

Pope's Address to the Pauline Family on November 26, 2014

Dear Brothers and Sisters of the Pauline Family!

I receive you joyfully on the occasion of the centenary of your foundation, the work of Blessed Giacomo Alberione. I greet the Cardinals, the Bishops, the priests, the consecrated persons and the lay faithful. I thank the Vicar General for his words, and I associate myself heartily to the memory of the mourned Superior General, Don Silvio Sassi, who participates from Heaven in this moment of celebration.

1. May this, your centenary, offer you the opportunity to renew your commitment to live the faith and to communicate it, in particular through the editorial and multi-media instruments, typical of your charism. Those who receive the Good News that God is love and, in Jesus Christ, communicates Himself to humanity, are all men, every man and woman who lives in this world; and the recipient is the whole man, in the totality of his person, of his history and of his culture. "You received without pay, give without pay" (Matthew 10:8), says Jesus. In these words is the secret of evangelization, which is to communicate the Gospel in the style of the Gospel, namely gratuitously, the joy of the gift received out of pure love. Only one who has experienced such joy can communicate it, in fact, he cannot not communicate it, because "the good always tends to communicate itself ... By communicating it, the good takes root and develops" (Evangelii Gaudium, 9).

I encourage you to continue in the way that Don Alberione opened and how your Family has followed up to now, always having its gaze turned to vast horizons. We must never forget that "evangelization is connected, essentially, with the proclamation of the Gospel to those who do not know Jesus Christ or who have always rejected him. Many of them seek God secretly, moved by the nostalgia of his face, also in countries of ancient Christian tradition. All have the right to receive the Gospel. Christians have the duty to proclaim it without excluding anyone" (Ibid., 14). This drive to "peoples", but also to the existential fringes, this "Catholic" drive, you have in fact in your blood, in your "DNA," by the very fact that your Founder was inspired by the figure and the mission of the Apostle Paul.

2. The Second Vatican Council presented us the Church as a people on the way to an End, which surpasses everything and fulfils everything in God and in his glory. This vision of the Church on the way is expressive of Christian hope; in fact, the ultimate end of our Christian action on earth is the possession of eternal life. Therefore, our being Church on the way, while rooting us in the commitment to proclaim Christ and his love for every creature, impedes us from remaining prisoners of earthly and worldly structures; it has its spirit open and makes us capable of prospects and instances that will find their fulfillment in the Lord's blessedness.



Consecrated persons are the special witnesses of this perspective of hope, above all with a lifestyle marked by joy. The presence of Religious is a sign of joy – that joy that flows from a profound experience of God, who fills our heart and makes us truly happy, so much so that we have no need to seek our joy elsewhere. Other important elements that nourish the joy of Religious are the genuine fraternity experienced in the community and complete oblation in serving the Church and brothers, especially the neediest.



3. Blessed Giacomo Alberione perceived, in the proclamation of Christ and of the Gospel to the popular masses, the most authentic and the most necessary charity that can be offered to men and women thirsty for truth and justice. He was touched profoundly by Saint Paul's words: "Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel!" (1 Corinthians 9:16) and he made them the ideal of his life and of his mission. Following in Jesus' footsteps and in imitation of the Apostle to the Gentiles, he was able to see the crowds as scattered sheep, needy of sure guidelines in the path of life. Therefore, he spent his whole life in breaking the bread of the Word for them in languages appropriate to the times.

Thus you are also called to spend yourselves in the service of the people of today, to whom the Spirit sends you, with creativity and dynamic fidelity to your charism, singling out more ideal ways so that Jesus is proclaimed.

The vast horizons of evangelization and the urgent need to witness the evangelical message to all constitute the field of your apostolate. So many still wait to know Jesus Christ. The imagination of charity knows no limits and is able to open ever new ways to bring the breath of the Gospel to cultures and to the most diverse social environments.

Such an urgent mission requires incessant personal and communal conversion. Only hearts totally open to the action of Grace are able to interpret the signs of the times and to respond to the appeals of humanity in need of hope and peace. In your following of Christ and in your witness, **the Year of Consecrated Life**, which is about to begin, will certainly be of help to you.

Dear brothers and sisters, may the Holy Virgin, Mother of the Church, protect you, help you and be the sure guide of the path of the Pauline Family, so that it can bring to fulfillment every plan of goodness. With these wishes, I assure you of my remembrance in prayer for each of you and, in turn, I ask you, please, to pray for me. And now I gladly invoke the Lord's blessing on you, on all those you represent, on the readers of your magazines and on those you meet in your daily apostolate.

[Original text: Italian]

[Translation by ZENIT]

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