



CENTENARY OF THE SOCIETY OF SAINT PAUL *GUIDELINES*

The IX General Chapter (25 April – 15 May 2010) through priority 5.3 has asked the Congregation to “Do its best for an adequate preparation, celebration and successive appreciation of the Centenary.” For the realization of the priority, the General Chapter has indicated the following operative lines:

- 5.3.1** The General Government is to indicate to the Governments of Circumscription a “guideline,” in view of the centenary of the Congregation, so that it may be celebrated in a homogeneous and harmonious manner.
- 5.3.2** The General Government is to promote the realization of an updated biographical volume on the Founder and on the Congregation and of a volume with abundant photographic documentation. It is also to evaluate the possibility of producing a film or documentary.

Operative line 5.3.2 requires a notable commitment and an adequate involvement of the entire Pauline Family, besides the Organisms of the Society of Saint that will be commissioned; operative line 5.3.1, on the other hand, requires rather a series of indications so that the celebration of the Centenary in the Circumscriptions may at the same time be unitary and creative.

In the meeting of 30 May – 1 June, the General Government has taken in attentive consideration the “guideline” project elaborated by the International Commission presided over by the General Procurator Fr. Alberto Fusi and assembled in Rome in the days 26-28 May. After some integrations made by the General Government, I now present to all of you some proposals that aim to contribute to a “homogeneous and harmonious” celebration of the Centenary in all of the Congregation.

Premises and indications common to the three years

- The General Government asks every Circumscription to be informed about the initiatives that are being undertaken in order to conserve their memory in the General Archives and to make common eventual suggestions or original contributions.

SUPERIORE GENERALE

- Every Circumscription is to point to Fr. Alberto Fusi (President of the *Commission for the triennium of preparation in the Society of Saint Paul for the Centenary of the Congregation*) a *resource person* with the task of maintaining contacts with the *Commission* itself.
- It is possible that in the course of the triennium of preparation for the celebration of the Centenary the General Government may suggest from time to time new proposals.
- The initiatives that are decided as a Congregation must bear in mind the program of the celebrations elaborated by the *Intercongregational Commission* presided over by the Vicar General Fr. Celso Godilano, contained in the *Allegato* (attachment) to the Letter of the Superior General and of the General Superiors of the Pauline Family, published in the Internet on 29 May 2011.
- Above all during the first year dedicated to the recovery of the “historical memory,” we intend to reach a description that is *unanimously shared* of the thought and work Fr. Alberione, of the geographical, historical, cultural and ecclesial context in which he has lived, such as to allow of it afterward a faithful, realistic and creative transmission.
- In order to fulfill operative line 3.3.2 of the IX General Chapter, in the course of the triennium it will be useful to reread and appreciate the contributions produced in the international study Seminars (about Saint Paul, the Charism and the Pauline mission, Formation, etc.) that have succeeded each other in the last decades.
- Celebrating means on one part knowing according to the truth, but it also means renewing in “creative fidelity” and therefore interpreting in light of “our time,” just as Fr. Alberione worked in light of “his time” and for the men of his time in which he has lived. We will have to ask ourselves, with fidelity and creativity, what are the aspects of his charismatic enlightenment that remain unchanged; at the same time, reflect on what are the applications and structures that today do not correspond anymore to that essential nucleus and need to be profoundly updated.
- The purpose of this preparatory work that will have to involve the entire Congregation will not be the production of “useless material,” made of paper or *online*, but *the elaboration and expression of a thought and of a will to renovate* that is our answer to the Alberionian advice: keep your hearts ready for the changes that God asks us to realize.
- One of the concrete and positive effects coming from the opportunity of preparing for the Centenary, can be the creation of a *Center of Spirituality* in every Circumscription. This can be attained by favoring the appreciation and contribution of those Paulines who in these years have attended the *Charism Course*.

- The celebrations are considered above all as “internal,” but according to the possibilities of the individual Circumscriptions, meaningful moments must not be wanting of openness either to the ecclesial community or to the lay world. They will be occasions of witness or debate that will allow us to dialog, to make ourselves known, to manifest ourselves to the outside world by means of conventions, new cultural events or prayer meetings that are open to all. The start of every year can be marked by a celebration that may involve not only the Paulines, but in the style of Paul, may be open to all.
- I recommend reading all the proposals provided for the triennium and to plan immediately every single year because there can be initiatives that require long times. For example: missionary planning, provided by operative line 1.1.1 of the IX General Chapter, requires on the part of the Brothers an “availability” for the opening of new foundations that cannot be improvised; equally, the study of new apostolic modalities, although recommended during the third year, require immediate study because they can be doable.
- In tracing the following lines, being indicated in the three years are the subjects and actions that from time to time are attributed to them (*General Government, Circumscriptional Government and SSP Commission for the Centenary*). In some cases the subjects still do not exist and will have to be established by the Governments at various levels: general, circumscriptional, local.
- Being anticipated here, without repeating them in the individual three years, are the contexts and the areas in which and by which will be produced and “will be lived” the initiatives of preparation for the Centenary of the Society of Saint Paul, always attentive to the different “receivers”:
 - In *Vocation Pastoral*,
 - Inside the formative activity (*Postulancy, Novitiate, Juniorate, Ongoing Formation*),
 - During preparation for the *Perpetual Profession*,
 - In the elaboration of the annual *Community Projects*,
 - In the animation of the *Pauline Institutes of Consecrated Secular Life* and of the *Association of Pauline Cooperators*,
 - In annual courses of *Spiritual Exercises* and monthly *Retreats*,
 - Taking advantage of daily *preaching*,
 - Inside our apostolic activity and productions,
 - Presenting by means of our instruments of information the organized events,
 - Appreciating the papal *Messages* for the *World Day of Social Communications*,
 - Participating and being included in the pastoral programming of the local Churches,
 - In the animation of the *laity* which collaborate with us in our apostolic activities.

1ST YEAR

From 20 August 2011

THE HISTORICAL RECALLING OF THE ALBERIONIAN "CREATIVE FIDELITY"

TEXT OF REFERENCE: *Abundantes divitiae gratiae suae*

In this first year the Congregation is asked for a **historical recognition** of her own origins, and above all of the spirit that has animated her, taking into due account the complex historical context within which everything has had beginning. The objective will be a shared historical map in which everybody may recognize themselves and from which, even in the transformation of historical cultural conditions, they may get inspiration.

The *General Government* will set up a historical commission composed of expert Paulines who, attentive to their interlocutors in every Circumscription, may start this research even availing themselves of already existing documentation.

Of use will be the compilation of a *Dictionary of the Paulines and of the Society of Saint Paul (Dictionary of the Pauline Family)* that organizes the material in a systematic way and one that can be easily consulted.

The same work can be realized on the level of the **Circumscriptions**, by creating a local Commission or tasking one or more confreres who may reconstruct the origins of the Pauline presence and its development, by gathering data, images and testimonies. In some cases it will simply be a matter of giving systemic nature to what eventually has already been done.

This work will be able to help the compilation of popular *files*, even *online* (edited by the Center of Pauline Spirituality) to be utilized in the area of formation regarding: Alberione and his time; the beginning of the Alberionian charismatic experience; the development of the Alberionian charismatic intuition; the first Paulines and their works; our "saints"; some "writings" of reference, etc.

As requested by operative line 3.3.1 of the IX General Chapter, the *Letter of the Superior General*, during the first year, will be dedicated to *Abundantes divitiae gratiae suae*.

The *Commission for the Centenary* will help in living and in praying during this first year by offering traces for Celebrations of the Word tied to the liturgical Year. The dominant character will be that of **praise** and of **thanksgiving** for the "Abundant riches of grace" (cf Eph 2,7) poured out on Fr. Alberione and through him to all of us: "Everything comes from God (1Cor 3,22-23): everything leads us to the *Magnificat*" (AD 4).

2ND YEAR

From 20 August 2012

THE RELAUNCHING OF THE PAULINE CHARISM

TEXT OF REFERENCE: *Ut perfectus sit homo Dei*

Fr. Alberione had hypothesized starting 1926 about “**a new, long and profound evangelization**” (UCBS n. 8 of 20 August), and he had made it after having studied the world in which he found himself to live. It is a happy coincidence that exactly from 7 to 28 October 2012 the Church celebrates the XIII Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, dedicated to the *New Evangelization for the transmission of the Christian faith*.

During this second year of preparation for the Centenary we are invited to recognize the profound historico-ecclesial stimuli that have involved our Congregation, a part of the Pauline Family, on the world and local level.

We will have to reflect on the contents of Vatican II, particularly the texts about Liturgy, about the Word of God, about social Communication, about the Church, and about religious Life starting from the *Chapter Documents* of the *Special General Chapter* of 1969-1971.

The *General Government* will offer stimuli and study material that will accompany the *Letter of the Superior General*, dedicated to the texts of the month of spiritual exercises of April 1960, gathered in the writing *Ut perfectus sit homo Dei*.

The individual *Circumscriptions* will reflect, in apposite *days of study*, on their actual socio-cultural situation and on the local reception of themes sensitive for us Paulines coming from the local Magisterium. It will be for them an occasion of verifying the journeys of the Circumscriptions traced by the Provincial Chapters and by the Regional Assemblies that have succeeded each other in the past years.

Dealing with a year that will ask the *Circumscriptions* above all an action verifying “creative fidelity” starting from the demise of the Founder in 1971, the *Commission for the Centenary* will offer traces for the celebration of **penitential liturgies** in the course of the liturgical year. As Fr. Alberione himself confesses, alongside the history of the Divine Mercies, there is also: “The humiliating history of non-correspondence to the excess of divine charity [that pushes us to] compose a new and sorrowful “Miserere” for our innumerable negligences, sins and offenses” (AD 1).

3RD YEAR

From 20 August 2013

THE APOSTLE PAUL PUSHES US TOWARD THE FUTURE

TEXT OF REFERENCE: *Notes in Pastoral Theology*

Woman associated with priestly zeal

The third year is marked by the decade of the *Beatification of Fr. James Alberione* and pushes the Paulines to strain forward with courage toward the future following the steps of him who Fr. Alberione has pointed out as the true Founder, the apostle **Saint Paul** (cf AD 2).

In order to relaunch the Pauline charism that blessed Alberione has made concrete in the **pastoral project** of “a new, long and profound evangelization,” we must re-think the totality of the unchangeable elements of the Pauline charism in light of the understanding that today we have **of the thought and evangelizing work of Saint Paul** and of the context of the complexity of **contemporary communication**.

The Pauline charism keeps itself “young” due to its **pastoral dimension** that assimilates from the constant reference to the missionary work of Saint Paul and from the example of blessed Alberione in his watchful openness to the “fastest and most effective means” of communication belonging to every historical era.

The *General Government*, also appreciating what has already been done in the various preceding international seminars, will involve the Paulines specialized in Sacred Scripture for the necessary deepening that will allow us to approach ever more the “heart of Paul” and to assume its riches of “sanctity and apostolate” needed to “rekindle” permanently the Pauline charism.

The *Letter of the Superior General* will have as meaningful subjects the *Appunti di teologia pastorale* (Notes in pastoral theology) and the *La donna associata allo zelo sacerdotale* (Woman associated with priestly zeal) in order to relaunch the characteristic “**pastoral**” of the Pauline charism that finds its reason for being in evangelization through communication and through the convergence of the apostolates of the other Institutions of the Pauline Family.

The General Government will mobilize the Pauline International Organizations (CTIA, SIF), the Faculties of Communication and the apostolic activities to offer to the various generations of Paulines, to the Pauline Institutes of Consecrated Secular Life, to the members of the Association of Pauline Cooperators and to the lay collaborators an adequate knowledge of contemporary communication.

The *Governments of the Circumscriptions*, appreciating the study on Saint Paul and about contemporary communication, will favor a re-thinking of their identity and mission in the socio-cultural areas in which they find themselves: they will listen to and allow themselves to be provoked by the requests coming from the

local Churches, opening themselves also to the possibility of new foundations and new apostolic modalities, in the spirit of the IX General Chapter (1.1.1 e 1.1.2).

The *Commission for the Centenary* will prepare traces of celebrations for prayer, for listening to the Word of God and for invocation and manifestation of full availability to the action of the **Holy Spirit**.

Since on 20 August 2014 is the celebration of the Centenary of the birth of the Pauline charism in its mother cell, which is the Society of Saint Paul, and in its successive developments made up of the Institutes that compose today the Pauline Family, we should perhaps gather a historical opportunity. A **General Assembly of all the Institutions of the Pauline Family** could be called to come to “*A Pauline Project of new evangelization,*” elaborated bearing in mind what according to blessed Alberione, is **common to all and what is specific, but convergent**.

Rome, 4 June 2011



Don Silvio Sassi

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