



## Communication No. 1

The Pauline participants of the Interchapter Assembly arrived in Manila, capital of the Philippines, between February 11 and 13. They were warmly welcomed by the Makati Community. The Interchapter Assembly began on 14 February with the Holy Mass presided by His Eminence Luis Antonio Cardinal Tagle, Archbishop of Manila, in the Sanctuary of St. Paul, in the presence of the whole Pauline Family. The Cardinal, who immediately felt at home among us, addressed those present, including the Vice President of the Philippines, Jejomar Binay. He exhorted everyone to choose life, and never death, even if at times death presents itself with apparent attraction (First Reading: Deuteronomy 30:15-20).

The participants then transferred to the venue, the Saint Paul Renewal Center of the Sisters of St. Paul de Chartres, in Alfonso, Cavite, in the midst of refreshing nature. The first day of the Assembly opened officially with the welcome of the Superior General, Fr. Silvio Sassi. Work started in early afternoon with the presentation of the Methodologist, General Councilor Fr. Carlo Cibien. He explained that the Intercapitular Assembly would undergo three phases: verification, relaunching, and resolutions/orientations/proposals.

The verification phase began with the report of the Superior General. He touched on what the 9<sup>th</sup> General Chapter has entrusted to the General Government: what has been done so far and what needs to be accomplished. He pointed out the clear criterion that guided his analysis: “When spirituality and practices of piety, intellectual formation, communitarian life, religious vows, structures of government and administration are not pulled by the magnet of the apostolate, consecrated life in general, and Pauline life in particular, suffers fractures and loses its identity, its direction, and the “cart” moves ‘towards the precipice.’ ”

Concluding his refection, Fr. Sassi underlined two realities: living side by side and co-existence of diverse generations in our communities—with all implications of life together and different apostolic sensibilities towards the digital world—and the development of our four study centers of communication

(COMPIL in Mexico, PAFCOM in Brazil, SPSF in the Philippines, and SPICE in India).

The second day of the Interchapter Assembly was devoted to the reports of the Major Superiors of the 18 circumscriptions where the Society of St. Paul is present in the world. The reports cover apostolate, communitarian life, spirituality, formation, administration and service of authority, and relationship with other institutes of the Pauline Family. Lights and shadows, successes and difficulties, were brought to the open, that they might help the participants to understand the diverse Pauline reality. Some circumscriptions that played important roles in the past are getting old, while others are rich in vocations and are growing. This change in balance among the circumscriptions appears clearer and clearer.

The work is done in the style of dialogue: after each presentation, there is place for questions and clarifications, giving opportunities to know what are of common interest. The atmosphere is serene, the discussion tranquil.

We would like to ask our Pauline brothers to continue to accompany us with their prayers, for the best result of this moment of verification which is the main task of this Interchapter Assembly.

We would also like to thank all brothers and sisters in the Pauline Family who have sent messages of their closeness to us through their prayers.

For more information on the Interchapter, we invite you to visit our website [paulus.net](http://paulus.net).

*The Central Committee of the Interchapter Assembly.*