



“As we have been united in the profession of the faith, so let us keep ourselves united in suffrage and intercession.”

(Fr. Alberione)

In the first hours of yesterday, Sunday 14 September 2014, Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, the divine Master has called to his eternal reward our brother Priest

FR. SILVIO FAUSTO SASSI
65 years, 54 of Pauline life, 37 of priesthood
Superior General from 2004 to 2014

He has passed away due to cardiovascular arrest in the General House in Rome. Yesterday he had passed the day in the usual way, spent between the hours of office, prayer, moments of fraternity with confreres of the community: nothing hinted at the epilogue of today.

Born in Vezzano sul Crostolo (Reggio Emilia, Italy) on 10 July 1949, Silvio had entered the Pauline seminary in Modena on 4 September 1960 at age eleven. After finishing secondary and gymnasial school, in 1965 he entered the novitiate in Ostia Lido (Rome) and here he made his religious profession on 20 August 1967. Then followed upper school studies and philosophy in Alba, and theological studies in Rome where he made his perpetual vows on 7 September 1975; his priestly ordination took place on 29 June 1977 through the hands of Mons. Fausto Vallainc in the Crypt of the Sanctuary Queen of Apostles.

In the same year (1977) he received his license in Theology at the Facoltà Pontificia San Bonaventura (Seraphicum) in Rome and left for Paris where he studied at the University of the Sorbonne (Paris III) in view of specialization in the Sciences of Communication (1977-1981) and completed his studies at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales as a researcher in semiology (1982); his doctoral thesis was about, precisely, the semiology of publicity.

On his return to Italy, he quickly put to good use his specific preparation as a teacher and as Director of the International Pauline Studio of Social Communications (SPICS), teaching semiology, linguistics and publicity (1983-1998). For some years he taught Ethics and Communication at the Istituto Superiore di Teologia Morale-Accademia Alfonsiana in Rome.

His teaching activity often ran parallel to his tasks in the Institution: for two consecutive mandates he was Provincial Councilor of Italy (1986-1994) and from 1999 to 2004 he was Director General of Apostolic Activities. Many were the courses of updating and conferences for men and women Paulines in Italy and from abroad, on themes like: the Founder and his charism, the Pauline apostolate, the Church and communication, the culture of communication in modern society. This allowed him to know in good part the international face of the Congregation and of the Pauline

Family: an experience very useful for the task that the VIII General Chapter entrusted to him on 10 May 2004 in electing him as Superior General of the Congregation, a task reconfirmed by the IX General Chapter on 8 May 2010. In this capacity, from 2006 to 2011, by nomination of the Holy Father Benedict XVI (20.10.2006), he was Consultor in the Pontifical Council of Social Communications.

Particular attention to the Pauline charism to be studied, meditated upon, realized and lived with authenticity was his constant preoccupation. Salient moments, upon mandate of the Chapter, aiming at this purpose have been his annual letters having for theme the *Letters of Saint Paul* and the *writings of Fr. Alberione*, as also the two international Seminars celebrated: the first dealing with the Pauline charism: *The actualization of the Pauline charism in the third millennium: spirituality and mission* (2008); the second: *International Seminar on Saint Paul* (2009, in the course of the ecclesial Pauline year). The *Centenary of foundation* of the Society of Saint Paul and of the Pauline Family, going on, has marked the point of convergence of his reflections, expectations and prayer: he already had his annual letter ready: “Evangelizing in communication employing communication,” a theme very dear to him, to be published this coming 26 November, feast of blessed James Alberione, and the concluding report of the Convention of study regarding the “Founder” Don Alberione (23-25 November). He rejoiced at the thought of being able to close the celebrations of the Centenary with an audience with the Holy Father and the eucharistic Concelebration presided over by the Cardinal Secretary of State.

Fr. Silvio would have ended his mandate on May 2016. In his mysterious designs, the Lord has guided matters differently. In this moment of sorrow and bewilderment, in which the only valid reasons are the reasons of faith, may the words of our Father Saint Paul be of consolation and hope to us: «If we live, we live for the Lord; if we die, we die for the Lord. Whether we live or die, we therefore belong to the Lord» (Rom 14,8).

Sustained by this hope, we elevate our thanks to the Father for the gift given to the Congregation through the life and work of our dear Fr. Silvio, to whom we owe much and who we accompany fraternally with our prayers.

Rome, 15 September 2014

Fr. Giuliano Saredi

His funeral will take place on Thursday, 18 September, at 11 a.m. in the Crypt of the Sanctuary of the “Queen of Apostles.” His remains will then be brought to Albano Laziale for burial in the Chapel of the Pauline Family in the city cemetery.

**The Superiors of Circumscription are to inform their communities for the prescribed suffrages
(Const. 65 and 65.1)**