



PAULINE YEAR 2008-2009

Benedict XVI has announced a special jubilee year, from 28 June 2008 to 29 June 2009, on the occasion of the bimillennium of the birth of Saint Paul, in his homily during the celebration of first vespers of the solemnity of saints Peter and Paul in the basilica of Saint Paul outside the walls, Thursday 28 June 2007.

The day after I have sent a letter to the Holy Father expressing the gratitude of the Congregation and of the entire Pauline Family for this significant initiative for the whole ecclesial community and much appreciated by all the Paulines.

In the context of the papal homily we find the reasons that have motivated Benedict XVI to proclaim a jubilee year; calling to mind the work of evangelization of Saint Paul, the Holy Father comments: "The success of his apostolate depends above all on his personal involvement in announcing the Gospel with total dedication to Christ; dedication that did not fear risks, difficulties and persecution". Making an application to the Christian community of today, the Pope affirms: "From it we can draw a lesson very important for every Christian. The action of the Church is credible and effective only in the measure in which those who are part of her are disposed to pay in person their fidelity to Christ in every situation. Where such availability is missing, the decisive argument of the truth on which the Church herself depends fails. Dear brothers and sisters, as in the beginning, even today Christ needs apostles ready to sacrifice themselves. He needs witnesses and martyrs like Saint Paul".

The goal to strive after through the Pauline jubilee year, in the intention of the Pope, is to study in depth the life and teaching of Saint Paul so as to identify a model of life of faith ready for everything for Christ: to be witnesses and martyrs like Saint Paul. Comparison with the strong figure of Saint Paul is indicated as a means to strengthen the identity of the Christian of today.

In order to live as Society of Saint Paul and as Pauline Family this providential ecclesial event, of help to us are some aims that blessed James Alberione proposes when from his own initiative he dedicates a year to Saint Paul from 25.01.1957 to 25.01.1958: express our gratitude to Saint Paul for his help at the start of our foundations, know more deeply his life and teaching, imitate better his virtues, pray to him, love the Apostle as model evangelizer, obtain from him apostolic wisdom for all the Paulines present in the nations of the five continents (cf *San Paolo*, January 1957).

Thanks to a generous creativity, initiatives common among the various Circumscriptions, with the other Institutions that make up the Pauline Family and in collaboration with the programming of the local Churches have already been subject of reflection and still are being planned at world level.

In order to contribute by means of our charism to the strengthening of the identity of the Christian of today through the life and teaching of Saint Paul, we Paulines must share with the ecclesial community the original interpretation that blessed James Alberione has elaborated in regard to Saint Paul.

The Pauline charism, starting from its appearance, is the spirituality of Saint Paul lived and proposed with the "written preaching" and afterwards with all the other forms of communication.



The conclusion of the meeting in Jerusalem, synthesized by Saint Paul, is the recognition of a single evangelization through two diverse categories: "...we were to announce the Gospel to the pagans; they, instead, to the circumcised" (Gal 2,9). Taking into account the due proportions, blessed Alberione, with the light of the Spirit and the approval of the Church, has placed "written preaching side by side with oral preaching". Said with a certain boldness, as Saint Paul has been sent to the pagans, the Paulines are sent to evangelize all those who make use of communication.

During this jubilee year we are invited to deepen for ourselves and to testify to others that the Pauline charism is not only original because of the means of communication it uses for evangelization, but also because the contents of the experience of faith and the pastoral method chosen are those of Saint Paul.

Through express indication of blessed Alberione, the Pauline charism is the unity of Saint Paul and of the whole communication; this certainty explains why the Paulines must be "Saint Paul living today": because if Saint Paul were living today, he would make use of media, multimedia and internet communication to evangelize.

Applying to us the *Letter to the Romans*, the Founder writes: "Saint Paul, moreover, interprets, explains, and adapts the principles of the Gospel to the men of his time, particularly the pagans. We, too, following his example, must always bear in mind the audience that we address, who are the readers, who are the spectators of cinema, in order to give them what to the utmost can do good". (*L'apostolo Paolo, ispiratore e modello*, ed. 2008, pp. 283-284).

Drawing from the spirit of Saint Paul and evangelizing through communication, the Pauline charism contributes to the strong identity of the Christian today through a mentality and a pastoral method that know how to propose the faith, taking into account the men of today.

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