

## *Introduction*

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

Dear sisters, 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 are meeting together to *redesign the apostolate in the light of the charism*, according to the Chapter directives and in keeping with the itinerary we have been following up to now.

The theme of our 9<sup>th</sup> General Chapter—*Chosen and Loved in Christ Jesus, We Communicate His Word to Everyone*—expressed very well our yearning to start afresh from the charismatic experience that inspired Fr. Alberione (*Come to me, all of you*). It urged us to rekindle our apostolic passion and update the Pauline charism by means of an integral project of new evangelization that took into consideration all the aspects of life: holiness, study, apostolate, poverty....

In both the preparation and holding of the Chapter, we saw the urgent need for a attentive revision of the apostolate in the light of the charism so as to respond to the needs of contemporary humanity, which is facing new challenges and problems. But we confronted a twofold reality within the Institute and in the contexts in which we live and work. On the one hand, this reality consists of renewed trust in the timeliness of the Pauline apostolate, awareness of being communities that proclaim the Gospel, commitment to communicating the Word in new ways, openness to collaboration with the laity and the strength that come from the esteem the Church continues to express for the Pauline mission. On the other hand, as we underscored then and underscore now, the reality is that our apostolic work is conditioned by weak vocational motivations, scarce professional training, not enough attention to our receivers, organizations with rigid structures or with structures that do not meet our concrete needs, insufficient communication and circulation of information, the problem we have working in teams and making the most of the talents given to each one of us by the Lord, etc.

But our Chapter Document offers us the comforting reminder that our point of reference is the Apostle Paul—his passion for the Gospel (“I do everything for the sake of the Gospel”: 1 Co. 9:23) and his pastoral method (“I made myself all to all”: 1 Co. 9:22), which today continues to give vigor to our apostolic thrust and urges us on to creatively and zealously explore new paths for our mission.

By means of these four Continental Meetings for the Apostolate-Administration, of which this is the second (the first, for Asia and the Pacific, was held in Korea from

14-24 June 2011), we want to create a platform to concretize the Chapter proposals precisely in the apostolic sphere.

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

Our goal is in keeping with the line of action proposed by the 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.

During this meeting, we will 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.

We want to live these days *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* we want to renew 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)

Let us seek 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 and uncertainties.

Let us hope that, with the collaboration of everyone, we will be able to live a beautiful experience of fraternity, communion, encouragement and great openness to the future so as to then return home enriched and capable of implementing with our sisters who were not able to participate in this meeting the decisions made here.

Sr. M. Antonietta Bruscato  
*Superior General*

Sao Paulo, 8 August 2011