

Where do I find the strength to continue my commitment to the vocation I have received?

How do I cultivate my great desires to become a saint and to fulfill my part in the mission of saving the world, in union with the mission of the Jesus?

IV. PRAYER

I bless you, Jesus for giving Saint Paul a heart so full of love to God and to the Church, and for having saved so many souls through his zeal.

And you, O my friend, obtain for me a lively desire to exercise the apostolate of social communication of prayer, of example, of works and of the word, so that I may merit the prize promised to the good apostles.

Saint Paul the Apostle: pray for us.

Prayer for the General Chapter

O divine Spirit,
who, sent by the Father in the name of Jesus,
infallibly assist and guide the Church,
pour over our Chapter the fullness of your gifts.
O gentle Master and Comforter,
enlighten our minds,
let abundant fruit ripen from this Chapter;
let our commitment
of sanctification and apostolate take new vigour;
spread ever further the light
and the power of the Gospel among men.
O sweet Guest of souls,
confirm our minds in the truth,
dispose the hearts of all to obedience,
so that the deliberations of the Chapter
find generous assent and full compliance.
Renew in our Family the wonders of a new Pentecost.
Grant that, united in unanimous and more intense prayer,
around Mary, Mother of Jesus, and the Apostles,
spread the kingdom of the Divine Master,
in the spirit of the Apostle Paul. Amen.



ANIMATION PAPER 2 (NOVEMBER)

***...to prophetically announce the joy of the Gospel
in the culture of communication.***

THE PAULINE IN MISSION: INTEGRAL FORMATION FOR MISSION

I. PRAYER

To the Holy Spirit

O holy divine Spirit eternal love of the Father and the Son
I adore you, I thank you, I love you,
I ask your forgiveness for all the times
I have wronged you in me and in my neighbor.
Descend with many graces
in the sacred ordinations of bishops and priests,
in the consecrations of religious men and women,
in the confirmation of all the faithful:
be light, holiness, zeal.
To you, Spirit of Truth
I consecrate my mind, my imagination, my memory: enlighten me.
May I know Jesus Christ the Master and understand his Gospel
and the teaching of the Church.
Increase in me the gift of wisdom,
of knowledge, of intellect, of counsel.
To you, Sanctifying Spirit I consecrate my will:
Guide me in your will,
sustain me in the keeping of the commandments,
in the fulfillment of my duties.
Grant me the gift of fortitude
and the holy fear of God.
To you, the life-giving Spirit, I consecrate my heart:
Preserve and increase in me the divine life.
Grant me the gift of piety. Amen.

II. READING THE BIBLICAL TEXT

From St. Paul's Second Letter to Timothy

(2 Tim. 1:6-9,12-14; 2:1-3,8-17; 4:1-2,5)

⁶ For this reason I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands; ⁷ for God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline. ⁸ Do not be ashamed, then, of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel, relying on the power of God, ⁹ who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace.

¹² and for this reason I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know the one in whom I have put my trust, and I am sure that he is able to guard until that day what I have entrusted to him. ¹³ Hold to the standard of sound teaching that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. ¹⁴ Guard the good treasure entrusted to you, with the help of the Holy Spirit living in us.

² You then, my child, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus; ² and what you have heard from me through many witnesses entrust to faithful people who will be able to teach others as well. ³ Share in suffering like a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

⁸ Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, a descendant of David—that is my gospel, ⁹ for which I suffer hardship, even to the point of being chained like a criminal. But the word of God is not chained. ¹⁰ Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, so that they may also obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory. ¹¹ The saying is sure:

If we have died with him, we will also live with him;

¹² if we endure, we will also reign with him;

if we deny him, he will also deny us;

¹³ if we are faithless, he remains faithful—

for he cannot deny himself.

¹⁴ Remind them of this, and warn them before God that they are to avoid wrangling over words, which does no good but only ruins those who are listening. ¹⁵ Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved by him, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly explaining the word of truth. ¹⁶ Avoid profane chatter, for it will lead people into more and more impiety, ¹⁷ and their talk will spread like gangrene.

your ministry" (4:5). Efforts, sufferings, and the need to make sacrifices are inscribed in the call and mission of an apostle. In the apostolic life one should not expect only easy tasks and favorable circumstances. The mystery of Christ's Passover, present in the life and mission of the Apostle, is the source of their strength and fruitfulness, as witnessed by St. Paul (cf. 1:12). It is also an opportunity to bear credible witness to God and his saving love (cf. Lk 21:12-13). The willingness to sacrifice also shows the value we place on the Gospel and the apostolic mission.

"For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of strength, charity and prudence" (1:7). We are not abandoned by the one who chose us. In fulfilling the mission entrusted to us by God, we can count on his support and grace. Self-sufficiency and self-referentiality, like fear or the search for comfort, are temptations that close us off and narrow the field of apostolic activity. We must constantly cultivate a relationship with Jesus, because from him we have received the apostolic mandate (cf. 1:9) with all the gifts necessary for its implementation.

Comparison with the Word of God

In light of this word, read the excerpts from the *Instrumentum laboris*: INTERPRETING in the Light of Faith, 13. Dichotomy between formation and mission (p. 30-32); 14. Loss of passion for mission... (p. 33-35).

The integral life of the Pauline vocation is an important characteristic of our charism. This applies both to each Pauline in his individual journey and to the entire reality of the Congregation. Only the integration of all the elements of Pauline life can bring the hoped-for fruits. As in a single organism (cf. Rom 12:4-5), all the parts must coexist and collaborate: individuals with their individual characteristics, entire communities, formation, belonging to the St. Paul Family, apostolate, economy....

Any division has a devastating effect on the entire organism, which is weakened and unable to fully carry out the tasks entrusted to it. The lack of unity and consensus increases the risk of losing everything (cf. Mt 12:25). The effort to integrate all the elements is an expression of love and responsibility for the charism.

Personal Resonances

What circumstances weaken my zeal in Pauline spiritual, communal and apostolic life? How can I prevent their bad influence?

constant point of reference for us in our life and mission. We are not the creators of grace, but its ministers. God alone is the giver of saving grace.

Comparison with the Word of God

In light of this word, read the passage from the *Instrumentum laboris*: RECOGNIZING OUR SITUATION, 11. At the Root of Our Charism (p. 27-28).

Creative fidelity to the charism we have received sometimes seems to us to be an enigma that is difficult to solve. We accept the need to be creatively faithful, but it is difficult for us to translate this idea into life practice. We notice our flaws and are able to describe the ideal we desire. However, we often find ourselves powerless when faced with the question: how to do this? how to bring about this transformation?

The charism, which is a gift of the Holy Spirit, is always the same, but also always new, like wine that requires new wineskins (cf. Mt 9:17). The changes we most need must take place within us, making us a place where the old meets the new and where - as in the passage in which the Divine Master speaks of the disciples of the kingdom of heaven - the master of the house *"takes out of his treasure new things and old things"* (Mt 13:52).

Personal Resonances

How do I live my love for the vocation I have received? How zealous am I in my Pauline life?

What am I missing to make me feel fulfilled in my Pauline vocation?

How does my relationship with Jesus Master Way, Truth and Life affect my life today?

To what extent do the Divine Master's words about the scribe who became a disciple of the kingdom of heaven (Mt. 13:52) apply to me?

3. A Passion for Mission

"Proclaim the Word" (4:2), *"do your work as a proclaimer of the gospel, fulfill your ministry"* (4:5). The exhortation addressed to Timothy reminds him of the essence of his mission: it is to serve the Word, to proclaim the Gospel, to bear witness to Jesus Christ. That is why he has been chosen as an apostle and must remain faithful to this mission.

"By the power of God, suffer with me for the sake of the Gospel" (1:8). *"As a good soldier of Jesus Christ, suffer with me"* (2:3). *"You, however, watch carefully, endure sufferings, do your work as a proclaimer of the gospel, fulfill*

4 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you: *2* proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favorable or unfavorable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching. *5* As for you, always be sober, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully.

III. FOOD FOR THOUGHT

At the end of his life, Paul wrote a letter to his beloved disciple Timothy. The Apostle had behind him a life in which his intense missionary activity was combined with a profound spiritual relationship with Christ. These two aspects of the Apostle's life were neither separate nor in conflict with one another. On the contrary, they motivated and complemented each other; one could not exist without the other. Now Paul is urging Timothy to maintain that harmony in his apostolic life.

The second letter to Timothy is a kind of testament of St. Paul, his last known work. In it he communicated many valuable formative directions, referring to his own apostolic experience. Although Timothy, in his apostolic life, learned everything from St. Paul, he was nevertheless a person still in formation. For this reason Paul addressed words of encouragement, exhortation and reminder to the already mature Timothy.

1. Integral formation for mission

"Strive to present yourself to God as a worthy person, a worker who need not be ashamed and who rightly dispenses the word of truth" (2:15). We are responsible for our own formation before God who has called us. It is also relevant to our mission of proclaiming the "word of truth," for we must not lie. Moreover, adequate preparation for apostolic tasks translates into the quality of our service and the courage with which we face new challenges.

"Take as your model the sound teachings which you have heard from me by faith and love, which are in Christ Jesus" (1:13). *"Call these things to mind"* (2:14). Paul encourages Timothy to take advantage of the teachings he has given him. The disciple continues the master's mission. This also means updating "by faith and love" the deposit received, which enables creative fidelity to the charism. The fidelity of the mission received and its creative continuation are ever-present challenges for the next generations of apostles.

“...Let vain discussions be avoided, which profit nothing except the ruin of those who hear them” (2:14). “Avoid empty and perverse talk, for it drives those who engage in it more and more into ungodliness; for the word of such will spread like gangrene” (2:16-17). Paul exhorts Timothy not to imitate the false apostles who, instead of the divinely revealed teaching, preach their own opinions. The apostle must guard the deposit of faith and proclaim it faithfully, without hypocrisy. Entering into discussion with the propagators of erroneous ideas, Paul considers it unnecessary and even harmful to the achievement of the purpose of the apostolic ministry. It is important that the word of God should not become bound (cf. 2:9) or distorted. Hence the need to constantly study, deepen and integrate, in one’s life and apostolate, the teachings of the Bible and the Church.

“My son” (2:1). Paul and Timothy had a special bond, which was more than a student-teacher, formand-former relationship. Young Timothy was like a son to Paul (cf. 1 Timothy 1:18; 2 Timothy 1:2). For us, this special relationship is a model for building beautiful relationships in formation, which is not only the transmission of technical information, but is an accompaniment in the growth toward integral maturity of the brothers and sisters entrusted to us.

“The things you have heard from me before many witnesses, pass them on to people you trust, who in turn will be able to teach others” (2:2). Not everyone has the qualities necessary to carry out a specific mission. God bestows his gifts with great creativity, and their diversity is related to the different tasks and services for God’s people (cf. 1 Cor 12:28; Eph 4:11). Paul advises Timothy to be careful in delegating apostolic tasks to different people. Discernment remains the constant challenge of formation so that the Gospel is proclaimed by worthy and well-prepared apostles.

Comparison with the Word of God

In light of this word, read the passage from the *Instrumentum laboris*: RECOGNIZE our situation, 10. Formation and Mission (p. 26-27) and INTERPRET in the light of faith, 12. Deficiency in Integral Formation... (p. 29-30).

Formation is an ongoing commitment. It consists of successive stages with different characteristics that are shaped by the circumstances of time and place. St. Paul is our father and model of the apostolate, so the instructions he lovingly gives to Timothy can also stimulate our own journey of ongoing formation.

Fraternal relationships are a necessary means of achieving human and religious maturity, without which it is impossible to create a culture of communication and to proclaim Christ in it. Throughout his life, every Pauline participates in the formation process both as a formator and as a person who has been formed. To be involved in this process shows responsibility to ourselves and to our brothers and sisters.

Personal Resonances

Do I want to continue to grow?

How does my commitment to formation manifest itself?

Which of the areas of my Pauline life described in the image of the Pauline chariot urgently requires my attention and my action: spirituality, study, apostolic activity, poverty?

How does fraternal life in my community influence my development?

How does the Pauline mission motivate me to continue my spiritual and apostolic formation?

2. At the Root of our Charism

“I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is in you” (1:6), “Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the precious good that has been entrusted to you” (1:14). The exhortations to Timothy confirm that God’s gifts can grow weaker and weaker in us if they are not constantly cultivated and properly used. In the life of every apostle, it is necessary to care for the development and strengthening of one’s vocation (cf. 2 Pet 1:10). This is also true of the Pauline charism, which remains unchanged in its essence, but the way in which it is implemented needs to be updated.

God *“has called us with a holy vocation, not according to our works but according to his plan and grace” (1:9).* Our vocation is God’s work and must be carried out according to his plan. Recognizing this gift implies taking responsibility for it and engaging in persevering cooperation. This is also the purpose of our ongoing formation.

“Therefore, do not be ashamed to bear witness to our Lord” (1:8), “draw strength from the grace that is in Christ Jesus” (2:1), “remember Jesus Christ...” (2,8). In the life of an apostle, the relationship with Christ is fundamental. It builds the identity of the disciple, it is a source of grace and it makes our testimonies credible and fruitful. The person of the Divine Master must be a