

and more in knowledge, love and imitation of Jesus Christ the Divine Master. Thus, having first been faithful disciples of Jesus Christ we shall become skilled in teaching others.

- What fruits has my following of Christ recently brought? What challenges do I still face?
- How do I evaluate these two dimensions of my Pauline life: being a disciple of Christ and being a teacher of people?

IV. FINAL PRAYER

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.



“CALLED”

THE PAULINE CONSECRATED LIFE

FEBRUARY

I. INITIAL PRAYER

Act of resolve

Jesus, you are the Way that I must follow;

the perfect model I must imitate;

In presenting myself for judgment I want to be found like you.

O divine model of humility and obedience,

make me like you.

O perfect example of mortification and purity,

make me like you.

O poor and patient Jesus

make me like you.

O model of charity and ardent zeal,

make me like you.

O Jesus Master, Way, Truth and Life, have mercy on us.

II. READING OF THE BIBLICAL TEXT

From the Gospel according to Matthew (17:1-9)

Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. Then Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here; if you wish, I will make three dwellings here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud a voice said, “This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!” When the disciples heard this, they fell to the ground and were overcome by fear. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, “Get up and do not be afraid.” And when they looked up, they saw no

one except Jesus himself alone. As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus ordered them, "Tell no one about the vision until after the Son of Man has been raised from the dead."

III. DEEPENING

From the apostolic exhortation *Vita Consecrata*

14. The evangelical basis of consecrated life is to be sought in the special relationship which Jesus, in his earthly life, established with some of his disciples. He called them not only to welcome the Kingdom of God into their own lives, but also to put their lives at its service, leaving everything behind and closely imitating his own *way of life*. [...]

...the Transfiguration is not only the revelation of Christ's glory but also a preparation for facing Christ's Cross. It involves both "going up the mountain" and "coming down the mountain". The disciples who have enjoyed this intimacy with the Master, surrounded for a moment by the splendour of the Trinitarian life and of the communion of saints, and as it were caught up in the horizon of eternity, are immediately brought back to daily reality, where they see "Jesus only", in the lowliness of his human nature, and are invited to return to the valley, to share with him the toil of God's plan and to set off courageously on the way of the Cross.

15. [...] This light shines on all the Church's children. *All are equally called to follow Christ*, to discover in him the ultimate meaning of their lives, until they are able to say with the Apostle: "For to me to live is Christ" (*Phil 1:21*). But those who are called to the consecrated life have *a special experience of the light which shines forth from the Incarnate Word*. For the profession of the evangelical counsels makes them *a kind of sign and prophetic statement* for the community of the brethren and for the world; consequently, they can echo in a particular way the ecstatic words spoken by Peter: "Lord, it is well that we are here" (*Mt 17:4*). These words bespeak the Christocentric orientation of the whole Christian life. But they also eloquently express the *radical* nature of the vocation to the consecrated life: how good it is for us to be with you, to devote ourselves to you, to make you the one focus of our lives! [...]

16. [...] By professing the evangelical counsels, consecrated persons not only make Christ the whole meaning of their lives but strive to reproduce in

themselves, as far as possible, "that form of life which he, as the Son of God, accepted in entering this world". By embracing *chastity*, they make their own the pure love of Christ and proclaim to the world that he is the Only-Begotten Son who is one with the Father (cf. *Jn 10:30, 14:11*). By imitating Christ's *poverty*, they profess that he is the Son who receives everything from the Father, and gives everything back to the Father in love (cf. *Jn 17:7, 10*). By accepting, through the sacrifice of their own freedom, the mystery of Christ's filial *obedience*, they profess that he is infinitely beloved and loving, as the One who delights only in the will of the Father (cf. *Jn 4:34*), to whom he is perfectly united and on whom he depends for everything.

IV. EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE ACCORDING TO THE SSP CONSTITUTIONS

Const. 1. With a free response to the appeal of the Holy Spirit, we have decided to follow Jesus Christ and to consecrate ourselves totally to him. In order to be a sign and witness of his love, we have come together as his own in a fraternal communion of life in the Religious Congregation of the Society of St Paul.

- How do I live the dimension of totality in my following of Christ?
- What does the realization of the "fraternal life in community" to which I have committed myself invite me to?
- What contribution do I make to the realization of the religious dimension of the Society of Saint Paul?

Const. 2. The Society of St Paul is a religious clerical Congregation of apostolic life. It sets as its goal for its members the perfection of charity — to be attained through the spirit and practice of the vows of chastity, poverty and obedience and fidelity to the Pope, in common life, in accordance with the norms of the present Constitutions — and the evangelization of humankind through the apostolate by the means of social communication.

- How does the process of perfecting love, which is one of the fundamental objectives of the Congregation, progress in me?
- How do I use the means of sanctification, which are my religious vows?

Const. 90. The principle that oversees the formation of the Pauline is the one that was formulated by St Paul: "that Christ may be formed in us". Formation will therefore be arranged in such a way that we will advance more