



HOMILY
At the conclusion of the Intercapitular Assembly
Alfonso (Cavite), 28 February 2013

Don Silvio Sassi, General Superior

INTRODUCTION

As members of the Interchapter assembly we have so many reasons to express our collective thanksgiving to the Most Holy Trinity.

We thank the Spirit of Christ for the enlightenment of our minds that has helped us to do our work and increased in us a wider vision of the Congregation and made us more responsible and united.

We reciprocally thank ourselves for the testimony of faith and love for the Pauline charism that we have exchanged to one another during these days.

We thank all those who have facilitated the laborious course of the Interchapter assembly; thanks also for those moments of a well-organized outing. In a special way, we thank the entire Philippine-Macau Province in the person of Fr. Jose Aripio.

Aware of the news today regarding the retirement of Pope Benedict XVI, let us pray that the Holy Spirit continue to assist the Church, making its future youthful.

Gathering the invitation that comes to us daily from the liturgical time of Lent, let us entrust ourselves to the mercy of God so that he will convert us.

In my opening statement I have cited a passage from the First Letter to the Corinthians (14:1-12) with the objective that the works of the Interchapter Assembly produce on all members of the Congregation the same effect of the common mobilization that can have, as St. Paul explains, a **blast of trumpet** that has to be clear in its execution if it is to be heard by everyone with the same effect.

In the church context of the *Year of Faith* and after the celebration of the Synod of Bishops on the theme “*New evangelization for the transmission of the Christian faith*” as well as in the context of Congregation and of the Pauline Family that celebrates its second year of preparation for the 2014 centenary, our Interchapter Assembly has been lived in the **spirit** of the objective of the IX General Chapter: “*to stir with creative fidelity the gift received from God through St. Paul and Blessed James Alberione, by announcing, in fraternal communion, the Gospel of Christ Way, Truth and Life in the culture of communication*”.

If the Church exists for evangelization, we, part of the ecclesial community, find **our reason for existence in evangelizing with communication**. Blessed Alberione taught us

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that all the wheels of the Pauline cart have to “turn in a synchronized way” to allow us to stay on the cart to “**share the Gospel to the souls**” (cf *Alle Figlie di San Paolo* 1954, p. 144).

The passage of the Gospel (Lk 16:19-31) proclaimed on the last day of our work in the Interchapter Assembly, strengthens our determination to find in the evangelization with communication the **pole** that orients and characterizes the launching of the celebration of the centenary for the next three years. The Spirit enlightened Blessed Alberione to make us exist from 1914 as form if “new evangelization”; now that the Church manifests a universal sensibility for this missionary commitment, we need to have still more awareness of what we can offer in a particular way to the ecclesial community: **the spiritual experience of St. Paul testified by the actual communication.**

The parable of the rich man and the poor Lazarus is found only in St. Luke and, after him, the exegetes, theologians, moralists and preachers have offered us **numerous interpretations** according to their own experiences: only at a superficial reading, the parable can offer impression of an obvious meaning.

Drawing from this variety of interpretations, I limit myself to underline the words of Abraham: “*If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they cannot be convinced even if one would rise from the dead*”. The change of life of the brothers of the rich man will not happen with the resurrection of a dead person, but with **listening and the practice of the Scriptures.**

To enliven our charism in creative fidelity, we need to blow on the embers of our mission of evangelization with communication, making the program of St. Paul our own: “**Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the Gospel**” (1Cor 1:17). Without diminishing the importance of baptism, St. Paul affirms the primacy of preaching: if before the preaching of the risen Christ was not listened to, there can be no baptism.

Upholding with courage and originality the equivalence between “**written preaching and oral preaching**”, Blessed Alberione has left us a “Pauline” identity that remains always fascinating and ever young in the measure that we continue to enhance the value of every form of communication by the proclamation of the Gospel.

At the end of our Interchapter Assembly, we invite our confreres in all Circumscription to welcome the invitation of prophet Jeremiah, contained in the First Reading of today (Jer 17:5-10), “**to put all our trust in the Lord**”. The words that Christ addresses to St. Paul, who was quite hesitant in initiating his evangelization in Corinth, are also repeated for us who are **fearful due to so many apostolic problems, above all, in giving due value to the digital communication for the sake of the Gospel.** Today Christ encourages us: “Do not be afraid; continue to preach with communication because in the world of communication I have plenty of people” (At 18:10). (*Homily of Fr. Silvio Sassi, Feb. 28/13*).



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Superiore generale