

WELCOME ADDRESS

OF THE SUPERIOR GENERAL FR. VALDIR JOSÉ DE CASTRO

AT THE MEETING OF THE MAJOR SUPERIORS

Rome, 22 June 2016

Welcome dear brothers! On behalf of the General Government I welcome you in this meeting of the Persons responsible of the Circumscriptions, among them, of the 18 present here, 13 were appointed after the celebration of the X General Chapter, held in Ariccia from 25 January to 14 February 2015. We welcome you in this house where our Founder, Blessed James Alberione, lived most of his life and has accompanied, with an all-embracing heart, the Paulines (and the Pauline Family) scattered throughout the world.

We want to live during these days an important time of communion between you and us of the General Government, where there will be moments of prayer, reflection, sharing, exchange of information, evaluation and programming. We consider it important to see together how we are putting into practice, in the different cultures where the Congregation is present, the indications given by the last Chapter which has as its theme: *«I do everything for the Gospel (1Cor 9:23). Paulines, evangelizers-communicators. In Christ new apostles for humanity»*.

The Gospel, Jesus himself, *«who came to serve and not to be served» (Mt 20:28)*, is the first reference for any initiative of the community, formation and apostolate, and also for us who have received from the Congregation, as a responsibility, the service of animation. In fact, to animate is the first task of the Superiors, the ministry that brings, among other things, to *«create interpersonal ties with all those in the community and, by word and example, to cultivate a gospel sense of brotherly fellowship» (Const. 165)*. This reminds us of the admonition of our Founder: *«Use authority in charity; never as a means to shore up our own self-love and allow it to triumph. No one makes himself master of souls: they are of God. One has just to guide them, help them realize the plan God has for them» (Haec Meditare II, 6 [1946], p. 67)*.

It is evident that to animate, with the love and patience that it requires, we need to feel motivated, well aware that if we trust only in our own forces it will be impossible to realize such ministry. For this reason, let us open our hearts and minds to the Spirit of the Lord so that he accompany us. Let us entrust to him our problems and concerns, but also our hopes and aspirations to carry on, with courage and audacity, with all the confreres of our Circumscriptions, the challenge of evangelizing with the different languages of communication, in the footsteps of the Apostle Paul.

We believe, with St. Paul, that *«hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us» (Rom 5,5)*. With this certainty we will live these days and celebrate, at the end of our

meeting, in Saint Paul's Basilica, the Jubilee of Mercy with the entire Pauline Family present in Rome. At the tomb of our Father St. Paul, we will renew our missionary commitment with the most rapid means to announce what is good.

May the Lord, rich in mercy, accompany us and help us to grow more and more in communication, which consists, first of all, in living the concrete attitudes that bring us closer as persons and that brings us into communion, searching together that kind of service that is more effective for the evangelization of the men of today. Have a fruitful meeting! Thanks!