



PRIMO INCONTRO INTERNAZIONALE  
DELEGATI ISTITUTI PAOLINI  
DI VITA SECOLARE CONSACRATA

Ariccia, 12-18 settembre 2009

**FINAL REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE DELEGATES  
OF PAULINE INSTITUTES OF SECULAR CONSECRATED LIFE**

The first international meeting of the Pauline delegates of the Institutes of secular consecrated life took place at Ariccia from 12 to 18 September 2009. Among the 25 participants, there were 18 delegates and one spiritual animator, belonging to three continents (Asia, Europe and America). The work was organised by Fr Juan Manuel Galaviz, assisted by Brs. Takahito Tokuda and Giuseppe Galli. The Superior General, Fr. Silvio Sassi has presided over the opening section of the international meeting and he participated in all its sections. Two sisters of annunciation generously offered their service as secretaries.

In giving the welcome address to the participants, the Superior General has defined the historical meeting as a congregational event in the Spirit of the VIIIth General Chapter, which is perceived as an adequate occasion to go ahead in the right knowledge of the Pauline Institutes, and thus to move from knowledge to praxis oriented towards a re-launching of these Institutes.

In their turn, the participants have expressed, from the very beginning of the inaugural assembly (12 September), their expectations:

- To know each other and to exchange experiences;
- To have general vision of the situation of these institutes in the world;
- Promote reciprocal collaboration among the delegates and the institutes;
- Clarify ideas and correct concepts which are not exact;
- Reflect together on how to face common difficulties and how to arrive at common objectives, specially in view of the next General Chapter;
- Give a “push” to the Institutes and promote their apostolate, with particular attention in the field of communication;
- Promote in the Institutes a sense of belonging to the Pauline Family, with its particular characteristics of being called to be “St Paul living today”;
- Point towards a common formation plan for all or to each of the four institutes.

### **Talks during the meeting**

There were two talks for studies and reflections of each day (one in the morning and one in the afternoon) which was followed by work in groups and the respective reflections and proposals to be presented in the assembly.

1. “The thought of the founder about the Pauline Institutes: integral part of the Pauline family and aggregated to the Society of St Paul”. With this report presented on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2009, the Superior General, Fr Silvio Sassi, has offered to the participants – in a documented and illuminative panorama—the historical evolution of this project of *unity in diversity* which realises itself in the Pauline Family of which the Aggregated Institutes are integral parts. Only in this context, can the institutes which is approved by the Holy See can be understood as part of the SSP.

2. “The laity in the church and in the Pauline Family” (14 September): Fr Angelo De Simone, after a biblical-anthropological introduction in order to underline the goodness of God,

presents about the catholic laity in general and then that of “laity” in the teaching of Fr James Alberione and in the Pauline Family.

3. “The role of consecrated women in the world” (14 September). The three parts in which unfolded this report, by Fr Vito Spagnolo, focuses attention on the role of women in the teaching of the Church, in the thought of Fr James Alberione as consecrated in the world.

4. “The Pauline Institutes of secular consecrated life: their place in the church and in the world: CDC and statutes” (15 September). Fr Juan Manuel Galaviz has illustrated, with the Code of canon law, the meaning of “aggregated” which has four Pauline Institutes of secular consecrated life, approved by the church as part of the SSP. He has, besides, pointed out that not only the institutes but their members are also consecrated. The related statutes, approved by the Holy See, are explicit in this regard.

5. “The ‘plus’ that belonging to the Institute of Jesus the Priest offers to the members of the diocesan clergy (16 september). Fr Domenico Cascasi, delegate of the IGS for Italy, after having given a synthetic historical picture about the origin of the “secular institutes”, passed on to focus on the specific value of IGS, presenting the testimony of a member of this Institute: The servant of God Fr Bernardo Antonini, who, thanks to this particular vocation of belonging to this institute, could go ahead as a model, in his vocation as a diocesan priest; rather, his priestly ministry could be enlarged according to the heart of Paul and of Alberione.

6. “The Pauline Institutes in the Pauline family. Their participation to a unique mission with convergent ends (17 september). Fr Jose Pottayil, Vicar General of the SSP, has developed this theme in two parts. In the first place, has emphasised that the Pauline Institutes are willed and founded by Fr Alberione as integral part, and these institutions together forms a social body which is called Pauline Family: ten institutions united as a unique body with organic unity. In the second place, he has underlined how these institutes that form the Pauline Family are called to contribute in the unique mission, which is carried out with “converging ends”.

7. “The ISF: the consecrated Pauline couples, particular gift of the Spirit to the Church and to the society” (17 September). Fr. Innocenzo Dante, delegate of the ISF for Italy, has presented a synthetic picture of the vocation to “consecrated Pauline couples”, beginning with the official teaching of the church and then underlining special attention which Blessed James Alberione has always had for the family. The institute incarnates in its longing to sanctify the family with consecrated couples: the objective of enriching the church and the society.

Sunday 13 September, there two interventions of technical character:

“Statistics of 1 September 2009 and presentation/instruction about the data of the Institutes. Presenting the newness of the data of the Institutes, Br. Lorenzo Vezzani has pointed the growth of quality that with such initiative has actualized: now we shall make available a data comprehensive, the data of each member, with the possibility of carrying out a suitable statistics, graphics, percentage, etc.

The second intervention was that of Fr. Norman Pena who has oriented the delegates regarding the use of the “*opera omnia* of the Founder and the documents of the Pauline Institutes in the site of the congregation”.

### **Round Table**

Tuesday 15 was dedicated to the listening of the testimonies of the members of the first hour. The four Institutes are represented by: Odo Nicoletti, ISGA; Macella Mazzeo, IMSA; Fr Furio Fabbri, IGS; and the couples Angela and Learco Monina, ISF. The questions addressed to the members of the Institutes by the delegates aroused great interest.

### **Results of the group works**

Here are the questions on which the discussions were held in group, and the synthesis of the responses received.

## **I. General situations of the Institutes**

*1. Do you consider that in your circumscription, from the part of the SSP in particular and of the FP in general, there is proper understanding of the Pauline Institutes of secular and consecrated life? Give expression to the your responses with positive and negative aspects.*

From the part of the SSP and of the FP in general, their understanding of the Pauline Family of VSC is insufficient. In certain circumscriptions there is more theoretical knowledge than practical. It is necessary to have Pauline priests of the SSP who can dedicate their complete time to the assistance of the Institutes; besides, it is necessary to guarantee knowledge and esteem of the institutes during the formation of young Paulines.

*2. In what measure, you as delegate and the members of the institutes consider yourselves committed in the proposal to live and help live the true ideal of these institutes. Indicate, favourable and opposite factors to such ideal.*

The ideal is expressed in the first articles of the statutes; achieving this ideal of the secular Pauline institutes requires profound convictions, knowledge of the teaching of the founder, sense of belonging, fidelity and enthusiasm. The commitment must be common to the delegates and to the members. The contrary factors are: doubt the ideal, murmuring, the spirit of giving up, pessimism, etc. Lack of preparation is also an obstacle; and in some cases the delegates have other commitments; other general difficulty is that of certain misunderstanding from the part of the local church regarding our institutes.

Regarding the actions of the delegates, in general, they operate in different levels: monthly recollections, suitable catechesis, correspondence, periodical meetings, retreats, etc. It is considered important to promote systematically a sense of belonging in the members which expresses itself in the form of economic solidarity for the good of the same institute.

## **II. Vocation Promotion of the Institutes**

*1. With what means, with what method and with what results are being carried out the vocation promotion of the Pauline Institutes of VSC in your circumscription?*

*Means:* Leaflets, our magazines, internet sites, radio, circulars, addressing groups...

*Methods:* visiting places: parishes, groups of youngsters, occasional collaborations of the Pauline congregations. Experiences of reflections and of prayer.

*Results:* The leaflets rarely reach its objective. More efficient is the insertions in our magazines. The best method is to meet person to person

*2. Do you consider that the members of the Pauline Institutes of VSC themselves offer a convincing witness? Yes? No? Because?*

Generally, they offer a credible witness, often taking part in the activities of the ecclesial community. Often, this witness does not produce the desired effect because of the “reservation” to belong to an institute of secular and consecrated life.

*3. Have you assigned to the members of the institute the role of a vocation promoter, and accompany them in the carrying out of their work? How?*

Even if the Statutes do not foresee the figure of vocation promoters, to this end, the members collaborate with a sense of personal responsibility. In certain circumscriptions, the delegates explicitly entrust to the members of the institute this work.

## **III. Animation of the institutes**

*1. How is inculcated in the members of the Institutes the sense belonging to the FP and the genuine Pauline Spirituality?*

In almost all the circumscriptions, the sense of belonging to the FP is inculcated by means of apostolic initiatives, Pauline days, anniversary, etc. always with reference to the thought of the Founder.

Pauline Spirituality is transmitted through a formative process proposed in the statutes, which comprises of monthly recollections, retreats, study meetings, etc. with particular attention to the writings of Fr. Alberione.

*2. What resources have the members of the Pauline Institutes of VSC in order to be rooted in the thought of the founder regarding their institutes and with the teaching of the church about consecrated laity and its mission in the world today?*

The thought of the Founder regarding the institutes are promoted through the study of his writings (for example UPS, the collection of his writings CISP, Meditations for the consecrated seculars); in addition, there are books and articles to deepen oneself in the same. There is lack of translation to local languages.

The knowledge of the teaching of the church about the consecrated laity and its mission in general is left to personal initiative (participation to moments of study, reading of documents). However, it is necessary to promote this formation in a more organised manner.

*3. What would be the suggestions so that the experience of the consecrated seculars of the members of the institutes could be useful for the whole of Pauline Family?*

*Proposals:*

The Pauline spirituality lived by the seculars helps to understand better the reality and the richness of this spirituality. It is necessary, therefore, that it be understood and assimilated well by them.

It is necessary to communicate the testimony of secular Pauline inviting them to our communities and assuming common initiatives of apostolate and vocation promotion.

It is necessary in the whole of FP that there be an increment in the knowledge of the institutes of VSC and be utilised their expertise and their competence in various fields. The laity have many human and Christian values to teach us religious.

#### **IV. Formative stages of the Institutes**

*1. What methodology and formative steps do you use in each stage: postulancy, novitiate, period of temporal profession, preparation for the perpetual profession, ongoing formation? What are the results?*

The methodology varies according to the experiences and the reality in each circumscription, but in general there are these various stages. Where there is a better organisation, the methodology comprises more definitive objectives, more systematic information and catechesis, more immediate preparation for the perpetual profession and more attention to the ongoing formation.

*Helps:* Statues, catechesis in the periodical meeting, bulletins, documents of the church and reflections of the FP (Ex. seminars), Bible and the writings of the founder, letters of the Superior General, communications of the delegates....

*Results:* Good in certain circumscriptions, limited in other; on the whole, a better defined and accompanied movement is necessary.

*2. Do you count on a written Formative Plan? How many and who are the persons who contributed to its editing?*

In the major part of the circumscriptions there isn't a true and its own written formative plan. The delegates who make it available have edited: some of them by themselves, others in collaboration with superior of the circumscription and of a few members of the institute and also with the help of an expert in the field. However, it is necessary to have a general formative plan.

3. Which are, according to you, the most important challenges to which we must respond today for an adequate formation of the members of the Pauline Institutes of VSC?

*Challenges for an adequate formation of the members:*

- Promote in the members a solid preparation in all the levels: theological, sociological, professional, etc. Care be given to a continual renewal on faith, on social activities, on Bible, on witnesses of the members of the Institute and of the whole of Pauline Family.
- Insist upon the sense of belonging to the Pauline Family and to its charismatic project.
- The General Delegate and the delegates of different circumscriptions should have the time to fulfil the service entrusted to them.
- The members of the Institutes be greatly involved in the vocations promotion for themselves as for the Pauline Family.
- The delegates should take care of the formation of the members of the Institutes in the understanding of secularity and of the Pauline colour of their mission in the world.
- It is necessary that the documents offered in three languages in the site of the congregation be translated into other languages.

## **V. Apostolic Orientation in the Institutes**

1. List the more significant apostolic activities of the members of the Institute or institutes entrusted to you. According to you, what way such apostolic activities contribute to the unity of mission of the FP?

Besides taking into consideration the value of witness, of consecration, of prayer, of suffering, of offering of one's work, the activities and initiatives more relevant are:

*Activities in association with the parish:* catechesis, liturgy, parish groups and bulletins, vocation promotion...

*Social activities:* assistance to the sick and the old, voluntaries, free medical service, Pauline cultural centres...

*Activities connected to communications:* diffusion of periodicals, good press centre, exhibition of books, bible day, radio, book centres....

With these activities, one is sure of making a contribution towards the unique mission of the FP.

2. What activities are carried out by the members of the institute of institutes entrusted to you specifically in the field of communication? Do you think that their contribution could be greater this area? Do you have any suggestion to promote greater contribution in the field of communication?

Regarding the apostolic activities in the field of communication, these are the experience to be included: managing of a radio, journalism in the local TV, creation of internet site, collaboration in the diocesan office of CS; in certain circumscriptions, there is a group formed, with relative financial viability, in view of apostolic activities in the field of communication. The delegates feel that this apostolic contribution of the Institutes in the field of communication could be better. The difficulties presented are that of lack of time and of preparation, and the high level of average age of the members who could find time for this special apostolate.

*Suggestions:* First of all, the delegates be more sensitive, convinced, prepared in the field of communication so that they can motivate and organize the members of the institute. Besides, it is necessary to deepen oneself in the teaching of the founder and of the Magisterium about apostolate of communications; call to particular attention how much the statutes themselves speak about this aspect; organise and animate days of communication; insert the theme of communication during the basic and ongoing formation of the members.

## **Certain conclusions in view of the IX General Chapter of the SSP**

From the work carried out during the meeting, we can derive certain important conclusions in view of the IX General Chapter of the SSP and of the immediate future of the work of these Institutes.

- A. On 13<sup>th</sup> September 2009, according to the latest data on the register of the Pauline institutes of VSC, such groups put together form a total of 3687 persons. The average age is above—at least in the first three institutes—60 years. It is necessary: a courageous plan of vocation promotion of the institutes in each circumscription and orientation at the general level.
- B. It is necessary that the choice and the formation of delegates of the institutes be always focused and assisted. In the formative process of the youngsters, it is necessary to inculcate the knowledge and esteem of the Pauline institutes of VSC.
- C. The practical involvement of the same members of the institutes in diverse fields is a movement of growth and an indispensable condition to obtain energy. It is welcomed that, according to the judgement of Fr Silvio Sassi, Superior General of the SSP and of the Pauline Institutes of VSC – in the IX General Chapter of the congregation, a few secular consecrated of the FP could participate as “hearers” or “invitees”.
- D. The Pauline institutes of VSC have need of common directives for the various states of their formation.
- E. Being the Pauline Institutes of VSC part of the SSP, their apostolic orientation is the work of the major superiors, of delegates, in respect of the relative statutes and guaranteeing that necessary “Pauline colour” to reach “convergence of purposes” in the unique mission of the FP, as always willed by the Founder.

Ariccia, 18 September 2009.