

Editorial Guidelines

Identity, contents and interlocutors of the Pauline apostolate

Introduction

«*I do all for the Gospel*» (1Cor 9:23). This motto of the X General Chapter is like a beacon that guides the Pauline apostolic action. Inspired by this broad horizon, the Capitulars have reiterated an essential aspect of our vocation: «*We are called, in the personal, communitarian and apostolic life, to be evangelizers like the Apostle Paul, in the culture of communication and according to the dynamism lived by Blessed James Alberione in the integral following and proclamation of Jesus Master, Way, Truth and Life*»¹. From the impulse that comes from this inspiration there emerges the need to «*creatively renew our missionary impetus at the service of the Word*»² and, in this broad perspective, also a request to update the document *Editorial guidelines, contents, recipients of the Pauline apostolate*, dating back to 2005, and entrusting to the Circumscription Governments the responsibility of its application in their pastoral context³.

To carry forward this process of updating and to begin a deeper reflection on the crucial themes of mission and Pauline life, the General Government, through the CTIA, convened the 2nd *International Seminar of Pauline Publishers* (2nd ISPP) from 16 to 21 October 2017. About 60 Paulines from around the world were able to reflect together on the new contexts and paradigms of communication, sharing their opinions and experiences on the impact of the significant changes in the publishing world – especially with the advent of digital language –, which naturally lead to a redefinition of the profile and priorities of the Pauline Publisher.

I. Identity of the Pauline Publisher

I.1 From Paul, the Pauline Publisher learns that true apostolic spirituality is that which bears witness to an experience of the crucified and risen Christ, the central and unique content of evangelization that gradually takes on different forms in the announcement. From Paul, the Pauline Publisher captures the ability to address the concrete questions of the world (at the ecclesial, community, social level, etc.) and his effort to adapt the language to each interlocutor^(*). It then assumes the dimension of pastoral spirit and universality, prophecy, zeal and total commitment, passion and audacity, the ability to listen and build a network of collaborators, apostolic dynamism and a sense of responsibility. From Paul he learns to do everything for the Gospel.

¹ Introduction to the *Final Document* of the X General Chapter.

² *Priority 1.1* of the X General Chapter.

³ Cf. *Operative Guideline 1.1.2* of the X General Chapter.

(*) In our context, an “interlocutor” is a person who is actively involved in a conversation; one who is taking part in a conversation or dialogue. Traditionally called “recipient” or “receiver”, in this document we now use the word “interlocutor” to emphasize the interaction and the active participation of both the giver and the receiver of the message.

1.2 Every Pauline, by his specific vocation, is a “publisher”. This is the “only purpose”⁴ – Father Alberione would say – of his life and his action, of his vocation and mission. The Pauline is a man called by Christ and consecrated to be an apostle of communication, to be essentially a “publisher” who gives form to an experience, who writes or translates his personal and community life of faith and encounter with Christ in words, texts, images, sounds, videos, bytes or in any other form that technology gradually develops; but also in experiences and initiatives where every language is at the service of the inculturation of the Gospel with and in communication. One who, after the example of Mary, gives (*editit*) the Saviour to the world⁵.

1.3 However, despite the great wealth of identity and content which the Pauline Publisher possesses, sometimes the method and the most appropriate forms are missing to share this treasure in a clearer, more precise, more incisive and meaningful way. Sometimes the wisdom to assume and immerse oneself in new fields and contexts – like those of the digital environment – is lacking as well as the courage to review structures, adapting them continually to real needs. Also, still wanting is the ability to give new impetus to some traditional forms of publishing – for example cinema, radio or television – that continue to be fundamental and very effective in different contexts.

1.4 Starting from the *1st International Seminar of the Pauline Publishers*, the Congregation has made a successful journey towards the concept of the *single multimedia Publisher*. The challenge now is to make a qualitative leap, with creativity and new resources, not limiting ourselves to structures or superficial proposals or focused on “products”. The single multimedia Pauline Publisher, exploring new forms of relationships and the possibilities of cross-media and transmedia narratives, has the challenge of fully embrace the digital revolution in the three moments of the apostolate: writing-creation (content), production-technical (form, supports) and promotion-diffusion (strategies).

1.5 The starting point for this qualitative change is to have an up-to-date, clear, concrete and strategic Apostolic Project, fostering synergies and collaboration between the various initiatives and apostolic areas, with common criteria and objectives. This means integrating all persons, communities, activities and initiatives onto a single track, aware that the Pauline Publisher is always a community subject, as it emerges from our charismatic heritage⁶ and as our own Constitutions point out: «*Since the specific goal of the Society of St. Paul is attained through an apostolate that is par excellence communitarian, all the members are to cultivate fraternal collaboration and friendship and to give to one another that mutual help to correspond to their common vocation*»⁷. Every project and personal initiative, «*excluding centralization, self-sufficiency and individualism*»⁸, should be in harmony with the present *Editorial Guidelines* and should be integrated into the single circumscription *Apostolic Project*.

⁴ Cf. Renato Perino, *Acts of the International Seminar of the Pauline Publishers*, 1988, pp. 13 and 154; *Constitutions of the SSP.* (1922), art. 2; James Alberione, *UCBS*, Year 1923 - no. 2 (27 Feb., p. 3), no. 4 (19 Apr., p. 3), no. 6 (21 June p. 17).

⁵ Cf. *Vademecum*, no. 1051.

⁶ Cf. James Alberione, *Abundantes divitiae gratiae suae*, no. 23 ff.

⁷ *Constitutions and Directory*, art. 15. Cf. also art. 77 ff.

⁸ *Ibidem*, art. 85.

2. Courage to change

2.1 «*The principal goods of the Congregation are not buildings or land: they are the editions*»⁹, said Father Alberione. One of the findings that emerged from the 2nd ISPP is that our structures are not adequate to meet the real needs of the current socio-communication context. Sometimes, we have not been able to make decisions that reflect the evolution of communication as a social architecture and the living conditions in today's world¹⁰. We are late, given that the digital revolution is omnipresent and that it is rapidly changing the mentality and lifestyle of our contemporaries and the same way of doing all things.

2.2 Faced with the crisis of the industrial model of communication¹¹, to which we are accustomed and on which we have built and based all our apostolic and formative structure, we still struggle to find alternatives. «*Today the pulpit is not enough: all means are needed. In just a few years the world has been transformed and we need to update ourselves a little bit in order to walk with the world: cinema, radio, press, television and all that is needed to communicate*»¹², said Father Alberione as early as 1955. It is important, therefore, to update ourselves not only with regard to technological and instrumental innovations but also, above all, with regard to concepts and new forms of communication, which determine the communication ecology and the current publishing world¹³.

2.3 Being aware that «*our mission is not identified with the use of one or the other means of communication, but with the very fact of communicating to all in an expeditious and efficient manner the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the Spirit of Apostle Paul*»¹⁴, the Pauline Publisher has a great responsibility, because he is called to be himself an instrument of evangelization and to communicate the Gospel by every means and in every circumstance, with enthusiasm, creativity, professionalism, dedication and coherence.

3. Create relationships

3.1 Attentive to “relationships” as a key point of communicative practice and to networks as places of collaborative creation of meanings and contents, the Pauline Publisher must look for new forms of presence and action, not so much tied to the means but rather to culture and the new grammar of communication, being at the service of all the people of God, especially the men and women who live in today's peripheries.

3.2 Rethinking Pauline Publishing in the light of relationships and in an ecological-collaborative perspective naturally implies a capacity for reaching out, dialogue and active listening. It is important, first of all, to understand that dialogue is not reducible to an exchange of data or information and that the relationship with the other is not limited to a simple connection. The Pauline Publisher should not confuse mere contact with dialogue and

⁹ James Alberione, *Mihi Vivere Christus Est*, no. 225.

¹⁰ Cf. *Acts of the 2nd International Seminar of the Pauline Publishers*, General House of the Society of Saint, Rome, 2018, pp. 35 ff. and pp. 191 ff.

¹¹ This is the typical model of “mass media” and cultural industry, based on large-scale production and on a system linked to the processes of standardization and distributive rationalization to meet the needs of a mass market, defined as “industrial” because it is assimilated to the organizational forms of industry rather than creative and personalized production.

¹² *Prediche del Primo Maestro [1952-1955]*, cited in R. F. Esposito, *La teologia della pubblicistica*, EP Rome 1972, p. 19.

¹³ Cf. *Acts of the 2nd International Seminar of the Pauline Publishers*, op. cit., pp. 53 ff. and pp. 163 ff.

¹⁴ *Chapter Declaration of the X General Chapter “To Evangelize Today in Joy as Apostle Communicators and as Consecrated Persons”*.

interaction or a simple exchange of messages with real communication. Communication is a deeper exercise, which takes us out of our usual comfort zone and self-absorption.

3.3 Overcoming self-absorption to look towards a wider horizon is imperative in this moment of epochal change. To know and draw close to the interlocutors of our mission, the Pauline Publisher must change attitudes and mentality, creating a “way out”, as clearly indicated by the current teaching of the Church and the example of St. Paul, who, communicating the Gospel, created relationships and communities.

3.4 In general, we are more used to “speaking” (*logic of the pulpit*) to the recipients than to “listening” to them (*logic of the agora*). Hence, the importance of engaging in a conversion of attitude to promote moments and instruments that create bonds and foster relationships, the starting point for offering quality contents and services. Our bookshops are a privileged place for listening, if configured as true multimedia centres of evangelization and culture¹⁵, sources that radiate the light of the Gospel, spaces of humanity, encounter and dialogue, service and formation. Other spaces with great potential to meet and interact with people – and therefore with the possibility of protagonism in order to open new avenues for evangelization and form *communities*¹⁶ – are our cultural Centres, the Pauline Study Centres in Communication, the different events for the diffusion of the Word of God and our individual Pauline communities. These are all present forms of expressing the relational and missionary dimensions of Pauline Publishing, always in harmony and dialogue with all the apostolic areas.

4. Open to every interlocutor

4.1 The X General Chapter reiterated the need for openness to all, especially to the most needy, to those who live in the different peripheries and frontiers, as it clearly emerges also in the pontificate of Pope Francis, especially in the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii gaudium*.

4.2 The great challenge of the Pauline Publisher is to identify, in every context, who are the “poor”, the “distant” and the “non-believers” to whom he has to turn, and to recognize what kind of poverty must be addressed, with the awareness that today, as in other times of human history, there are so many shortcomings and limitations of human beings and society, so many wounded people searching for answers.

¹⁵ Cf. James Alberione, *The Apostolate of the Edition*, no. 403 ff.; James Alberione, *Consider your vocation*, p. 133 («The bookshops are the communication point of the Congregation with the faithful; the bookshop is a temple; they are centres of light and love; they are the field for the exercise of many virtues »); p. 261 («Our bookshops are centres of apostolate; the indication is the Gospel with the image of St. Paul; they are not shops, but service to the faithful; not commerce, but apostolate for offerings; they do not have customers, but cooperators; not for business, but centres of light and warmth in Jesus Christ; it is not aimed at dominating, but at serving the Church and souls; not to make money, but to benefit souls; Catholics of action and the clergy must find collaboration, light and direction for their ministry; not prices, but offerings; the bookshop reflects the whole of the St. Paul Institute: it is the point of contact between itself and the people, it is the centre of diffusion of all the apostolic-Pauline initiatives. It is the Publishing House of God. The bookshop is a temple; the bookseller a preacher; light, holiness, joy in Jesus Christ and Christian life are the fruits sought; the desk is a pulpit of truth»).

¹⁶ From the *Communities Manifesto* (2010) thus, Stan Garfield defines the concept of community: «They are groups of people who, for a specific subject, share a specialty, role, passion, interest, concern or a set of problems».

4.3 The proliferation of technological devices, the algorithm, the deep noise of communication and the “digital storm” of data and information can make us deaf to the truth. In fact, the speed and the growing quantity of information weakens the superior faculty of judgment of contemporary society. In this sense, the Alberionian motto “to give everyone the charity of the truth” is very relevant, as it is the prophetic dimension of Pauline Publishing to offer to the inhabitants *onlife*¹⁷ the tools to develop a critical and autonomous spirit, helping them to have a more conscious and constructive presence, to discern in order to find the truth in the midst of so much confusion, obscurity and *fake news*; helping them to live “holiness” in this environment, as expressed in the Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete et exsultate*.

4.4 One of the most important groups to consider is the children and the young people, the so-called “digital natives”. It is fundamental to strive to take seriously and significantly their language, to help new generations to have a saving encounter with the Lord and find alternative ways that lead to a life full of meaning and values.

5. Apostolic Unity

5.1 In communication, understood primarily as communion, teamwork and networking are essential. The Pauline Publisher is not an isolated person, but is part of a single and cohesive body. The new communication dynamics of the network society demand a coordinated, harmonious, horizontal and universal work. This collaboration and teamwork¹⁸ begins within each Circumscription, between the different apostolic areas and their Councils, a sign of the unity and collegiality of being a publisher.

5.2 Among the most current needs that must characterize the Pauline Publisher from his initial formation to the realization of apostolic projects are universality¹⁹, internationality and multiculturalism. To develop international and online projects and initiatives; to coordinate, reorganize and optimize the apostolic structures; and to rethink the continental-linguistic groups are some of the commitments endorsed unanimously by the participants in the 2nd ISSP which will have to be implemented.

5.3 The respect and value of the Trademark or Logo as a symbol of unity, universality and credibility is an important step that should not be overlooked. Our unique Trademark has given us a common identity and a recognized name. If our publications are made accurately and if we offer quality services and projects, they will eventually be appreciated also in the non-Catholic field. We must not hide ourselves in meeting the so-called “non-believers”, but try to be recognized as publishers open to dialogue who, through the human values underlying the Gospel, a critical sense and a prophetic spirit, want to contribute to human and social progress. It is essential to work on the consolidation and recognition of our Trademark, giving it new expressions and new forms of communication. It is imperative,

¹⁷ The concept that defines the new living condition in the world of current hyper-connected communication, characterized by four major transformations: the confusion of the distinction between real (*off-line*) and virtual (*on-line*); the lack of the distinction between man, machine and nature; the substitution of a condition of scarcity of information with one of abundance; and the transition from the concepts of “ownership” and “binary relations” to those of “processes” and “networks”.

¹⁸ Cf. *Constitutions and Directory*, art. 85 and ff.: «*Collaboration in the apostolate*».

¹⁹ Cf. James Alberione, *Ut perfectus sit homo Dei*, I nos. 372 ff.: The Pauline mission is universal with respect to people, the technical means, the times and the goal.

then, to take care of the editorial values, the identity and the reliability that our Trademark already represents and guarantees.

5.4 This apostolic unity must also be expressed in the relationship with our lay collaborators in order to strengthen their professional presence and their sense of belonging to the Pauline charism, making them truly involved in the evangelizing mission of the Congregation, which generates transformation and new life. In the same way, integration with the Pauline Family²⁰ must be promoted, which requires a change of mentality and mechanisms, which sometimes in the past have been inspired more by a spirit of competition than by true and mutual collaboration.

6. Editorial Choices

6.1 For every Pauline it must be clear that, above all, «we offer the Gospel to all. It is not a set of concepts or a normative formality but the very Person of Jesus Christ, Way, Truth and Life (Jn 14:6), the sole Master (Mt 23:10), the Saviour of the world»²¹. From this central and essential content, all other content must stem. The primacy of content, therefore, is indispensable. Consequently, it must be the priority of the Pauline Publisher. We can reduce the Pauline presence within the administrative and commercial structures, but we can never give up paying attention to the contents and the direction of the editorial guidelines of Pauline identity.

6.2 Our editorial choices, in the different fields and areas, must manifest the prophetic dimension of our consecration, helping people to understand reality and to face the present challenges, offering them the criteria necessary to make responsible and conscientious choices. These demand from us to be “outgoing publishers”, with social sensitivity, with innovative proposals and methods, aware of the deep bonds between «*evangelization, human promotion, development and liberation*»²².

6.3. Considering the group work of the 2nd ISPP, the relevance and actuality of the three specific and determining areas of our apostolic mission are confirmed²³, that is, Bible, family and communication.

6.3.1 The Bible is the fundamental priority in a world in constant change and in need of more light. «*The Bible is life for the apostolate of the editions*»²⁴, «*it is the book we must give [...] using all the means the Lord has given us*»²⁵, said Father Alberione. The creation and development of St Paul Biblical Centre (SPBC) and the application of the Congregational Biblical Project in its five dimensions (editorial, formative, pastoral, spiritual and ecclesial) will certainly be important in the strengthening of this thematic area of Pauline Publishing in every Circumscription. Under the guidance of the SPBC, all new initiatives

²⁰ Cf. *Constitutions and Directory*, art. 86 («*Relations between the Society of St Paul and the other Institutes of the Pauline Family are to be marked by a close collaboration on the spiritual, intellectual and apostolic levels*») and 86.1 («*In our relations with the Daughters of St Paul on an apostolic level it will be especially borne in mind that, in accordance with the charism of the Founder, we have in common with them a single mission, and as such it must appear before the Church. This principle should be the constant inspiration of the whole of our apostolic activity, both in content and in project, as well as in choices that have to be made on a practical levels*»).

²¹ *Chapter Declaration*, op. cit.

²² Cf. Pope Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, no. 31.

²³ Cf. *Editorial guidelines, contents, recipients of the Pauline apostolate*, 2005, no. 4.

²⁴ James Alberione, *For a spiritual renewal*, Rome, 1950², p. 102.

²⁵ James Alberione, *Vademecum*, no. 1014.

and those with a long tradition in the Congregation should be valued and coordinated, such as courses, festivals, Bible quizzes, weeks of the Word, as well as the initiatives promoted by SOBICAIN, etc.

6.3.2 The *family*, as a core of the present and as the future of society, must be constantly promoted. There are many problems and challenges that threaten the family in today's world. It becomes, therefore, ever more urgent to animate, protect and promote this gift of God and the fundamental nucleus of society through proposals, orientations and help consistent with the magisterium of the Church, especially the apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*. This must be done together with the effort to take care of the “common home” and to promote a social sensitivity and ecological citizenship, as the encyclical *Laudato Si'* invites us to do. Also in this context, the various initiatives that already exist must be valued. Special attention is to be given to our periodicals, books and other projects or initiatives aimed at educating in human and Christian values, leading families to experience the love of God in everyday life.

6.3.3 The third area is that of *communication*. Conscious that communication is an environment and culture, that is, the space and time in which we live today, and that everything and everyone is connected online, in constant relationship, it is fundamental «to strengthen our apostolic commitment in becoming formators in the field of communication»²⁶. Communication must receive special attention in publishing activities, but especially in the various initiatives promoted by the Congregation and in our formation centres (study centres, cultural centres, bookshops, communities, parishes, etc.), becoming the criterion for the reading and interpretation of every content and activity. «Besides employing the media of social communication with the objective of evangelization we are also duty-bound to train people to use these media for their own formation, for healthy relaxation and for spiritual uplift»²⁷. This characteristic dimension of the Pauline Publisher is very timely, necessary and urgent, especially in the digital agora. The challenge of creating an “international communication observatory” is still valid, which, especially involving the current Pauline centres of study in communication, provides for generating and sharing contents, information and thought, and act as a true “laboratory” of innovation at the service of the whole Congregation and of the Church.

6.3.4 A specific theme will be added annually to these three main thematic areas, inspired by the major contemporary problems and in harmony with the journey of the universal Church. This theme will be suggested, adequately in advance, by the Superior General and will have to guide initiatives and projects at national and international level.

6.4 Quality and reliability must be constant characteristics of Pauline Publishing, a sign of coherence and constancy in offering proposals, initiatives and services of excellence. While financial sustainability is important, the economic criterion cannot be the main one in the choice of contents and projects.

²⁶ Priority 1.2 of the X General Chapter.

²⁷ *Constitutions and Directory*, art. 74.

7. Formation for the Mission

7.1 For the Pauline, communicative ecosystem is not a space that is reduced to the professional field, but a true vocation and missionary place that coincides with the environment of life and proclamation of the Gospel; it is our “existential form of witnessing”²⁸. To be able to respond to this call, the Pauline Publisher must be a person of faith, passionate about the Gospel, capable of «*feeling with Jesus, with the Church and with St. Paul*»²⁹. He is a person full of prophetic audacity that emanates from his process of “Christification”, through the progressive formation of the whole person: *mind, will and heart*³⁰.

7.2 In this perspective, formation is an essential element for the Pauline apostle-communicator, just as it is for the lay collaborators who work side by side with us. The new generations of Paulines must be formed in and for the culture of communication and encounter³¹ – with courage, creativity and hope – and not only according to the requirements of the canonical curriculum and those of a simply mechanical and instrumental use of means. At the same time, an appropriate accompaniment should be given to all professed members and to each community in the field of “meducation”³² in order to facilitate the updating necessary for immersion in the new communication environment. Only with an integral, solid and specific formation – the result of a clear and updated *Formation Iter* – will Paulines succeed in becoming true “publishers”, «*formators in the field of communication and in the Bible*»³³, promoters of ideas, of encounter, of initiatives and of critical reflection.

7.3 There are many challenges and difficulties to «*renew our missionary impetus*»³⁴ in the current socio-communication context. Although we recognize ourselves as limited and insufficient, we are nevertheless driven and animated by the certainty that the Pauline is a continuer of the mission of Jesus, the Master, according to the missionary dynamism of St. Paul and the apostolic passion of Father Alberione. «*We should not escape from our duty; we should not excuse ourselves easily; we should not fool ourselves with presumption to do other good, we should do ours; we should not waste time*», exhorted the Primo Maestro³⁵. We are called to evangelize today, as “apostles-communicators-publishers”, with all the means and languages, to make the truth reach everyone. «*If our apostolate will follow God as writer and publisher, it will be truly fruitful, it will never end, vocations will multiply themselves*»³⁶.

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²⁸ Cf. Pope Francis, *Gaudete et exultate*, no. 11.

²⁹ Cf. James Alberione, *Apostolate of the Edition*, nos. 33-37.

³⁰ Cf. *Ibidem*, nos. 64-71.

³¹ Cf. Valdir José De Castro, *Apostle Communicators for a Culture of Encounter. Annual Letter (2018)*.

³² Some authors – for example, F. Ceretti and M. Padula in *Umanità mediale* (ETS Editions, 2016) – speak today of “meducation”, studying the media starting from the assumption that “the media is us”. In this new perspective of media education, what is properly educated is humanity inasmuch as medial. This implies a reflection on man in his development as “being medial”, that is, to educate and to educate himself with, to and in the media, going beyond reflection on the media themselves only as tools, objects and educational environment (perspective typical instead of the so-called “*media education*”).

³³ Cf. *Priority 1.2* of the X General Chapter.

³⁴ Cf. *Priority 1.1* of the X General Chapter.

³⁵ James Alberione, *Mihi Vivere Christus Est*, op. cit., no. 84.

³⁶ James Alberione, *Per un rinnovamento spirituale*, op. cit., p. 102.