



## INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS OF THE SUPERIOR GENERAL AT THE XI GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF CIDEP

Dear Brothers,

I offer you my personal greeting and that of the members of the General Government, with the strong desire that this eleventh General Assembly of CIDEP bear fruit for the good of the Pauline mission, especially in the Ibero-American area. It is in this specific territory that you are called to live and to proclaim Jesus Master, so that the people we serve may have life in abundance.

In fact, we are "apostles communicators and consecrated" not for ourselves, but for the men and women of our time, to transmit to them, with our personal witness and with the languages of modern communication, the Gospel we have received. With the Apostle Paul and Blessed James Alberione we can affirm that we believe, and therefore we speak (see 2 Corinthians 4:13) and, despite our human and material limitations, we try to do everything for the Gospel (see 1 Cor 9, 23) in the culture of communication.

As our Founder affirmed, *«living our Christian and religious life is a great way to exercise a beneficial influence in society. But this is not enough for the Pauline apostolate. We must work diligently to penetrate the inestimable leaven of Christianity in the social and cultural life»*<sup>1</sup> of our time.

In this perspective, we want to walk not alone, as individual Circumscriptions, but also together, with all possible projects, as Fr. Alberione was already guiding us in his time: *«Offer mutual support through prayer and collaboration. Personal selfishness destroys community life; social, political, and family egoisms, even destroy institutions, or at least condemn them to sterility»*<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, in view of developing the CIDEP project for the next three years, let me suggest some reflections.

### **I. A history to consider**

This XI Assembly of CIDEP is being held 27 years after the creation of this international organism, which took place in 1991. You have already received, in digital file, the text, *Chronology of CIDEP – Encuentros Paulinos Iberoamericanos. Antecedentes históricos y acontecimientos más relevantes de la colaboración apostólica en Iberoamérica. 1953-2018*<sup>3</sup>, which summarizes the various initiatives of CIDEP, including meetings and projects (for publishing, administration, training, production and diffusion,) that, although in some cases did not have the desired result, cannot however, be ignored. Above all, we cannot forget the people who

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<sup>1</sup> James Alberione, *San Paolo Bulletin*, March 1950.

<sup>2</sup> James Alberione, *UPS I* (1960), pp. 381-382.

<sup>3</sup> This text has been prepared by Father Antonio Carrera, and updated for this Assembly by Brother Darlei Zanon.

have given their time generously so that CIDEP could grow. Our heartfelt thanks to all of them.

With regard to history, I would just like to mention that the birth of CIDEP has been anticipated by other organisms created, in principle, to stimulate closer collaboration in the apostolate among the Circumscriptions of Latin America. The first was the *Centro de Ediciones Paulinas Latinoamericanas (CEPLA)*, whose constitution was commissioned by Father Alberione with his letter of July 14<sup>th</sup> 1960, immediately after the month of spiritual exercises held in Ariccia in April 1960, and it continued till 1972. Always in search of a better organization of the apostolate, in July 1973 *l'Encuentro Paulino Latinoamericano (EPLA)* was born and in 1980 the EPLITA was formed for meetings of sectors, both with the Daughters of St. Paul. Both these experiences were then concluded in 1987.

It should be noted that the 1<sup>st</sup> *International Seminar of Pauline Publishers (1<sup>st</sup> SIEP)*, held in Ariccia-Milan from 17 September to 2 October 1988, was necessary to rethink and give new impetus to the international organizations of the apostolate. In fact, in November 14, 1988, after this Seminar, the *International Technical Committee for the Apostolate (CTIA)* was born. In 1991 the *Secretariado de Apostolado Latinoamericano (SAL)* of the Daughters of St. Paul was created and, in the same year, on 29 November, the *Centro Ibero-americano de los Editores Paulinos (CIDEP) (Centre for Latin America Pauline Publishers)* was created.

In the 6<sup>th</sup> General Chapter (Ariccia 15 March-16 April 1992) gave impetus to the growth of these Organisms as stated in the formulation of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Priority of the Final Document: «Widen the sphere of our communication of the Gospel, through a global multimedia project that, through the planning and the national and international coordination of people and resources, reaches everyone, especially the poor, the distant, the great masses».

With this in mind, the other two continental organizations for the apostolate were established in 1992: the *CAP-ESW* and the *Europe Group* (including Canada and the Congo) and, in the same year, the adoption of the new logo “*San Paolo*” came into effect. It is also good to remember the elaboration of the *Manual of Authority*, which was approved by the General Government *ad experimentum* in 1995 and, finally, in the VIII General Chapter of 2004, with the title *Manual of the Service of Authority in the Society of Saint Paul*.

## **2. From the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 2<sup>nd</sup> SIEP: a changing world**

The 1<sup>st</sup> SIEP was an important moment in the journey of our mission<sup>4</sup>, especially for the reflections on the meaning of the concept of “Pauline Publisher”<sup>5</sup>, on the need to assume the new means of communication and regarding the organization. Although in the following years the Congregation did not take significant steps in the field of multimedia, at the organizational level there have been several developments. In addition to the structural aspects, already mentioned, the 1<sup>st</sup> SIEP was important in establishing, over time, the concept of a single multimedia publisher, the figure of the Director General of the apostolate (with his Council), the need of preparing an Apostolic Project of the Circumscription, of estimates and budgets, of the organization chart, of the function manuals, etc.

It is certain that not all the Circumscriptions of the Congregation have taken the same steps in putting into practice these guidelines the General Government issued through the CTIA. However, specifically in the case of Latin-American area, an effort has been made, as a

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<sup>4</sup> With reference to the 1<sup>st</sup> SIEP, this continues to be a point of reference for reflection on our apostolate, leaving aside, of course, the statistical data and the communicational and ecclesial contexts of the time.

<sup>5</sup> See the articles in the Acts of the 1<sup>st</sup> SIEP: *Introduction to the International Seminar for the Pauline Publishers of the Society of St. Paul* (Father Renato Perino); *The Concepts of Publishers – Publishing – Publication of Father Alberione* (Father Giancarlo Rocca) and *How the publishing of Father Alberione was born and how it flourished* (Father Franco Pierini).

whole, to improve the apostolic organization. In this journey, CIDEP has been an organisation that collaborated with the Circumscriptions, obtaining, we can say, good results, especially where such indications were taken seriously and where there has been real continuity between the successive people in charges for the apostolate.

From 16 to 21 October 2017 the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Seminar of the Pauline Publishers (2<sup>nd</sup> SIEP) took place in Ariccia, organized with a view to updating the document *Editorial Lines, Contents, Recipients for the Pauline Apostolate*, requested by the X General Chapter. As we know, the *Editorial Lines*, revised and updated, were approved by the General Government on 5 June last and will be studied in this Assembly to shed light on the steps we must take, like CIDEP, in the coming years, given that an important part of the demands of the 10<sup>th</sup> General Chapter is regarding precisely this document, “*Let the Circumscription Governments assume the responsibility for its application in their pastoral context*” (see operative line I.1.2).

We are aware that a good 29 years have passed between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> SIEP, during which the world has changed in every sense, especially in the field of communication, with the advent of the digital environment. In fact, among the many questions we asked ourselves at the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> SIEP, there was one that we can consider fundamental: who is the Pauline publisher in a society in continuous transformation, mainly with the advent of digital technologies?

We are aware that today «it is no longer just about “using” instruments of communication, but about living in a largely digitalized culture, which has very profound impacts on the notion of time and space, on the perception of self, others and the world, on the way to communicate, to learn, to get information, to get in touch with others»<sup>6</sup>. For our part, as a Congregation, it is not simply a matter of being present in this environment like any other person, but of living it and evangelizing it with the Pauline style of being and doing.

Evidently, speaking of the digital environment, we do not want to overshadow or forget the apostolic reality of the press. Paper communication is still an important means in the CIDEP area, although we note that digital reality is causing great changes in this publishing sector. We must continue to invest – with sustainable initiatives – in this means and to do this job well, but always with due caution. Furthermore, we remember that there is no break but complementarity between the virtual world and the real world. Everything is part of today’s human life. «*The digital environment is not a parallel or purely virtual world, but it is part of the daily reality of many people, especially the younger ones*»<sup>7</sup>. Therefore, the challenge for us Paulines is to integrate the traditional means of communication with the digital environment, which together form the specific field of our apostolate.

### **3. Rethinking the structures and the mode of action**

Considering the changes caused by digital technology in the field of communication, which we see clearly affecting our apostolate, we must think about what to do at CIDEP level. What the objective of the last General Chapter affirms still continues to be a challenge: «*Being aware of the signs of the times, renew the momentum of our apostolic activity by converting ourselves, our communities and our apostolic structures to reach everyone, especially the periphery also using the new languages of communication*».

We must, in this Assembly, among other things, decide on some action plan in the apostolic field to be taken together and also rethink the structure of CIDEP, decisions that must respond to the needs of the present times. However, simultaneously, we must also realize that the transformation of our apostolic structures, as our X General Chapter affirmed,

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<sup>6</sup> *Final Document of the Synod of Bishops on Youth*, 27 October 2018, n. 21.

<sup>7</sup> Pope Benedict XVI, *Message for the 47th World Communications Day*.

depends above all on the conversion of each person. It is in this prospect that the Annual Letter of the Superior General this year was written, which opens with the words of our Founder: «*The apostolate is a fruit, and the fruit comes from the plant: if the plant is healthy, the fruit will be abundant; but if the plant is sick, the fruit will either be missing or scarce*»<sup>8</sup>.

It is therefore essential, in the journey of renewal, first of all to present the identity of the Pauline publisher, in the sense we have inherited it from our Founder, an identity that must be an expression of faith in Jesus and his Gospel, lived on the horizon of our institutional charism, trying to embody it, with creative fidelity, in the cultural context in which we live. It is true that the future depends on the apostolic choices we make, but we cannot deny that these, in turn, depend on «*the capacity to preserve our identity, that is, to cultivate the meaning of Pauline life as “communicating and consecrated apostles”*». This means that the future will be mainly characterized by the theme of the person, because it is precisely the people who build it starting from their fundamental choices»<sup>9</sup>. In fact, the Pauline publisher depends on listening skills to choose contents, dynamism, *parrhesia*, creativity, strategies, organization, etc.

Structures are also part of these choices and are important, but as “means” and not as “ends”, as a means of sustaining apostolic options. The structures exist for people, in our case, who are dedicated to evangelization with the specific charism in the world of communication, not the other way round; otherwise everything stops. Then we need the ability to see which structures respond to today’s apostolic work. Do the structures we have today respond to the real needs of our apostolate or do we only keep them by habit?

We cannot comply with the habit. As Pope Francis notes, speaking of pastoral care in a general way, «*Complacency is seductive; it tells us that there is no point in trying to change things, that there is nothing we can do, because this is the way things have always been and yet we always manage to survive. By force of habit we no longer stand up to evil. We “let things be”, or as others have decided they ought to be*». Then, the Pope shows us a path to overcome the complacency: «*Yet let us allow the Lord to rouse us from our torpor, to free us from our inertia. Let us rethink our usual way of doing things; let us open our eyes and ears, and above all our hearts, so as not to be complacent about things as they are, but unsettled by the living and effective word of the risen Lord*»<sup>10</sup>.

When we speak of structures we refer, yes, to the apostolic structure of each Circumscription, but also to the structure of CIDEP, as an organisation, as its Statute affirms. The CIDEP, in fact, was born to «*develop and implement a common strategy to create new initiatives: coordinate, promote, develop and supervise the apostolic and formative projects of common interest of CIDEP to be a single multimedia publisher, with regard to the image, content and editorial policies*». We will require a corresponding structure to manage the goal of CIDEP and the concrete action plans that will emerge from this Assembly. Therefore, we cannot be afraid of adapting it to the times of today, with the aim of achieving the pastoral results that the people of God expect.

#### **4. Communication: charism and method**

In the process of discernment and pursuit of renewal of the apostolate and the organizational structure suitable for the times of today, as we have said above, the “person”, with his ability to establish communication channels, is important. As we have already written on another occasion, «*the identity of the Pauline does not coincide only with his work in the specific*

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<sup>8</sup> James Alberione, *Vademecum* (edited by Angelo Colacrai), Edizioni Paoline, Cinisello Balsamo, 1992, n. 961.

<sup>9</sup> Valdir José De Castro, *Report to the X General Assembly of CIDEP, Evangelizing in joy as communicating apostles and as consecrated persons in the Latin American reality*, São Paulo (Brazil), November 11, 2015.

<sup>10</sup> Pope Francis, *Gaudete et Exsultate*, n. 137.

*environment of communication, but also with his understanding of himself as a "man of communication", as a person of true relationships, which makes a constitutive part of his being and action in the dimension of communication»<sup>11</sup>.*

In this sense, it is opportune to consider that the conclusions of the 1<sup>st</sup> SIEP — with its insistence on a particular type of "corporate" apostolic organization — were inspired by the prevailing communication model of the time, that of three decades ago, in which the reference was to the traditional means of mass communication (printed magazines and newspapers, radio, TV, cinema, audio visuals, etc.), i.e., a hierarchical, vertical, authoritarian communication model, of one towards many... This model of company and of relationships — which focuses on "technical tools" and not on people — has inspired our apostolic organization and, to a certain extent, also our *Manual of Authority*.

The communication context in which the 2<sup>nd</sup> SIEP was held is marked instead by the digital environment, characterized by web communication, which is interactive and non-hierarchical, a model where the "recipient" is increasingly transformed into the "interlocutor". As we have seen in the 2<sup>nd</sup> SIEP, the culture generated by the digital environment, which focuses on the person and, therefore, fosters an increasingly relational communication, is also marking the publishing organization. As already stated, *"the publisher of the future produces relationships"*.<sup>12</sup>

As one of the speakers of the 2<sup>nd</sup> SIEP noted, regarding the current trends in publishing, *"communication is one of the components, or if you want, one of the ways to achieve some qualities of a system: in our case, the publishing system. It is not a support or an additional modality within the publishing organization: it is a premise, on which depends the effectiveness of the entire activity that takes place, because the publishing work, in all its phases and in all its processes, lives on the communication that runs through the publishing house as an essential link between the various departments, and also lives on the communication that the publishing house activates to enter into a relationship with its own public or with its intermediaries"*.<sup>13</sup>

In addition to this internal aspect, there is also the external one, fundamental for our mission. In this perspective, *«we realize that to announce the Gospel it is not enough to be experts in new technologies and digital communication. Although this is undeniably important. Evangelization requires, above all, the ability to meet women and men of our time, with their wounds and their anxieties, with the doubts and fears they carry in their hearts, to try to offer them an encounter with the God of hope who breaks the wall of indifference and offers a reason for living, a reason to hope»*<sup>14</sup>.

However, it is necessary to realize that in these relational dynamics the net is not sufficient and neither is social media. In fact, it is also necessary to create direct contacts with the interlocutors, to bring to all our testimony and the contents of our publications. The Pauline Publisher, in this sense, cannot be reduced to a street vendor of religious ideas, but must try to be, above all, a builder of relationships, of communion, of community. It is a matter of giving birth to a new humanity, starting from within. Therefore it is necessary that every Pauline be a person who listens, which is an indispensable attitude in the process of communication, a person who "creates relationships" to convey the "contents".

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<sup>11</sup> Valdir José De Castro, *Annual Letter of the Superior General: "Apostles Communicators for a Culture of Encounter"*, 2018.

<sup>12</sup> Federico Badaloni, *Rethinking the role of the publisher, today*, in *Acts of the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Seminar of Pauline Publishers*, Ariccia, 16-21 October 2017, p. 191.

<sup>13</sup> Giuliano Vignini, *Reality and trends in publishing*, in *Acts of the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Seminar of Pauline Publishers*, op. cit., p. 182.

<sup>14</sup> Dario Edoardo Viganò, *Which models of communication the Church needs in the world today*, in *Acts of the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Seminar of Pauline Publishers*, op. cit., pp. 100-101.

In this sense, the Apostle Paul is a model for us as a person who listens, a listening that translates into a continuous process of incarnation of the Gospel in different cultures. In this perspective we can also highlight *«his ability to build collaborative interactions, involving in the proclamation men and women who, together with him, become protagonists in the construction of the first communities; the inauguration of a totally new missionary style, strategically articulated through a "network" of domestic churches that, starting from the great cities of the Mediterranean world, extends throughout the empire; flexibility in valuing every situation, every experience and every means, transforming them into a precious opportunity to communicate the Gospel; and, at the basis of everything, the living experience of Christ, crucified, dead and risen, that Paul communicates not as a set of abstract concepts or memories received, but as a dynamic and engaging experience that invades him»*<sup>15</sup>. And, again: *«By meeting and listening to others, Paul derives his own identity, his ultimate vocation, the truth of his missionary mandate. By proclaiming, one is proclaimed, and – analogously – by listening one is heard»*<sup>16</sup>.

## 5. Which CIDEP do we want?

Dear friends, I have shared with you some ideas that I consider important for the work of this House in view of an evaluation and projection into the future of CIDEP. In this process of discernment and decision, I also invite you to pay attention to what was reflected in the 2<sup>nd</sup> SIEP and, in a special way, to try to put into practice in the Latin American reality the *Publishing Guidelines, Identity, contents and interlocutors of the Pauline apostolate*.

In addition to the reports, in the Acts of the 2<sup>nd</sup> SIEP you can find summaries of the group work, which are appropriate proposals to reflect on and which serve to rethink Pauline publishing in the Latin American area. Among the various suggestions, I will take up here at least five, which make direct reference to international bodies and which mention some expectations regarding this matter of coordination of the apostolate:

- a) *«How to make our international bodies work with creativity and a clear identity to help us communicate with today's world. It is a matter of creating research centres and proposals for the improvement of our activities also through the Centres of Study in Communication»*<sup>17</sup>.
- b) *«Moving from a widespread publishing organizational model (Circumscriptions/Nations) to a centralized cross-media publishing organization, a single international publisher»*<sup>18</sup>.
- c) *«To relaunch the functioning of the international organizations (CIDEP) that have lost their way and we believe they are necessary for the development of the apostolate in Latin America. It is a kind of Literary Agency that buys and sells significant works, promotes initiatives that help each of the nations. It can be a center of innovation for our apostolate»*<sup>19</sup>.
- d) *«Reorganise the geographical area groups, CIDEP, GEC and CAP-ESW, to think and manage projects as a team»*<sup>20</sup>.

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<sup>15</sup> Giuseppe Mazza - Giacomo Perego (edd.), *Paolo an announcement strategy. An identikit of an Impactful Communication*, Edizioni San Paolo, Cinisello Balsamo (Milan), 2009, p. 17.

<sup>16</sup> Ibidem, p. 16.

<sup>17</sup> *Summary of Group Work*, in *Acts of the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Seminar of Pauline Publishers*, op. cit., p. 369.

<sup>18</sup> Ibidem, p. 370.

<sup>19</sup> Ibidem, p. 388.

<sup>20</sup> Ibidem, p. 404.

- e) «*Examine international organisations (see CIDEP) and encourage or renew them, for example, to form an international team of editors who take advantage of the easiness of communication*»<sup>21</sup>.

We recall that also the Interchapter in Aparecida (Brazil) from 15 to 25 February 2018<sup>22</sup>, made reference to the international Bodies. Among the various commitments undertaken by the General Government, there is the intention of is the request to «*give continuity to the study on the identity and effectiveness of the international Organizations of the apostolate (GEC, CIDEP, CAP-ESW)*»<sup>23</sup>. Among the recommendations of the Major Superiors is the request to «*revamp or restructure the International Bodies so that they will contribute to becoming a true multimedia publisher*»<sup>24</sup>.

In addition to the organisational aspects, there are three points that I would like to highlight, among many others, which will certainly be present in the discussions:

- a) **Biblical Pastoral Care:** without underestimating the publishing choices regarding the Family and Communication present in the Publishing Guidelines, Biblical pastoral care, as we know, must occupy a prominent place in our apostolate<sup>25</sup>. Examine to what extent the Circumscriptions that make up CIDEP value the San Paolo/Paulus Bible Centre and the Congregational Biblical Pastoral Project. What initiatives, in the biblical field, is possible to undertake in common?
- b) **The Pauline Centers for Studies in Communication:** in the area of CIDEP we have two Pauline Centers for Studies in Communication presently functioning: COMFIL (Mexico-Cuba) and FAPCOM (Brazil), attended by our young people in formation and also by external students. We are also planning UNISANPABLO (Colombia), already approved by the local civil government. In congratulating the Province of Colombia-Ecuador-Panamá on this initiative, and hoping that soon this University can begin its activities, we remind you that all these Centers must follow the indications of the *Guidelines of Pedagogical Identity and fundamental operational choices for the Pauline Centers for Studies in Communication*. Related to this point, there is an element that can give even wider answers to the publishing challenges facing us today: we recall, in fact, that in the document *Publishing Guidelines* we speak of a *International Observatory of Communication* in the future.
- c) **Publishing choices in harmony with the universal Church:** it is essential, as our Founder already used to do, to have as reference in our publishing choices, in addition to the concrete situations of the reality of each Circumscription, also the guidance of the universal Magisterium of the Church. In this sense, documents such as *Evangelii Gaudium*, *Amoris Laetitia*, *Laudato si* and the Final Document of the Synod on Youth must be used as orientation in the choice of our publications. The next *Synod on the Amazon* will be important, especially for the CIDEP area, and will deal with the theme of the Congregation's publishing choice for the year 2019.

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<sup>21</sup> Ibidem, p. 405.

<sup>22</sup> *Interchapter Assembly of the Society of Saint Paul*. Aparecida (Brazil), 15-25 February 2018, in São Paulo, year 93, no. 451, May 2018.

<sup>23</sup> Ibidem, p. 62.

<sup>24</sup> Ibidem, p. 64.

<sup>25</sup> «*First of all, try to spread the Bible, the Gospel; the two royal works. Have the Gospel in every house as one has the Crucifix. The Gospel heals the spirit, instils fervour, heals evils. The Gospel is more than a medal; when they are sick, let them keep the Gospel!*», James Alberione, *Haec meditare I*, 1939, p. 207.

We insist on the fact that it is necessary to have a good preparation of the Paulines in order to make progress in the apostolate. We need to invest in the formation of our young people in order to work fruitfully in the biblical area, in communication, in formation and in many other areas that concern our mission. Invest in “professionalism”, without separating this from the apostolic dimension and other dimensions of Pauline life, always focusing on an integral formation.

We hope that in this meeting a project can emerge that will help to strengthen the ties of collaboration between the Circumscriptions of CIDEP, “collaboration” and not “competition”, remembering that we are “apostles”, not “merchants”. In this sense, the invitation is to develop all the means to grow in internal communication, working together Paulines and lay people, in synergy, and also in communion and collaboration with the Pauline Family, in a special way with the Daughters of St Paul. We are all called to build the culture of encounter, as Pope Francis desires, on the basis of our concrete actions.

We thank the Mexico-Cuba Province, in the person of Father Faustino Hernández, Provincial Superior, who has welcomed us for this Assembly, as well as the Pauline community of Guadalajara. Our gratitude also goes to Father Alberto Scalenghe, President of the Council of Major Superiors of CIDEP, and to Father Andrés Monroy, Executive Secretary of CIDEP, for their precious work at the service of this international body, as well as to Father Jose Pottayil and Brother Darlei Zanon. To each one of you who, in spite of your various commitments, has come to project into the future this International Body of our Congregation, our heartfelt thanks!

Finally, a special mention should be made of our confreres from the Portugal-Angola Region who do not have their representation in this Assembly because of the canonical visit of the General Government, which falls precisely on the occasion of the celebration of the 75th anniversary of our presence in Portugal. We are united with them in our prayers.

May Jesus Master, through the intercession of Saint Paul, accompany us with his light! Do a good job!

Guadalajara (Mexico), 27 November 2018



*Valdir José De Castro*  
Father Valdir José De Castro  
Superior General