



Jesus Master

Formation's Aids n. 1
International Pauline
Spirituality Centre SSP



The aim of these formation aids prepared by the international Centre of Pauline Spirituality (ICPS) is the passing on of our charism as found and studied in the writings and preaching of Bl. James Alberione and set in the context of its fundamental data in comparison with the origins so that it can become the driving force in our Pauline mission.

These aids seek to come up with the charismatic and historical recollection through a proposal of emerging contents by a comparison among the elements that come to us from the reading of the Word of Christ, of St. Paul, of the Magisterium of the Church and of the Founder. This is done through a Pauline hermeneutics which will integrate the Way-Truth-Life method with the Alberionian concept of the Pauline car (of four wheels) which has Christ the Master at the centre of the life of the person, the community and the whole Pauline Family engaged in the new evangelization.

The Director and members of the CPS (General House)



1. THE WORD OF THE MASTER THE WAY AND TRUTH AND LIFE

The first disciples of Jesus were those who looked for him and met him personally. Seeing that two of them were following him closely, he asked them: «What are you looking for?» They answered: «Teacher – which means Master – where do you stay» (cfr. Jn 1:38).

Jesus is questioned as teacher also by some other Israelites, like Nicodemus who came to him at night: «Teacher, we know that you have come from God as Master; no one else can perform the miracles that you perform, if God were not with him» (cfr. Jn 3:2). Jesus teaches with authority, through words and deeds.

At the Last Supper Jesus accepts this title and leaves to the disciples an articulate will: «You call me Master and Lord, and you do well, because I am what you call me. If therefore I, your Master and Lord, have washed your feet, you also should wash the feet of one another» (cfr. Jn 13:13-14).

The first disciple to recognize the Risen Lord as the Master, Way, Truth and Life, is Mary of Magdala. Jesus told her: «Mary!». She turned and answered, «Rabbuni!», which means “my Master” (cfr. Jn 20:16).

THE WORD OF THE MASTER

THE TRUTH THAT SETS US FREE

«Jesus told those Jews who had found faith in him: “If you remain faithful to my word, you will indeed be my disciples; you will know the truth and the truth will set you free.”

They answered him: “We are the descendants of Abraham and we have never been slaves to anyone. How can you say: You will be set free?” Jesus replied: “I tell you most solemnly: whoever commits sin, is a slave of sin. A slave does not belong to the house permanently, but a son belongs there forever. If the Son sets you free, then you will be free indeed. I know you are Abraham’s descendants. Yet you are trying to kill me, because you will not accept my teaching. I talk about what my father has shown me, but you do what your father has told you»

(Jn, 8:31-38)

TO CONTEXTUALIZE

Jesus is in Jerusalem for the feast of the Tabernacles and teaches both inside and outside of the Temple. As usual, however, his language is incomprehensible. Many of his disciples, for example, after hearing him talk about the need to eat his flesh and drink his blood, told him: «This is hard talk. Who can listen to it?» (Jn 6:61).

Jesus who teaches, on account of his words and deeds, becomes himself a sign of contradiction for what he does. He, a man, the Teacher, the Prophet, the Messiah, the King of Israel, the Son who dares to call God – Creator and Lord – Father, making himself equal to Him.

«Why are you not able» – asks Jesus – «to understand my language? It is because you do not listen to my message» (Jn 8:43). Jesus is rejected because of who he is and what he says he is: he will end up his days as a martyr bearing courageous testimony before the High Priest and Pilate. He dies on the cross as “king of the Jews” because “he made himself son of God”.



2. THE WORDS OF PAUL TEACHER OF THE GENTILES



THE CONTEXT

Paul, speaking about the new life in Christ and in the Church, exhorts the community in Rome to carry out their manifold ministries in an orderly way. We have different charisms, different ministries and different activities (cfr. 1Cor 12:4-6) according to the grace given to each one: let him who has the gift of prophecy use it in proportion to his faith; he who has a ministry, let him carry it out, «one who teaches, let him dedicate himself to teaching...» (cfr. Rom. 12:7).

In his correspondence with Timothy, his “co-worker” (1Ts 3:2; Rom 16:21), “beloved son” (1Tim 1:2,18; 1Cor 4:17), “brother” (2Cor. 1:1), Paul presents himself as the one responsible for teaching the Gospel to the gentiles. Reminding Timothy of the beautiful testimony Jesus made before Pilate, Paul also gives a hint of his being «made a preacher and apostle, a teacher to the gentiles in the faith and in truth» (cfr. 1 Tim. 2:7).

For the Gospel, Paul insists by saying, «I was appointed preacher, apostle and teacher» (cfr. 2Tim. 1:11).

At a time when many false prophets had arisen in the community of Ephesus, Paul had to strongly attest his identity to gain the support of Timothy.

The days will come, Paul foresees, when people will not listen to “sound doctrine” (2Tim 4:3) – that is, the absolute oneness of the gospel of which he is the principal preacher – but, even to hear something, men will surround themselves with teachers according to «their own desires, refusing to listen to the truth in order to pay attention to legends» (2Tim 4:4) – or lies.

The grace of freedom

The one who, with true enthusiasm, listens to the word of Jesus becomes his disciple and, like Paul, becomes a servant of God and apostle of Jesus Christ to bring the faith to all whom God has chosen and to make known to all the *«truth that is in conformity with authentic religiosity»* (cfr. Tit 1:1). Paul has the courage or frankness to point out publicly to Peter himself at Antioch his mistake: he opposed him in the presence of others because according to him Peter was in the wrong: *«When he saw that they were not walking a straight path in line with the truth of the Gospel, he said to Peter in front of them all, "If you, a Jew, live like the gentiles and not like a Jew, how, then, can you try to force the gentiles to live like Jews?"»* (cfr. Gal 2:11-14). For Paul, therefore, the supreme authority is not Peter, but Christ crucified and risen, the sole truth which renders all people free and united.

Writing to the Corinthians who with their opposing positions provoked Paul – some supporting Cephas, some Paul himself and yet others Apollos – he says that nobody should boast about what men can do because *«everything belongs to you: Paul, Apollos and Cephas, the world, life, death, the present, the future: everything is yours! But you belong to Christ and Christ belongs to God»* (cfr. 1Cor 3:21-23). In the Church, the more we appeal on the authority of men rather than on the truth of the gospel, the more we bring division in the Church.

The truth liberates the whole creation from the evil

«The whole of creation waits with eager longing for God to reveal his children. For creation was condemned to lose its purpose, not of its own will, but God willed it to be so. Yet there was the hope that creation itself would one day be set free from its slavery to decay and would share the glorious freedom of the children of God» (Rom 8:19-21).

The privileges and the method of Paul

«Though indebted to nobody, though nobody's slave, I made myself everybody's slave in order to win as many people as possible. While working with the Jews, I live like a Jew in order to win them; and even though I myself am not subject to the Law of Moses, I live as though I were when working with those who are, in order to win them. In the same way, when working with gentiles, I live like a gentile, outside the Jewish Law, in order to win the gentiles. This does not mean that I do not obey God's law; I am really under Christ's law. Among the weak I become weak like one of them, in order to win them. So I become all things to all men, that I may save some of them by whatever means are possible. All this I do for the gospel's sake, in order to share in its blessings» (1Cor 9:19-23).

Teaching on prayer and on the universal mission in the only Mediator

«First of all, then, I urge that petitions, prayers, requests and thanksgivings be offered to God for all people; for kings and all others who are in authority, that we may live a quiet and peaceful life with all reverence towards God and with proper conduct. This is good and it pleases God our Saviour, who wants everyone to be saved and to come to know the truth. For there is one God, and there is one who brings God and mankind together, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself to redeem all mankind. That was the proof at the right time that God wants everyone to be saved, and that is why I was sent as an apostle and teacher of the gentiles to proclaim the message of faith and truth. I am not lying; I am telling the truth» (1Tim 2:1-7).

3. THE WORDS OF PETER

THE CHURCH MAGISTERIUM



THE CONTEXT

Our Founder exhorted us, Paulines, to give the maximum attention to the teaching of the pontifical magisterium: «We must follow faithfully the teaching of the Pope. Let us not pretend to be something different: God will give us the grace to do it. We need not dive to the depth of learning, we need not become leaders of the different schools of thought: it is enough that we understand well and disseminate the teaching of the Pope, and we shall remain close to him on points that are disputed and in controversies over teaching and practice. We are not to be proponents of theories: we will remain close to the Pope, we will always strive faithfully to follow the guidelines of the Pope» (Union of the Cooperators of the Good Press, 15/11/1924, p.1)¹.

¹The above text was published when Pius XI (Achille Ratti) was the Pope. In his allocution “*Amplissimus Consessum*” given during the Consistory held on the 24th May 1924, the Pope authoritatively declares: «... there are many who, yearning for truth and charity, for unity and peace, they turn from schism and heresy towards Us and this Apostolic See, like sheep that have strayed and are without a shepherd, but want to go back to the sheepfold of the Lord. It's just a case to say how happy we should be to welcome them back, renewing the invitation of the Supreme and only Shepherd: “Come to me, all of you”».

In the same year, 1924, Fr. L. Sturzo published in the paper of Gobetti an article, *Popularism and Fascism*, in which he pointed out the incompatibility between the two systems. Christians had to make a choice.

Pius XI, in the same allocution, was warning, “in the name of Christ”, the Bishops of Italy, the clergy and the fathers and mothers of families “not be fooled into security and to be ever vigilant, and if necessary, to protest”. It was a matter of the gravest importance in Italy at the time of Fascism “not so much the fate of the Church... spread throughout the world, but as to the destiny of families, of civil society and of the State itself. In fact, the community (the people of the country) can reap only what it has sown before, that is, truth or error, true faith in Christ or pagan perversions, human civility or horrible barbarianism, especially when it is disguised in external splendor and under the refined elegance of the recent advances in progress”.

We must, however, remember that between the Italian Church and Fascism there were courtesies and exchanges of investments, or reciprocal recognitions. In 1932, Pius XI decorated Mussolini with the Order of the Golden Spuron. From the other side the Fascist Italian State and the Savoyard King of Italy decorated Cardinal Pacelli, then Vatican Secretary of State, the future Pope Pius XII, with the Collar of the Annunciation. Pacelli has been the Papal Nunzio in Germany under Hitler, and is the brother of the advocate who was the architect of the Lateran Pact (agreement of mutual recognition between the Kingdom of Italy and the Holy See, signed on 11 February 1929, thanks, to which for the first time from the Unification of Italy, regular bilateral relations were established between Italy and the Holy See).

Being a follower of the Pope, Primo Maestro, not for himself alone, but for the congregation as a whole, proposed a fourth vow to the Society of St. Paul, that of “fidelity to the Pope” with regard to the spreading of the Gospel, *gratia veritatis*. “The Pope is the centre of diffusion of the Gospel in the world” (February 1932, *Donec Formetur*, 1985, p. 117, n. 179). There is no need, therefore, to make a continuous discernment between fidelity to the Pope and fidelity to the Pauline mission which is to announce the gospel of truth (cfr. Gal 2:5,14; Eph 1:13; Col 1:5) to all men of all time of all the nations on earth? For this, to enrich our study, we give here some of the texts of the papal Magisterium which had a great influence in the life, in the formation and in the teaching of Primo Maestro with regard to Truth. We will add also a few recent texts from the Magisterium.

LEO XIII (1810 -1903) *Tametsi futura*

This *encyclical*, dated 1st November 1900, is the spiritual, theological and sociological foundation of the Pauline charism. In the same year, prior to the above encyclical, there were two other encyclicals and a good 73 other church documents. Alberione, a seminarian in his teens at that time, assimilated to a great extent the ideas and inspirations contained in all these making them the germinal nucleus of his foundational charism. Leo XIII puts in evidence the problems arising out of the evolution of the secular world and at the same time also expresses his concerns for the future. The encyclical (*Tametsi futura*) can be summarized into four points: a) the spiritual condition of mankind at the close of the XIX century, which describes the positive and negative forces existing at that time and the fears and hopes for the new century; b) Jesus the Redeemer is the indispensable point of reference: he freed humanity from sin, and now he will renew it in our times; c) Redemption is described in its “three principles necessary for every salvation: Jesus Way, Truth and Life” (cfr. Jn 14:6); d) universal religious and civil mobilization: it is necessary to return to Jesus as he presents himself in the Johannine self-definition.

«The one who once saved the human nature destroyed by sin is the one who will save it for ever: “He gave himself to redeem all mankind (1Tim 2:6). “All will be brought to life in Christ” (1Cor 15:22). “His kingdom will never have an end (Lk 1:33). Therefore, according to the eternal plan of God, in Christ Jesus is found the salvation of both individuals and the whole of humanity...



Those who go astray from the road wander far from the goal they aim at. Similarly, if the pure and true light of truth be rejected, men's minds must necessarily be darkened and their souls deceived by deplorably false ideas. What hope of salvation can they have who abandon the very principle and fountain of life? **Christ alone is the Way, the Truth and the Life (Jn 14:6). If He be abandoned the three necessary conditions of salvation are removed.**

It is surely unnecessary to prove, what experience constantly shows and what each individual feels in himself, even in the very midst of all temporal prosperity - that in God alone can the human will find absolute and perfect peace. God is the only end of man. All our life on earth is the truthful and exact image of a pilgrimage. Now **Christ is the "way,"** for we can never reach God, the supreme and ultimate good, by this toilsome and doubtful road of mortal life, except with Christ as our leader and guide. "No one can come to the Father except through me" (Jn 14:6). What does it mean? That means that, firstly and above all, no one can go to the Father except through the grace of Jesus. But this grace will not work in a soul that fails to observe his precepts and laws. Jesus laid down his law for the protection and safety of the human race redeemed by him so that guided by it men might turn away from their evil ways and might safely tend towards God...

Just as it is the height of misfortune to go astray from the way, so is it to abandon the truth. Now, **Christ Himself is the first, absolute and essential truth, inasmuch as He is the Word of God, consubstantial and co-eternal with the Father, He and the Father being One. "I am the way and the truth." Therefore if truth be sought by the human intellect, it must first of all submit it to Jesus Christ, and securely rest upon His teaching, since therein truth itself speaks.**

There are innumerable and extensive fields of thought, properly belonging to the human mind, in which it may have free scope for its investigations and speculations, and that not only agreeably to its nature, but even by a necessity of its nature. But what is unlawful and unnatural is that the human mind should refuse to be restricted within its proper limits, and, throwing aside its becoming modesty, should refuse to acknowledge Christ's teaching. This teaching, upon which our salvation depends, is almost entirely about God and the things of God. No human wisdom has invented it, but the Son of God hath received and drunk it in entirely from His Father: "The words which you gave me, I have given to them" (Jn 17:8). Hence this teaching necessarily embraces many subjects which are not indeed contrary to reason - for that would be an impossibility - but so exalted that we can no more attain them by our own reasoning than we can comprehend God as He is in Himself.

If there be so many things hidden and veiled by nature, which no human ingenuity can explain, and yet which no man in his senses can doubt, it would be an abuse of liberty to refuse to accept those which are entirely above nature, because their essence cannot be discovered.

To reject dogma is simply to deny Christianity. Our intellect must bow humbly and reverently "unto the obedience of Christ," so that it be held captive by His divinity and authority: "We take every thought captive and make it obey Christ" (2Cor 10:5). Such obedience Christ requires, and justly so. For He is God, and as such holds supreme dominion over man's intellect as well as over his will. By obeying Christ with his intellect man by no means acts in a servile manner, but in complete accordance with his reason and his natural dignity. For by his will he yields, not to the authority of any man, but to that of God, the author of his being, and the first principle to whom he is subject by the very law of his nature. He does not suffer himself to be forced by the theories of any human teacher, but by the eternal and unchangeable truth. Hence he attains at one and the same time the natural good of the intellect and his own liberty. **For the truth which proceeds from the teaching of Christ clearly demonstrates the real nature and value of every being; and man, being endowed with this knowledge, if he but obey the truth as perceived, will make all things subject to himself, not himself to them; his appetites to his reason, not his reason to his appetites. Thus the slavery of sin and falsehood will be shaken off, and the most perfect liberty attained: "You will know the truth and the truth will set you free" (Jn 8:32). It is, then, evident that those whose intellect rejects the yoke of Christ are obstinately striving against God. Having shaken off God's authority, they are by no means freer, for they will fall beneath some human sway. They are sure to choose someone whom they will listen to, obey, and follow as their guide...** It must therefore be clearly admitted that, in the life of a Christian, the intellect must be entirely subject to God's authority...

God alone is life. All other beings partake of life, but are not life. Instead, Christ, from all eternity and by His very nature, is "the life", just as He is the Truth, because He is God of God. From Him, as from its most sacred source, all life pervades and ever will pervade creation. Whatever is, is by Him; whatever lives, lives by Him. For by the Word "all things were made; and without Him was made nothing that was made".

This is true of the natural life; but, as we have sufficiently indicated above, we have a much higher and better life, won for us by Christ's mercy, that is to say, "the life of grace", whose happy consummation is "the life of glory", to which all our thoughts and actions ought to be directed. In this consists the whole force of Christian doctrine and laws, that "dead to sin, we live by justice", that is, through virtue and holiness and in which the moral life of men consists with the sure hope of a happy eternity. This justice, in order to be advantageous to salvation, is nourished by Christian faith. "The just man lives by faith" (Gal 3:11). Without faith, it is impossible to please God" (Heb 11:6)...

It is, therefore, the cry for the common welfare: **return to Him from whom we should never have gone astray; to Him who is the way, truth, and life. All elements of the national life must be made to drink in the Life which proceeds from Him legislation, political institutions, education, marriage and family life, capital and labour. And keep in mind that the very growth of**

civilization which is so ardently desired depends greatly upon this, since it is fed and grows not so much by material wealth and prosperity, as by the spiritual qualities of morality and virtue».



BLESSED PAUL VI (1897-1978)

Evangelii Nuntiandi

This is a post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation on the topic of evangelization issued in 8 December 1975, ten years after the closing of Vatican II. This document is the fruit of the discussions that emerged on the same topic in the III General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops held in the Vatican from 27 September to 26 October 1974.

In the first part of the Exhortation Paul VI enumerates the forms and the contents of the Church's work of evangelization. As for the former, over and above the evangelization aimed at personal and social conversion, he reminds us of the need to evangelize cultures and the *plantatio ecclesiae* by promoting human values and through the integral liberation of all believers. For contents, he insists on the kerygmatic proclamation of salvation, fruit of the grace and mercy earned by Christ.

«The Gospel entrusted to us is also the word of truth. A truth which liberates and which alone gives peace of heart is what people are looking for when we proclaim the Good News to them. The truth about God, about man and his mysterious destiny, about the world; the difficult truth that we seek in the Word of God and of which, we repeat, we are neither the masters nor the owners, but the depositaries, the heralds and the servants.

Every evangelizer is expected to have a reverence for truth, especially since the truth that he studies and communicates is none other than revealed truth and hence, more than any other, a sharing in the first truth which is God Himself. ***The preacher of the Gospel will therefore be a person who even at the price of personal renunciation and suffering always seeks the truth that he must transmit to others.*** He never betrays or hides truth out of a desire to please men, in order to astonish or to shock, nor for the sake of originality or a desire to make an impression. He does not refuse truth. He does not obscure revealed truth by being too idle to search for it, or for the sake of his own comfort, or out of fear. He does not neglect to study it. He serves it generously, without making it serve him. We are the pastors of the faithful people, and our pastoral service impels us to ***preserve, defend, and to communicate the truth*** regardless of the sacrifices that this involves. So many eminent and holy pastors have left us the

example of this love of truth. In many cases it was an heroic love. The God of truth expects us to be the vigilant defenders and devoted preachers of truth. Men of learning - whether you be theologians, exegetes or historians - the work of evangelization needs your tireless work of research, and also **care and tact in transmitting the truth** to which your studies lead you but which is always greater than the heart of man, being the very truth of God. Parents and teachers, your task - and the many conflicts of the present day do not make it an easy one - is to help your children and your students to discover truth, including religious and spiritual truth» (EN 78).

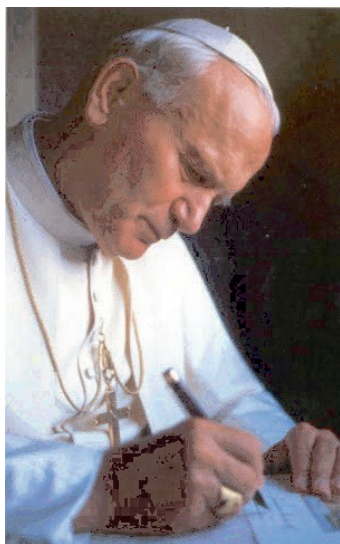
«Our century is characterized by the **mass media** or means of social communication, and the **first proclamation, catechesis or the further deepening of faith cannot do without these means**, as we have already emphasized. When they are put at the service of the Gospel, they are capable of increasing almost indefinitely the area in which the Word of God is heard; they enable the Good News to reach millions of people. The Church would feel guilty before the Lord if she did not utilize these powerful means that human skill is daily rendering more perfect. **It is through them that she proclaims “from the housetops” the message of which she is the depositary.** In them she finds a modern and effective version of the pulpit. Thanks to them she succeeds in speaking to the multitudes.

Nevertheless the use of the means of social communication for evangelization presents a challenge: through them the evangelical message should reach vast numbers of people, but with the capacity of piercing the conscience of each individual, of implanting itself in his heart as though he were the only person being addressed, with all his most individual and personal qualities, and evoke an entirely personal adherence and commitment» (EN 45).

SAINT JOHN PAUL II (1920-2005)

Veritatis splendor - Fides et Ratio

The purpose of this encyclical, *Veritatis splendor*, of 6 August 1993, was to clarify certain «fundamental questions in the moral teaching of the Church» and to face the cultural challenge in the theological discussion between faith and reason and freedom and truth. The fundamental problem is the relation between human freedom and truth. There are some who tend to weaken, if not to deny, the dependence of freedom on truth. The encyclical tries to make us understand that forming a moral conscience is an essential part of the new evangeli-



zation effort of the Church, always keeping intact the Truth revealed by the Master.

The main topic of the encyclical *Fides et Ratio* dated 14 September 1998, is Faith and Reason which, like two wings, help the human spirit to soar towards the contemplation of the truth which is fundamental, inalienable and which surpasses all ages and history of mankind.

Here below are some important passages from the encyclical.

«The authority of the Church, when she pronounces on moral questions, in no way undermines the freedom of conscience of Christians. This is so not only because **freedom of conscience is never freedom “from” the truth but always and only freedom “in” the truth**, but also because the Magisterium does not bring to the Christian conscience truths which are extraneous to it; rather it brings to light the truths which it ought already to possess, developing them from the starting point of the primordial act of faith. The Church puts herself always and only at the service of conscience, helping it to avoid being tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine proposed by human deceit (cf. Eph 4:14), and helping it not to swerve from the truth about the good of man, but rather, especially in more difficult questions, to attain the truth with certainty and to abide in it» (VS 64).

«The Church remains faithful to the **integral truth about man**; she thus respects and promotes man in his dignity and vocation. Consequently, she must reject the theories set forth above, which contradict this truth. Dear Brothers in the Episcopate, we must not be content merely to warn the faithful about the errors and dangers of certain ethical theories. We must first of all **show the inviting splendour of that truth which is Jesus Christ himself. In him, who is the Truth (cf. Jn 14:6), man can understand fully and live perfectly**, through his good actions, his vocation to freedom in obedience to the divine law summarized in the commandment of love of God and neighbour. And this is what takes place through the gift of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, of freedom and of love: in him we are enabled to interiorize the law, to receive it and to live it as the motivating force of true personal freedom: “the perfect law, the law of liberty”» (Jas 1:25) (VS 83).

«According to Christian faith and the Church’s teaching, only the freedom which submits to the Truth leads the human person to his true good. **The good of the person is to be in the Truth and to do the Truth**» (VS 84).

«The Supreme Good and the moral good meet in truth: the truth of God, the Creator and Redeemer, and the truth of man, created and redeemed by him. Only upon this truth is it possible to construct a renewed society and to solve the complex and weighty problems affecting it, above all the problem of overcoming the various forms of totalitarianism, so as to make way for the authentic freedom of the person» (VS 99).

«In the heart of every Christian, in the inmost depths of each person, there is always an echo of the question which the young man in the Gospel once asked

Jesus: "Teacher, what good must I do to have eternal life?" (Mt 19:16). Everyone, however, needs to address this question to the "Good Teacher", since he is the only one who can answer in the fullness of truth, in all situations, in the most varied of circumstances. And when Christians ask him the question which rises from their conscience, the Lord replies in the words of the New Covenant which have been entrusted to his Church. As the Apostle Paul said of himself, we have been sent "to preach the Gospel, and not with eloquent wisdom, lest the Cross of Christ be emptied of its power" (1Cor 1:17). **The Church's answer to man's question contains the wisdom and power of Christ Crucified, the Truth which gives of itself.** When people ask the Church the questions raised by their consciences, when the faithful in the Church turn to their Bishops and Pastors, the Church's reply contains the voice of Jesus Christ, the voice of the truth about good and evil. In the words spoken by the Church there resounds, in people's inmost being, the voice of God who "alone is good" (cf. Mt 19:17), who alone "is love" (1Jn 4:8,16). Through the anointing of the Spirit this gentle but challenging word becomes light and life for man» (VS 117).

The essence of Christian Revelation is truth along with charity. The universal appeal of Christianity arises from its claim that it is true and this appeal will fade away if our conviction that our faith is truth fades away. Truth appeals to everybody and therefore Christianity appeals to everybody because it is true. This is the ground from where arises the reason for and the duty of the missionary activity of the Church: if the human reason for and the duty of the missionary activity of the Church: if the human reason yearns to know the truth, if **man is created for the truth**, then the Christian message is the answer to the yearning of human reason. There cannot therefore, be any contradiction or separation between Christian faith and human reason, because both, though distinct from each other, are united by truth, are in their own way at the service of truth, and both have their source in truth.

«Christian Revelation is the true lodestar of men and women as they strive to make their way amid the pressures of an immanentist habit of mind and the constrictions of a technocratic logic. It is the ultimate possibility offered by God for the human being to know in all its fullness the seminal plan of love which began with creation. To those wishing to know the truth, if they can look beyond themselves and their own concerns, there is given the possibility of **taking full and harmonious possession of their lives, precisely by following the path of truth**... the truth made known to us by Revelation is neither the product nor the consummation of an argument devised by human reason. It appears instead as something gratuitous, which itself stirs thought and seeks acceptance as an expression of love. This revealed truth is set within our history as an anticipation of that ultimate and definitive vision of God which is reserved for those who believe in him and seek him with a sincere heart» (FR 15).

«**It is the nature of the human being to seek the truth.** This search looks not only to the attainment of truths which are partial, empirical or scientific; nor is it only in individual acts of decision-making that people seek the true good.

Their search looks towards an ulterior truth which would explain the meaning of life. And it is therefore a search which can reach its end only in reaching the absolute...

Christian faith comes to meet them, offering the concrete possibility of reaching the goal which they seek. In Jesus Christ, who is the Truth, faith recognizes the ultimate appeal to humanity, an appeal made in order that what we experience as desire and nostalgia may come to its fulfilment» (FR 33).



POPE FRANCIS

THE MAGISTERIUM TODAY

In his Angelus message of 23 June 2013, Pope Francis speaks about the truth in pastoral work and in the apostolate: «*There are so many people, Christians and non-Christians, who “lose their lives” for the sake of truth. **Christ has said “I am the truth”, therefore those who serve***

truth serve Christ. One of those who gave their lives for truth is St. John the Baptist. John has been chosen by God to prepare the way for Jesus. He pointed out Jesus to the people of Israel as the Messiah, as the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world (cfr. Jn 1:29). John dedicated himself completely to God and to the one sent by God, Jesus. But at the end, what happened? He died for the cause of truth ... ***How many people pay dearly for their commitment to truth!*** How many right-minded people prefer to swim against the currents rather than compromise their conscience, the voice of truth! They are the righteous people who are not afraid of going counter current!».

On the 22nd of January 2016, in his Message for the 50th World Communications Day on the theme of “Communication and Mercy: a fruitful encounter”, Pope Francis again deals with the theme of truth as the content of communication which «*should build bridges, heal the wounds, and touch the hearts of the people*». He insists that the real power of communication is “closeness”, and he exhorts the Christians to spread the truth with love, and without passing judgment on any one. Thus, he asks the social networks to be places of mercy where sharing and relationships are fostered.

«*Whatever we say, the way we say it, every word and gesture of ours should show forth the compassion, the tenderness and the forgiveness of God for all*». «*Love, by its very nature, is a communication*», that is, the truth that brings

about communion in society and in the Church. Hence, as children of God, *«we are called to communicate with everyone, without excluding anyone»*.

Communication, continues Francis, *«has power to build bridges, to enable encounter and inclusion»*. He says he is *«happy to see people who are careful in choosing their words and gestures so that misunderstandings may be cleared, hut feelings may be healed and peace and harmony may be restored»*. Words, he says, *«can throw open bridges both in the physical and in the digital word»*. Hence, his invitation to speak the right language to *«escape from the vicious cycle of condemnation and retaliation in which individuals and nations are sometimes caught»*.

In such cases, his encouragement is, *«mercy can create a new way of speaking»*.

Pope Francis quotes from the *Merchant of Venice* of Shakespeare *«that mercy is not an obligation. It comes down from heaven like the cooling freshness of the rain on the earth. It is a blessing both to the one who bestows it and to the one who receives it»*. May the style of our communication *«help to overcome the mind-set that neatly separates sinners from the righteous»*. One has *«to admonish those who err and to denounce the evil and injustice of certain ways of acting»*, but always bearing in mind that the truth is Christ, *«whose gentle mercy is the yardstick for measuring the way we proclaim the truth and condemn injustice»*.

Therefore, **truth must always be affirmed “with love”**, because only in that way can we *«touch the hearts of sinners»* He concludes, *«In a broken, fragmented and polarized world, to communicate with mercy means to help create a healthy, free and fraternal closeness between the children of God and all our brothers and sisters in the one human family»*.

4. THE WORDS OF ALBERIONE THE PRIMO MAESTRO



**TO KEEP PACE
WITH THE TIMES
IN UNION WITH THE
CHURCH
IN COMMUNICATING THE
TRUTH**

The Religious state has its roots in the depths of the Gospel

Christianity will always be seen by this world as a living paradox, a madness for some, a scandal for others. For us it is a divine truth and reality. It is implied in the eight beatitudes announced by the Divine Master. The religious state, which is the full development of Christian life and a complete living out of the whole Gospel, seems even more of a paradox: to sacrifice one's life in order to save it; to lose everything to gain everything. And the peak of the paradox is that poverty becomes wealth; abasement, exaltation; virginity, motherhood; slavery, freedom; sacrifice, beatitude; service, apostolate; death, life. «You have died and your life is hid with Christ in God» (Col 3:3); «I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me» (Gal 2:20). ([Observations on the Decretum Laudis (May 10, 1941) of the approval of the Society of St. Paul]), UPS I (1960), 55.

Making the bread is a joint venture

The Pauline apostolate calls for an effective group of writers, technical people and distributors. Everyone must be in harmony just like orchestra players tune up before giving a performance. How much will power and energy, uncoordinated and disorganized, ends up in wishful thinking, pain and failure! The bread of the spirit and of truth needs to be prepared by all together. (Benefits of common Life), UPS I (1960), 288.

To contextualize

The first step in Alberione's passion for the mass media led to his writing of *Social Catechism* or in *Elements of Christian Sociology*. It is a work consisting of 50 lessons containing 158 question-answers on man and society, family; civil society; the Church; labour and the economic order; the international community. The text of this work was published in 1950. This was the time the modern means started blossoming!

In March 1949 Alberione, for the second time, spoke through St. Paul Radio, Rome.

From 3 April to 24 July, Alberione visited the Paulines in the Far East.

On 27 June 1949, the Society of St. Paul received the Final Pontifical Approval. In the same year 1949, during the International Congress of Journalists in Geneva, Switzerland, Msgr. Charrière equated schools and newspapers to the great cathedrals built by Christians of the past centuries.

On 1 April 1960, the extraordinary course of spiritual exercises for one month started in Ariccia. 126 priests and brothers of the early years of the Society took part in it. Talks and instructions of the Course were collected together and published in four volumes known as: *UT PERFECTUS SIT HOMO DEI* – a phrase expressed by Paul to Timothy («All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching the truth, rebuking error, correcting faults, and giving instructions for right living, so that the person who serves God may be fully qualified and equipped to do every kind of good deed» (1 Tim 3:16-17), in 4 volumes.

On 8 April, the Sacred Congregation for Religious approved three Aggregated Institutes to the Society of St. Paul: Institute of Jesus the Priest (IGS) for diocesan priests, Institute of St. Gabriel the Archangel (ISGA) and the Institute of Our Lady of the Annunciation (IMSA).

On 30 April, James Alberione and all the 126 participants were received in a special audience by Pope John XXIII. The evolution of the means of communication with which Alberione has always been following attentively and which was referred to in *Inter Mirifica* (4 December 1963) was marked by certain important events in 1960: the launching of satellites for communication (*Echo I*, *Courier Ib*); regular colour TV programmes in Japan: the issuing on 29 June, Feast of Sts. Peter and Paul, of the Norms for Cinema and Means of Social Communications by the first Roman Synod. In 1939, at the Venice Film Festival, the film *Abuna Messias*, produced by REF (Romana Editrice Film), founded by Alberione, was judged the "best Italian film" and presented the Mussolini Cup. In 1960, in Tri-veneta region was celebrated the Day of Spectacles which could have inspired Paul VI in his message for the "First World Communications Day" (7 May 1967). 1960 was an important year for the press apostolate or publishing apostolate.

A special Year of the Bible (1960-61) was inaugurated on 30 June, Feast of St. Paul, with the motivating slogan "The Bible in every Home" which has resulted to the distribution of the "one thousand lire Bible" during 1365 bible weeks. On 14 October, John XXIII, through a papal brief, raised to the status of a "primary union" the International Catholic Bible Society which was set up by the Society of St. Paul. On 16 December, with another papal brief, the *Ut Unum Sint* Centre of the Society of St. Paul was raised to the status of a "primary association". *Famiglia Cristiana*, printed and published at Alba, reached one million copies.



5. WAY TRUTH & LIFE PROGRESS ONLY ON FOUR WHEELS

CONCLUSIONS AND PROSPECTS

■ *The Truth of the Gospel is based on the authority of Christ and this truth as interpreted by Paul liberates from all falsehood the nations of the world and transforms the world into a new creation in the image and likeness of God (palingenesis).*

«Christ has liberated us so that we may live in freedom; stand then, as free people, and do not allow yourselves to become slaves again» (Gal. 5:1).

■ *The one who can make himself a servant, minister or slave of Christ is the one who is free of fathers or owners or protectors and acknowledges Christ as the sole Master, Guide and Lord.*

■ *One should not get lost but pray and aim to freely work in the Church, trying to pass in between drops of water, without getting wet and without mixing. I do not know when and how, but we must have, and shall surely have, the freedom to work in the Church because that is demanded by our mission. (The Apostolate of the Film, 2 November 1956, in The Means of Social Communication [1964] p. 38).*

■ *The mission of Paul and of the Pauline Family is to make oneself all to all, because that is the will of God, our Creator, who wants to adopt all human beings as true sons in his Son.*

■ *Pauline life has its roots in the depths of the Gospel of Paul*

The first writings of Paul acknowledged by Peter: «Look on our Lord's patience as the opportunity he is giving you to be saved, just as our dear brother Paul wrote to you, using the wisdom that God gave him. This is what he says in all his letters when he writes on the subject. There are some difficult points in his letter which ignorant and unstable people explain falsely, as they do with other passages of the Scripture to their own destruction» (2Pt 3:15-16). «As I write this letter to you, I hope to come and see you soon. But if I am delayed, this letter will let you know how we should conduct ourselves in God's household, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth» (1Tim 3:14-15).

*KNEADING TOGETHER IN MAKING THE BREAD OF TRUTH
WE BECOME CHILDREN OF GOD*

We cannot do anything against the truth, but only for it (II Cor. 13:8).

THE WAY OF THE DISCIPLE

It is the same as the Paschal Exodus: crossing over from death to life; from the old man to the new man; from the past to the home of the Father, through Apostolate-Poverty, through the emptying of self for a Pauline offertory which consists in spending and in overspending oneself for the sake of others.

Go into the whole world, meet all the people and ANNOUNCE THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL to everyone and thus reconcile the world to God. «God was making all mankind his friends through Christ. God did not keep an account of their sins and he has given us the mission to make them his friends» (2Cor. 5:19).

Peter's ministry is to the circumcised while that of Paul is directed to the gentiles which encompasses those inside and outside of the Church. Paul proclaimed the Gospel orally and writing at least 13 letters.

The freedom of the children of God is generated in us and in others by the CHARITY OF THE TRUTH: the same as the MISSION OF PAUL.

*THE TRUTH MAKES US FREE
DISCIPLES AND TEACHERS*

READING: STUDY AND CONTEMPLATION: knowledge of the truth; the one who does not search does not ask, does not knock, does not pray and does not even study; for Alberione discipleship means daily study of the Word: daily listening of the Word; daily reading of the Gospel (he carried it always in his pocket, at his breast like viaticum).

➤ *Jesus, in Jn 8:31, presents himself as the "sign of contradiction" against the spirituality of the "Jews" which was based on the Torah. The true disciple of Jesus has the new spirituality which is the Truth.*

➤ *Jesus himself is the Truth (Jn 14:6). To follow the truth means becoming children of God as he is and being able to say, as he said, «he who sees the Son sees the Father» (Jn 14:9).*

THE APOSTOLATE OF THE TRUTH: to combat every form of falsehood in order to help people to become children of God, to be free people with only one law – that of love – the love for the truth. Alberione insists on a formation towards freedom: «the purpose of formation is to reach the people the right use of freedom, now and for all eternity» (Development of Personality) 1953 in AD 150.

The teachings of our Founder to the Pauline Family is that it is «not so much the great heretics that we should be scared of as those who spread falsehood, lies and hypo-

crisis through newspapers, periodicals, novels and pamphlets and disturb the minds and hearts of the people». He wrote: «In a free society, the press, be it good or bad, truthful or addicted to lies, corrupt or upright, is all powerful. It forms public opinion, life styles; if it is good, it strengthens the family and the educational institutions; if it is bad, it destroys them; it strengthens or pulls down governments, can create peace or war». Pius XI pointed out the "omnipotence" of the press and said: «even this expression is not adequate to point out the reality. With its organizational set up and wide circulation its omnipotence grows beyond every measure». The strength of the press is based on its power to speak to multitudes of people (a newspaper in Tokyo has five million copies), and on the fact that it is the printed word. (*The Apostolate of the Editions – of the word that is printed and diffused*) November 1950, CISP (1971) p. 803.

LIFE: PRIESTHOOD - PAULINE OFFERTORY *THE DEATH OF CHRIST IS YOUR LIFE*

The Paschal Exodus: to pass on to life from death through the LITURGICAL AND PRIESTLY APOSTOLATE of the word and of the sacrifice of the cross, of one's own life: PAULINE OFFERTORY.

Faith comes through the preaching of the Gospel to the People which join together to form the body of Christ. Jesus, in fact, «is our peace who formed one people out of two by breaking down the wall that separated them, that is, the enmity, by abolishing through his own flesh the law of precepts and decrees in order to form in himself one people out of the two and thus establishing peace» (Eph 2:14-15). Peace between nations, between Jews and Greeks, between believers and non-believers is possible only through the cross of Christ – and that of Paul and of ours. Jesus died «to reconcile the two (Jews and Greeks) with God in only one body» – the Church – «through the cross, destroying in himself their enmity» (Eph 2:16). Without the death of self there is neither resurrection nor apostolic efficacy – the salvation of the world.

*APOSTOLATE OF LIFE: Alberione teaches us that we should make reparation for the evils committed by the media (today the internet, the social media, the multi-media or cross-media). The Founders writes: «The evil ones do not rest, in the night the machines are turning out millions and millions of copies spreading immorality, against whatever is holy and whatever defends freedom... We speak in the churches and there are only a few who listen to us, but these media are widespread. We print only a limited number of copies while the copies of the evil press are millions and millions. In the morning these come out as it were a flood of paper and it flows into the cities and to the countryside». [The modern sins: Apostolate in the spirit of reparation] September 1959 in *The Instruments of Social Communication* (1964) pp. 54, 55.*

PRAYER

THE PAULINE OFFERTORY of Blessed James Alberione (First Edition)

FOR HIM WHO FEELS THE SAME THRIST FOR SOULS AS OUR LORD

«Oh, Lord, I offer you in union with all the Priests who today celebrate the Holy Mass, Jesus Host and myself as a small victim:

- 1° in reparation for the innumerable blasphemies, errors and obscenities that are printed in so many printing presses from which every day tons of paper leave that flood the world like rotten torrents;*
- 2° to invoke your mercy on the countless readers, perverse or innocent, that the scandalous press rips from your fatherly Heart, thirsty for souls;*
- 3° for the conversion of so many blind writers and printers, Satan's ministers, false teachers who have raised their teachings against the Divine Master, poisoning every teaching, human thought, and the sources of human activity;*
- 4° to honour, love, listen to Him alone, whom You, o heavenly Father, in your great Heart have given to the world, proclaiming: «This is my beloved Son: listen to Him»;*
- 5° to know that only Jesus is the perfect Master, that is, the One who enlightens, or the Model of every true sanctity of the soul, that is, sanctifying grace;*
- 6° to obtain the grace that in the world Priests and Religious multiply, consecrated to spread the doctrine of Jesus through the press;*
- 7° so that writers and workers of the press may be holy, full of wisdom and of zeal, for the glory of God and salvation of souls;*
- 8° to ask that the Catholic press prosper, spread, aided and multiply, raising its voice so as to impede the intoxicating and rousing atrocity of the perverse press;*
- 9° so that we all know our ignorance and misery, and the need to always bow before your Holy Tabernacle, O Lord, with pleading eyes and bowed head, invoking light, mercy, forgiveness».*

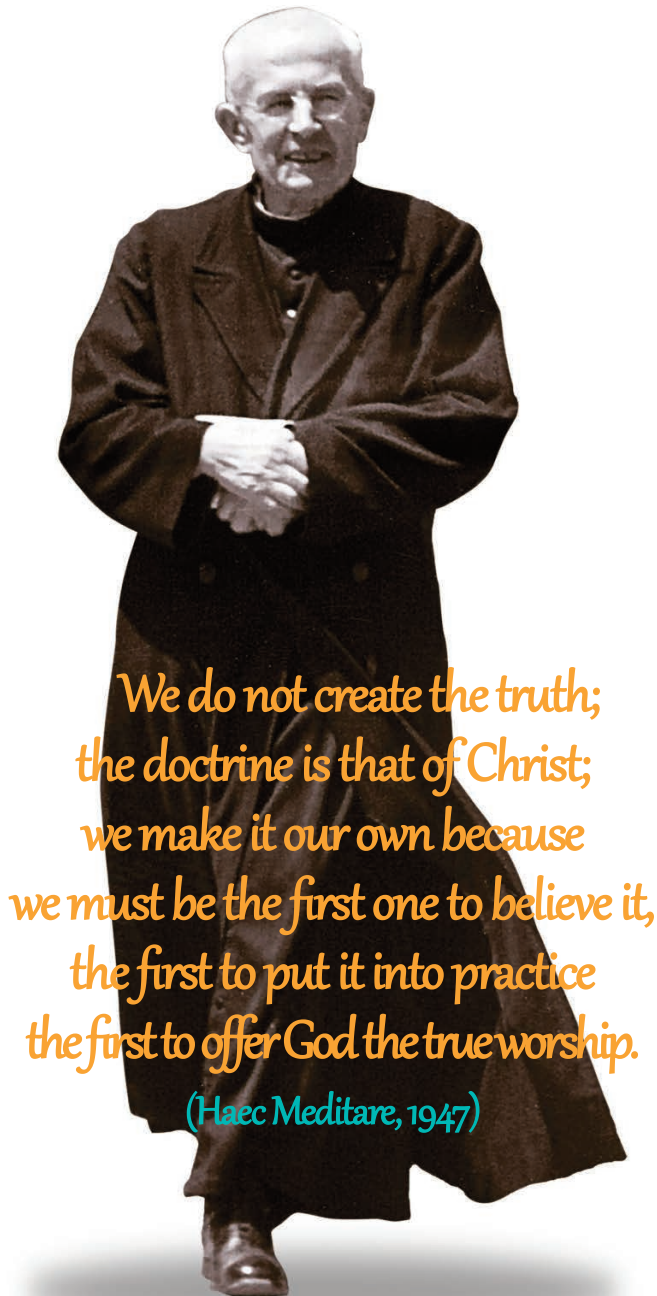
UCBS 1924 - 2 (Feb.) 4

LIST OF 2 FORTHCOMING FORMATION AIDS

- Jesus Shepherd and Guide: following the Way (Acts: followers of the Way)
- Jesus Priest and Victim: the liturgy of Life (Rom 12:1-2)

Formation aids prepared by the International Centre of Pauline Spirituality, at the General House of the Society of the St. Paul, Rome. Edited and printed by V. Stesuri – P. Venturini. Traduction by C. Godilano. Special thanks to Fr. Angelo Colacrai for his biblical guidance and collaboration.

*On cover: A. Ballan pddm - Jésus Master - Divin Master House *Photo V. Stesuri.*



We do not create the truth;
the doctrine is that of Christ;
we make it our own because
we must be the first one to believe it,
the first to put it into practice
the first to offer God the true worship.

(Haec Meditare, 1947)