persons who have been changed by their meeting with Jesus Christ, and who live in the Church not as one would in a company or bureaucratic organization but in a fraternity that is striving to communicate the wealth it has received, namely, the presence of the crucified and risen Lord himself.” Fr. Zanchi reminded us over and over again that our mission cannot be reduced to doing things: “Today, mission consists more in *being* than in *doing*, and it calls us to be protagonists in the *culture of being and offering oneself as a gift.*” We felt once again the urgent need to allow ourselves to be evangelized before attempting to evangelize, and to offer others the testimony of a fully-realized and fully-humanizing life—a life that is generated by faith and by means of which we strive *to give others a reason for our hope* (1 Pt. 3:15). In this context, the world of communications, especially the Internet, is for us a privileged place of testimony, while for Web users it is an opportunity to come in contact with a Christian community.

Sr. Maria Antonietta Bruscatto, FSP Superior General, then shared with us her experiences as an auditor during the *Synod of Bishops on the New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith*, held in the Vatican from 7-28 October 2012. Among other things, she highlighted several aspects of the Synod's propositions and Concluding Message, underscoring in particular the synergy between the Synod's orientations and the charism of the Pauline Family, above all with regard to the centrality of Christ, the Word of God, the call to conversion and the Pact as an expression of faith and trust in the Lord.

With the Church, we too felt the need to rethink the new forms of evangelization and decisively adopt the language of today's new technologies in our pastoral, liturgical and apostolic praxes.

The following day, we listened to the representatives of our various Congregations who, in a round table discussion, developed the theme, "How We Evangelized in the Past and How We Evangelize Today." Starting with a panoramic view of each Institute's history, the speakers presented the style, content and criteria that developed over the years, emphasizing the ways in which we use communication in our charisms, with all their diversities and convergences.

Another experience, no less important, was our work on the small group level, during which we sought together to pinpoint ways in which to reach those to whom we direct our mission today. During the assembly that concluded the day, we took a significant step forward in our awareness of being the Pauline Family by acknowledging that communication is part of the mission of each of our Institutes. In complete agreement, we decided to be a more evangelizing presence on the Web, living in a digital context.

The Central Commission for the Centenary of Foundation of the Pauline Family gave us an update concerning preparations for this important event. Some of the initiatives programmed include a pilgrimage to the places of our foundation, a Congress on Blessed James Alberione, and an art contest for our young people in formation. All our circumscriptions are asked to take into account the directives that the Central Commission will provide in this regard.

In addition, each Congregation informed the assembly of what it did this past year and the projects in which it is currently involved. As well as this year's many formation and apostolic initiatives, we would like to entrust to the prayers of everyone the Interchapter Meeting of the Society of St. Paul (14-28 February), the General Chapter of the Daughters of St. Paul (15 August–15 September) and the 75th anniversary of foundation of the Pastorelle Sisters (7 October).

During this Year of Faith, let us feel the presence of the Lord among us, inviting us to live our prophetic vocation in today's world and courageously take on the challenges of the new evangelization by means of a communicative style that is transformed into proclamation.

With fraternal best wishes,

The Participants in the

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