

8TH GENERAL CHAPTER OF THE SOCIETY OF ST. PAUL (2004)
“*To be St. Paul alive today. A Congregation that strains forward*”

Very dear brothers and sisters,

After having listened to the four conferences of experts on the theme of the General Chapter and the organization of the Chapter bodies, we have dedicated some days to getting to know the state of our Congregation.

The respective Provincial and Regional Superiors illustrated to all the Chapter Delegates the complex reality of the ten Provinces and of the eight Regions. Aside from the written texts, some speakers made use of multi-media products that stimulated the attention of the audience. Last to speak was the Superior General, Fr. Pietro Campus, reading before the Chapter Delegates the report that the General Government has drafted, thanks to the experience of six years of responsibility over the entire Congregation. The Superior General's report, appreciated by the Assembly, has been supplemented by two other interventions: one of the Postulator General of the Pauline Family and the other by the Bursar General. Every exposition was further expounded in the dialogue with the Chapter Assembly.

With the reports over, the Chapter Delegates had the opportunity of an entire afternoon for a personal reflection so that, with the help of the Spirit and the available documentation, they could identify the current needs of the Congregation. The fruit of the personal study shall then be completed by the work of study groups and by the presentation at the Chapter hall.

In order to further deepen the knowledge of the state of the whole Congregation and in order to begin hypothesizing a plan that could translate the Chapter theme, “*To be St. Paul alive today. A Congregation that strains forward*”, the Chapter Delegates have available to them the interpretative reading of the results of the questionnaire made in view of the Chapter, the *Instrumentum laboris* prepared up by the Preparatory Commission and the *Acts of the 7th General Chapter*.

The Chapter is committed to orient the Congregation towards the future, while integrating the past and studying with frankness the state of the present. The personal meditation, the work of the study groups and the assembly meetings are held in an atmosphere of prayer, of attentive listening and of the will to plan.

In order that the Spirit may continue to enlighten the Chapter which longs to seek God's plan for us today, we once more solicit your prayer which, in your many messages, you have assured us.

The Secretary of Information
Bro. Lorenzo Vezzani

Ariccìa (Rome), 30 April 2004

