

## *Introduction*

### “ONWARD” IN TRACING OUT NEW PATHS FOR OUR MISSION

*Sr. M. Antonietta Bruscato  
Superior General*

Dear sisters, once again I want to welcome you to this important congregational event which will give us the chance to share, with healthy realism and a gaze fixed on the future, our passion for the apostolate—the duty we feel with always greater urgency to proclaim the Gospel to the people of our time.

During the first phase of our governing term (from the 9<sup>th</sup> General Chapter up to the Interchapter), we launched a massive project aimed at redesigning our Pauline life. This Project is now being concretized in important ways on the continental and local levels.

As I have said over and over again, the Pauline mission has a fundamental role to play in this redesigning process. Because of this, we have gathered together to *redesign the apostolate in the light of our charism*, according to the Chapter directives and in keeping with the itinerary we have been following up to now. I am sure that this will help us rekindle the ardor—the “fire”—that characterizes every Daughter of St. Paul.

In harmony with the line of thought developed during the Interchapter Meeting, the theme of the four Continental Meetings for the Apostolate and Administration is: ***Imbued with the Word, we trace out new paths for our mission.***

The goal of these meetings is in keeping with the line of action proposed by our 9<sup>th</sup> General Chapter, namely, “to draw up a general plan of action that includes all the aspects of our mission” and “to cultivate collaboration with the various categories of laity” (CD 2007, nn. 39, 40). This line of action should be integrated with the specific elements of the Planning of the General Government 2008-2013, with what emerged in our continental meetings concerning the drawing up of a strategic and synergetic apostolic project, with collaboration with the laity and their formation, with the digital world, etc.

We will now take steps to draft a ***global apostolic project*** that re-expresses, today, **HOW** we are present and **WHAT WE DO** through our apostolic activities, courageously taking on new instruments and new ways of acting so as to trace out paths of hope.

By now you are all well aware that in this first stage of our itinerary we will be focusing our attention on the aspect of ***diffusion***, especially with regard to our ***book centers*** since they are a key point of our missionary activity. Our centers need to be given a new thrust so as to rekindle the qualities that have made them a significant expression of our presence in the territories in which we live and work. We would do well to remember what Fr. Alberione said with prophetic vision: “Our book centers are

temples and the sisters who work there are preachers. Light, holiness and joy in Jesus Christ are the fruits sought there. The service desk is a pulpit of truth.”

How should we live these days? The key word is **TOGETHER**. *Together* in an intense and profound action of grace as a result of the great gift the Lord has bestowed on us: *the grace of being apostles* (cf. Rm. 1:5). *Together* in renewing our passion for Christ and for humanity, fanning into a flame within ourselves the same zeal that made Paul cry out: “Woe to me if I do not evangelize!” (1 Co. 9:16)

I am deeply grateful to all of you for repeatedly voicing the need to revitalize and redesign our mission, make the best use possible of our resources and work in a more coordinated and integrated way—that is to say, truly *together*. “Together” means that each of us places our own small tile in the mosaic of proclaiming the Word so that the face of Christ might shine forth. It means integrating our gifts in a witness of unity that is more effective than any sermon. It means uniting our energies so as to achieve a common goal. It means solidarity, sharing, collaboration....

I also want to thank all the sisters who have worked tirelessly to give our apostolate an always fresh and better organized image in the world. We would never have reached the present stage of our journey if we didn’t have behind us a story that has guided us up to this point and that now points out to us the direction in which to move....

What we are about to undertake is, essentially, a journey of hope characterized by dynamic openness to the future. In view of this, I hope we will be able to create among ourselves a climate of mutual trust and freedom that will allow us to wholeheartedly share with one another the things we carry in our hearts: our yearning to do good, our initiatives, projects and dreams for the future, as well as our problems, uncertainties....

To the degree that we carry out our work in a spirit of fraternity and communion, detached from our own personal interests and views (which are often too narrow); to the degree that we are ready to welcome what the Spirit will reveal to us—it is to that degree that we will be able to pass on to the members of our communities and circumscriptions not only the input we receive here and the decisions made but also an experience of life that will motivate everyone to change.

Together with all of you, I entrust this meeting to the intercession of Fr. Alberione and Maestra Thecla. We feel them present in this room with us today and we are sure that they are looking at us benevolently because the progress of the apostolate was always of primary importance to them.

Best wishes to all of you as we now take steps to trace out new paths for our mission!



sr. M. Antonietta Bruscato  
superior general

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