



Rekindle the gift you have received.
*Creative fidelity to hundred years
of Pauline Charism.*

CHAPTER DOCUMENT

Ariccia, 25 April - 15 May 2010



PRESENTATION

Dear Brothers,

as is known to everybody, from 25 April to 15 May 2010 we have celebrated at Ariccia the 9th General Chapter of the Society of Saint Paul, guided by the theme **Rekindle the gift you have received. *Creative fidelity to hundred years of the Pauline charism.***

The official text of the **Chapter Document** that we publish is fruit of our common prayer, reflection, discussion and final approval. The Paulines capitular have wanted, first of all, to reaffirm by means of an *Introduction* the renewed identity of the Pauline charism in the XXI century and in the prospect of the centenary of 2014. Subsequently, from the strengthened relaunching of the certainties of the Pauline charism are derived: *the general objective, the priorities and the guidelines, the message to the lay collaborators and the message to the Pauline Family.*

With the publication of the present text starts the most important complementary phase for the Congregation: all the communities and every Pauline have now the responsibility to know, meditate, assimilate and put into practice what has been affirmed and programmed for the next six years of our Pauline life in every part of the world.

We entrust to the intercession of the Pauline Family in heaven, in particular to blessed James Alberione and to blessed Timothy Giaccardo, the commitment of all of us to rekindle the gift we have received, so that in union with Mary, Queen of the Apostles, we may obtain for the Congregation a renewed Pentecost of sanctification and apostolate.

Rome, 22 May 2010

*Feast of the B.V. Mary, Queen of the Apostles
and Vigil of Pentecost*

Fr. Silvio Sassi, SSP
Superior General

INTRODUCTION

Pauline identity since hundred years of foundation

1. *«He felt deeply obliged to prepare himself to do something for the Lord and the men of the new century with whom he would have lived»* (AD 15). With these words our blessed Founder **Fr. James Alberione** summarizes his experience of meeting with Christ, present in the eucharist, during the night that divided the 19th century from the 20th century. For us Paulines they come back to be an essential point of reference, at one hundred years since the birth of our Congregation and from the start of the Pauline Family.

In that same night Fr. Alberione had understood that it was necessary, in order to serve the Church and the men of the new century, to use the *«new means»* of progress and *«operate with others, in organization»* (AD 20). He has truly been a prophet. He writes, in fact, that *«roaming with his mind in the future, it seemed to him that in the new century generous souls would have felt what he felt»* (AD 17). We are the continuers of the illumination and charism that God has given to the Church and to the world through Fr. Alberione. Therefore we also want to look into the future that stands before us, to the men of this new century, continuing to do something for them. Even “preparing ourselves” to do better, **so that also in the new “digital continent” wherein we live the light of the Gospel may shine**, the face of Christ may be recognized, his voice may be heard and he may be accepted as the Way, the Truth and the Life.

Fr. Alberione has handed over to us **Saint Paul** as father, model and inspirer. He asks us to imitate his *«personality, sanctity, heart, intimacy with Jesus, work in Dogma and Morals, imprint left in the organization of the Church, zeal for all peoples»* (AD 64). Upon the example of Saint Paul we renew our passion for Christ, rooted in union with him until we are able to say *«I live now not I, but Christ lives in me»* (Gal 2,20). We also want to ignite again our passion for humanity: in a globalized world, where technological conquests have opened new ways of communication, creating a new culture, we

feel the same apostolic anxiousness of Saint Paul: «Woe to me if I don't announce the Gospel!» (1Cor 9,16).

At one hundred years since our foundation, following the steps of Saint Paul, all of us Paulines, priests and disciples, **commit to re-kindle the gift received from God** through blessed James Alberione with renewed apostolic thrust, faith, enthusiasm and generosity, in creative fidelity; with the same spirit of unity that has characterized our first generations, so that a new "Pauline spring-time" may come to realization.

2. How can we be the **apostles of communication** also in the new century that we have entered?

First of all, observant of the signs of the times, **we decisively insert ourselves in the culture of communication and in the field of the new technologies**, with a credible apostolic zeal and with a spirit of dialog and openness. We want to **announce the Gospel in communication and employing communication to the whole man and to all men**.

A **change of mentality** coupled with an **adequate preparation** is necessary. Thus we shall be able to adopt the new modalities in the planning and operative stages that make effective our apostolate today. Therefore we shall wisely accompany above all the young Paulines in their apostolic preparation. Moreover, we shall valorize the **collaboration of the laity** and the strategies of coordination at all levels.

We shall be attentive to the geographical axis of the Congregation, ever more shifting toward Latin America, Asia and Africa; to the challenges of a multicultural, multilingual and multireligious society. And we shall think of those Countries where we are not yet present, but who ask for our specific apostolate. We shall commit to collaborate with the structures of communication of the dioceses and to offer to the society the service of formators for the discernment and good use of communication.

3. Our missionary commitment in the culture of communication is not individual: **we share the charism with many brothers**. The true wealth of the Congregation are its members. We believe the

first apostolic strategy to be the synergy that derives from the charity that unites us with the divine Master, among ourselves, and with all the men and women of our time, to whom we want to bring the good news.

We therefore believe as fundamental the sense of belongingness and participation of everybody in the vocational, formative and apostolic goals of the community.

Our communities must be exemplary, capable of letting mutual love transpire, as well as fraternity, friendship: vivid testimony of our communion in Christ. In them must vibrate **the riches of our spirituality**, in the sharing of the missionary ideal of Saint Paul.

The communitarian dimension of our identity is not exhausted in the space of the local community, but opens itself to the ever widening circles of the Circumscription, of the Congregation, of the Pauline Family, of the Church. From our sense of community derive the universality and the missionariness that characterize our apostolic vocation. On the operative plane, from the communitarian dimension of our identity arise the needs of coordination, organization and solidarity.

4. To be apostles of communication, in communion of life, requires **authentic persons**. Right from the beginning Fr. James Alberione, in his charismatic illumination, clearly understood that *«it is necessary to develop the entire human personality for one's own salvation and for a more fruitful apostolate: mind, heart and will»* (AD 22). Fidelity to our charism therefore requires **the development in Christ of all our potentialities**: intelligence, will, sentiments, physical forces, particular qualities. Every talent buried or not put at the service of our specific mission amounts to infidelity. We feel the need to grow in human values, in Christian formation founded on the experience of Christ, in assimilation and vital practice of the Pauline spirituality. Because of this, indispensable is the deep study of Saint Paul with a serious updated and concrete knowledge of the charismatic inheritance left to us by the Founder.

Pauline formation must be integral and must always have our mission as its end. It must therefore target the Pauline as an apostle of communication. This asks us to give a great value to initial

and continuing preparation, to invest in specialized studies and research so as to remain at the level of the challenges of evangelization in the culture of communication. The commitment of constant updating is a fundamental expression of our fidelity to the charism.

5. To be apostles of communication also for the mankind of the new century, in creative fidelity to the charism received, we Paulines need a **qualitative leap**. We want “to do something” for the persons of our era, make ourselves «all for all» like Saint Paul (1Cor 9,22), imitate the Son of God who «*made himself man to find man, the lost sheep, and to bring him back to God the Father*» (AD 188).

We are aware of our poverty and of our limitations in the face of the complexity of the challenges that await us. If we look with realism at the world of today, we notice that there is no lack of wars and violence, terrorism and religious fanaticism. The international economic crisis renders ever more evident the division between rich and poor. The world of communication is often at the hands of the economically and politically powerful, and running through it are voices that entice and deceive.

However, we are sure that our mission is a work of God, founded on the promise made by Christ to our Founder: «*Do not fear, I am with you. From here I want to enlighten. Be sorry for your sins*» (AD 152).

We are therefore encouraged by the boldness of blessed Fr. James Alberione who has heard the voice of God and has started the Congregation in the midst of the skirmishes of the First World War. We are also encouraged by the example of fidelity of our elderly or ailing confreres. We are not afraid to set sail in this “digital sea” because we trust in the Lord. In communion with him and among ourselves, urged by love for Christ to love the men of today, we look at the horizon of the new century with **our hearts full of hope**. May the apostle Paul guide us in this renewed missionary thrust and may the Virgin Mary, Queen of the Apostles, assist us with her maternal protection.

Ariccia (Rome), 15 May 2010

THE MEMBERS OF THE IX GENERAL CHAPTER OF THE SSP

OBJECTIVE

In the centenary of the Pauline charism, we commit to rekindle through creative fidelity the gift received from God through Saint Paul and blessed James Alberione, announcing in fraternal communion the Gospel of Christ the Master, the Way, the Truth and the Life in the culture of communication.

PRIORITIES AND GUIDELINES

1. APOSTOLATE

- 1.1 Recover the apostolic audacity of the origins, giving concreteness to our missionary thrust through new presences, attention to the faraway and adopting new ways and new languages in communication.**
 - 1.1.1 On the occasion of the centenary, the General Government is to strengthen our reality in Africa and study a project that broadens our presence even in other continents with new foundations, entrusting its realization to the Circumscriptions capable of doing it.**
 - 1.1.2 The Circumscription governments are to start or consolidate – before the Interchapter – our apostolic presence in the digital world.**
- 1.2 Grow in collaboration whether inside the Congregation or toward the Pauline Family and the laity.**

- 1.2.1 The General Government is to review the statutes of the International Apostolic Organisms so that they may be more operative, and their activities be made known.
- 1.2.2 The General Government and the circumscription Governments, in accord with the International Apostolic Organisms are to elaborate a project that coordinates the biblical pastoral of the Congregation.
- 1.2.3 The Government of circumscription through the General Director of the Apostolate is to define and realize a formation program for the lay collaborators, intended to make better their professionalism and to increase reciprocal knowledge and collaboration.
- 1.2.4 The circumscription Government is to verify annually the Apostolic Project in order to guarantee its realization.
- 1.3 **Strengthen the “pedagogical choice,” becoming formators in the field of communication in the service of the Church.**
 - 1.3.1 The General Government is to coordinate and harmonize the specializations in the field of formation and apostolate in order to answer the common needs of the Congregation and of the individual circumscriptions.
 - 1.3.2 The General Government is to support with bourses of study the persons that the Governments of circumscription orient to a specialization in communication.
 - 1.3.3 The General Government, from its first year of activity, is to develop the potentialities and the interchange in the Centers of specialised formation in communication operating in the Congregation (COMFIL, FAPCOM, SPSF, etc.).
 - 1.3.4 The Governments of circumscription are to program with the approval of the General Government the specializations in the new technologies of the “digital continent.”

2. COMMUNITY AND SPIRITUALITY

- 2.1 Motivate our communities so that they may be a place of communication with God, with ourselves and with others, grow in fraternity and be capable of accepting and injecting enthusiasm among the young men by their witness of the Pauline charism.**
 - 2.1.1 The Major Superior is to solicit every community to elaborate its own community project and, after having approved it, verify its realization every six months.
 - 2.1.2 The local Superior is to see to it that in the project of his community the necessary space for the knowledge and deepening of the documents of the Congregation be given.
- 2.2 Revitalize the fraternity so as to become credible witnesses of our vocation and mission.**
 - 2.2.1 The Superiors, together with those responsible of the apostolate, are to valorize all the persons of the Congregation, involving even the elderly or the sick.
- 2.3 Reread and revive in today's time our specific spirituality and our charismatic inheritance with particular reference to the eucharistic and biblical dimension.**
 - 2.3.1 The General Government is to entrust to the Center of Pauline Spirituality the task of preparing aids for the reading and comprehension of reference charismatic texts.
 - 2.3.2 The Superiors of circumscription are to valorize the Course of Formation on the Charism of the Pauline Family, as one of the privileged means for knowing our charismatic inheritance.

3. VOCATIONAL ANIMATION AND FORMATION

- 3.1 Reformulate as soon as possible the vocation pastoral for the future of the Congregation.**
 - 3.1.1 The General Government through the SIF is to study the adequate strategies to better the formation of the formators and of the vocation animators.
 - 3.1.2 The Governments of circumscription are to prepare the project of vocation pastoral, inculturating the Pauline identity and mission in the various geographical areas. They are to verify its realization.
 - 3.1.3 The Coordinator in the circumscription for vocation pastoral and his collaborators are to promote the Pauline vocation in its double expression of priest and disciple, and to ensure its specific formative accompaniment.
- 3.2. Elevate the general cultural level of the Congregation and to “create thought.”**
 - 3.2.1 The General Government is to propose as annual theme an aspect drawn from the general objective of the Chapter.
 - 3.2.2 Every Circumscription is to assume the annual theme proposed by the General Government and include it in its program of permanent formation.
 - 3.2.3 The Government of circumscription, in accord with the Superior General and taking into account its own urgencies in the apostolate and formation, is to elaborate a program of specialization for the juniors and for the young perpetually professed.

- 3.3 To make better our ongoing formation through a broader knowledge of Saint Paul, of blessed James Alberione and of the documents of the Congregation.**
- 3.3.1 The Superior General is to draft an annual letter that has as basic reference a fundamental work of blessed James Alberione.
- 3.3.2 The Governments of circumscription are to valorize the content of the international Seminars “The actualization of the Pauline charism in the third millennium: spirituality and mission” (2008) and “International Seminar on Saint Paul” (2009), elaborating aids for animation and for other community projects.

4. ADMINISTRATION AND SERVICE OF AUTHORITY

- 4.1 Utilize in optimal way the human and financial resources of the Congregation in function of formation and mission.**
- 4.1.1 The General Government is to establish new modalities of application of the Pauline Fund at the service of the Congregation.
- 4.1.2 The Government of circumscription, in accord with the Superior General, is to promote the formation of some Paulines in the area of administrative management.
- 4.2 Review and update the norms of the Congregation.**
- 4.2.1 The General Government is to constitute in the course of this year a work Commission that orders the material up to now gathered and, involving the communities, suggests additional improvements to be proposed in the Interchapter in view of approval in the next General Chapter.

5. THE PAULINE FAMILY

- 5.1 To favor – inasmuch as “animator” – the unity and the convergence of the apostolic aims of the Pauline Family: «All the Institutes considered together form the Pauline Family. All the Institutes have a common origin. All have a common spirit. All have convergent aims» (UPS III, 185).**
- 5.1.1** The Superiors of circumscription are to commit to realize at least one meeting a year with the Governments of the Pauline Family in the Country.
- 5.2 Commit to give time to the care and promotion of the Pauline Institutes of Consecrated Secular Life (IPVSC) and to the Association of Pauline Cooperators.**
- 5.2.1** The Superior General is to handle the international coordination of the IPVSC.
- 5.2.2** Upon judgment of the Superior General or of the Superiors of circumscription, members of the IPVSC can be invited as observers during determinate moments of the General Chapter, Provincial Chapter or Regional Assembly.
- 5.2.3** The Superiors of circumscription and the Delegates are to be aware that the IPVSC are “work proper” of the Society of Saint Paul and belong to the pastoral project of the new evangelization of blessed James Alberione.
- 5.2.4** The local Superiors are to help the members of their communities to be aware that the IPVSC are “work proper” of the Society and to give just value to this vocation.

- 5.3 Do our best for an adequate preparation, celebration and subsequent valorization of the Centenary.**
- 5.3.1 The General Government is to indicate to the Governments of circumscription a “guideline” in view of the centenary of the Congregation so that it may be celebrated in a homogeneous and harmonious way.
- 5.3.2 The General Government is to promote the realization of an updated biographical volume regarding the Founder and the Congregation, and a volume with ample photographic documentation. It is to ponder, moreover, the possibility of producing a film or a documentary.

MESSAGE TO THE COLLABORATORS OF THE SSP

Dear collaborators,

We, the members of IX General Chapter of the Society of St. Paul, send you warm greetings and at the same time wish to express our appreciation for your significant contribution in our apostolic endeavours.

The Society of St. Paul is grateful to you for your valuable collaboration in fulfilling its charismatic mission handed down to us by Blessed James Alberione in the Church: to proclaim the gospel in and through the modern means of communication in the present culture of communication.

We come to you well aware that the challenges which await us in carrying out and in re-launching our apostolic mission demand a greater harmony, participation and responsibility also from your part. On the other hand, the richness of your persons expressed not only in the professionalism but also in the sharing of the same values, is a reason and an impulse for growth of the apostolic activity which we share.

Therefore, dear collaborators, the members of the IX General Chapter of the Society of St Paul send each one of you our sincere and warm greetings, imploring the Lord's blessings on you and on your families through the intercession of St Paul and of Blessed James Alberione.

Ariccia (Rome), 13 May 2010

THE MEMBERS OF IX GENERAL CHAPTER OF THE SSP

MESSAGE TO THE PAULINE FAMILY

Dear sisters and brothers,

Inspired by the theme of IX General Chapter: *"Rekindle the gift you have received. Creative fidelity to hundred years of Pauline Charism"*, in these days we have reflected on our Pauline identity.

We have had further confirmation of the value of being Pauline Family: your presence, your support, your prayer have accompanied our works. We are well aware of the small and great experiences which make us grow as brothers and sisters in the world. For this we thank the Lord and all of you.

At the same time, we have realized that there is a long way to go for the total realization of the plan of our father Founder, Blessed James Alberione, as emphatically expressed fifty years ago during a course of retreat of one month for the first Paulines conducted here at Ariccia. He tells us that *"the divine providence, along with the Society of St Paul, has given birth"* to various institutes of the Pauline Family, each one with its own government, norms, administration and a particular apostolate. Blessed Alberione emphasizes that *"all the Institutes together form the Pauline Family. All the Institutes have a common origin. All the Institutes have a common spirit. All the Institutes have converging goals"* (UPS III, 185).

Regarding you, brothers and sisters of the Pauline Secular Institutes of Consecrated Life, we have renewed our awareness of your importance and specific identity in the Pauline Family, and of our responsibility, in as much as you are a "charismatic work" of the Society of St Paul. With love we wish to improve our pilgrimage with you.

We also have given thanks to God for you, dear members and supporters of the Association of Pauline Cooperators for your vocation within the mission of the Pauline Family. May the Lord help us to journey with you with enthusiasm and collaboration.

The Superiors General have decided to celebrate together 2014 as the “centenary of the beginning of the Pauline Family”. We wish that this anniversary help us to:

- Understand better the charism of being Pauline Family as desired by the Lord through our Blessed Founder.
- Relaunch the apostolic collaboration in the complementarity of our apostolates.
- Reach a “comprehensive project of new evangelization” as Pauline Family that starting from common origin and spirituality, begin the fulfillment of that convergence of goals very dear to Blessed James Alberione.

May the Lord accompany us in this journey in creative fidelity to our Founder and make us capable of “*doing something for the men and women of today*” together, “*progressing a little each day*”.

Ariccia (Rome), 14 May 2010

MEMBERS OF THE IX GENERAL CHAPTER OF THE SSP

INDEX

Presentation of the Superior General	1
Introduction	2
Objective	6
Priorities and guidelines	6
1. Apostolate	6
2. Community and Spirituality	8
3. Vocational animation and Formation	9
4. Administration and Service of Authority	10
5. The Pauline Family	11
Message to the collaborators of the SSP	13
Message to the Pauline Family	14

Society of St Paul - General House
Via Alessandro Severo, 58 - 00145 ROMA
General Secretariat: seggen@stpauls.it
Tel. +39.06.5978.61 - Fax +39.06.5978.6602
www.paulus.net - information.service@paulus.net

May 2010 – Pro manuscripto