

**Homily of the Superior General,
Father Domenico Soliman,
for the Mass of the Memorial of Blessed Timothy Giaccardo**

The joy of participating in this Eucharist on the day of the liturgical memorial of our confrere, Blessed Timothy Giaccardo, strengthens the awareness that God always works in our life. He did it with Blessed Timothy, the first Pauline priest and faithful disciple of Blessed James Alberione, but he still wishes to do it today with the whole Pauline Family. The call to holiness is, in fact, addressed to every baptized person.

There are many pages that describe the richness of his life, the love for the Pauline vocation, for the priesthood, for the apostolate of the “good press” – today we will say of evangelization in the culture of communication – to the point of giving his life for the approval of our Sisters Pious Disciples of the Divine Master. In this Celebration, we recall the episode, reported in his *Diary*, when Father James Alberione, early in the morning, has to run to the small printing house to put out the fire: it was 26 December 1918. This fact is described in many details and shows us a Father Alberione busy and worried. The number of *Gazzetta d’Alba* is in danger, but so is the warehouse full of other publications. Eventually the fire is extinguished and after a sleepless night, everyone can breathe a sigh of relief. The following day Father Alberione shares these words with his boys: *«I would like it to be said briefly: In the House there would not have been this renewal of spirit if there had not been fire, fire purifies. It is a test...»* and he concludes with two proposals: *«Use more diligence on our part in all things; to attach ourselves more to God and... to trust in Him»*.

Starting from this fact, from these and other words that Father Alberione shared in those days, what did the young Timothy Giaccardo, himself and the other young people of the House, understand? What have Timothy assimilated from that situation, from Father Alberione’s way of getting involved? It is the words of today’s Gospel that help us find an answer: *«I no longer call you servants, because the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you all that I have heard from the Father»* (Jn 15:15). This passage from the Gospel of John speaks to us of the profound relationship between Jesus and his disciples, a free, mature, profound, compelling relationship: the servant or slave only obeys the master; he is not given to know the deepest motivations and what the master carries in his heart. Not so for the friend to whom secrets are confided. Jesus sets the relationship with the Twelve in the most familiar way possible so that everything they see Jesus doing and saying is for them a participation in something important, divine: after all, Jesus shares with them the way of living his humanity as a Son of God. Is it not the same for Father Alberione? This is just an episode from 1918, but his whole life has been a sharing, by example and by word, the heart of our life and the awareness that the Pauline Family is willed by God, it is his work... Father Alberione trying to put out the fire, even risking his life, showing his total involvement in the mission entrusted to him by the Father, sowed a seed of good in the souls of his children... a life of high tension, full of love for humanity, laborious and creative, grafted into the love of God. In the words of Jesus just heard, *«remain in my love»*, there is a special vocation addressed to all: it is the Lord who first wishes to “remain” in us. The Apostle Paul experienced this gift and for this very reason he can write to the Galatians: *«It is no longer I who live, it is Christ who lives in me»* (Gal 2:20). What greater thing to live and what greater

thing to share with humanity if not the Risen Christ, our Master, the Son loved by the Father? Humanity needs not only to know Jesus but also to live in him, to enter into a relationship of communion with the Lord.

This is the example that Blessed Timothy Giaccardo left us: he understood the spirit of the House, the sense of the Pauline vocation... and he lived the Pauline apostolate making his own the motivations and the spirit of Primo Maestro, a true son, therefore, of Father Alberione.

Let us entrust the Pauline Family, the people of this parish, all the people of God to the Lord and let us allow ourselves to be touched by the life and holiness of this brother of ours.

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Father Domenico Soliman
Superior General