

Spiritual Itinerary for the Jubilee Year of Foundation



Stage I

November 21, 2022 – February 10, 2024

PRESENTATION

We present the outline for a spiritual itinerary that will accompany the time of grace of the Jubilee Year of Foundation of our Congregation (November 21, 2022 – February 10, 2024) and which, along the way, will nurture gratitude, memory, reconciliation, renewed fidelity and the joy of the mission.

The itinerary is suitable for everyone: sisters, young women in initial formation, sisters and brothers of the Pauline Family, Friends of the Divine Master – Pauline Cooperators, collaborators, family and friends. The important part is the desire to walk together, enlightened by the Word of God and in company with Blessed James Alberione, Blessed Timothy Giaccardo, Venerable Mother Scholastica Rivata.

The itinerary unfolds in stages, following the rhythm of the liturgical year and our history, forming a grateful memorial of the wonders the Lord has done for us:

I. Jubilee: a time of grace

November 21, 2022 – February 21, 2023

II. Jubilee: a time of return and of pardon

Ash Wednesday, February 22 – Holy Thursday, April 6, 2023

III. Jubilee: a time of renewed fidelity, faith and shared joy

Easter Sunday, April 9 – August 30, 2023

IV. Jubilee: a time of renewed awareness

September 1, 2023 – February 10, 2024.

For each stage there are suggested texts from Scripture, the Magisterium of the Church, charismatic recollections and significant dates to be celebrated with the spiritual sensitivity and initiatives that arise in each community and Circumscription.

The Secretariat for Spirituality in each Circumscription, in dialogue with the Center for Studies and Research, may prepare cele-

brations, prayers or reflections that assist the communities in this itinerary, stage by stage, according to the rhythm of each reality. Any communications may be sent to this email address: centrostudiricerche@pddm.org.

We invite you to celebrate the Jubilee of foundation by being attentive that in each stage the symbolic value of the jubilee is rediscovered: it is not merely a fact of knowledge or the acquisition of ideas, but a lived experience.

Let us help ourselves to acquire an interior attitude that allows us to apply and to understand the symbol suggested by this journey: plant a tree as a manifestation of new life, received from the Creator and carefully guarded by us, that other generations may harvest and taste the fruit in the future. In which stage, let us choose the time and the manner to fulfill this action: at a suitable time and place so that it may be a gesture that generates new life.

Therefore, let us walk together, mutually sustained by the fidelity of God who nourishes us each day with his Word and the Bread of Life, following in the footsteps of Jesus Master, like the women of the Gospel.

STAGE I

JUBILEE: A TIME OF GRACE

November 21, 2022 – February 21, 2023



The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;
he sent me to announce a year of favor from the Lord
(cfr *Is* 61; *Lk* 4:18-19).

With the passage of time you will understand many things
which you can not now imagine,
remain always faithful to your vocation,
in docility and in faith.¹

In the emerging Pauline Family, the community of sisters
grows in a spirit of adoration and service (RV 4).



Like those listening to Jesus in the synagogue at Nazareth, we receive the gift of a special year of grace, looking at the past with gratitude, at the present with dedication, and to the future with hope.

We are completing a liturgical year with the Solemnity of Christ King of the Universe and we are also preparing to open our eyes,

¹ R. CESARATO – G. OBERTO, *L'Albero visto dalle radici* 2, PDDM, Roma 2000 *pro manuscripto*, p. 40.

together with the entire Church, to a new year of grace, looking toward the fulfillment of the Kingdom inaugurated by Jesus.

On November 21, 1923, Father Alberione “set aside” the first two sisters: it was a moment of preparation for the work that he held in his heart for some time, in the light of the Spirit, as he would say: “In 1908 I began to pray and have prayers said that a religious family might come into being, a family marked by a hidden life, and dedicated to adoration and to the priestly and liturgical apostolate; a family that would completely belong to Jesus the Divine Master present in the Eucharistic Mystery”².

² APD 1946-47, 21. Other references in the same volume are nn. 42. 50. 129.

USEFUL TEXTS FOR DEEPENING AND PRAYER³

FROM SACRED SCRIPTURE

Among the requirements of the covenant between God and his people, there is also the jubilee.

From the book of Leviticus (25:1-2; 8-13; 23-24; 39-43)

¹The Lord said to Moses on Mount Sinai: ²”Speak to the Israelites and tell them: When you enter the land that I am giving you...

⁸Seven weeks of years shall you count – seven times seven years – so that the seven cycles amount to forty-nine years. ⁹On the tenth day of the seventh month, let the trumpet resound; on this, the Day of Atonement, the trumpet blast shall re-echo throughout your land. ¹⁰This fiftieth year you shall make sacred by proclaiming liberty in the land for all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you when every one of you shall return to his own property, every one to his own family estate. ¹¹In this fiftieth year, your year of jubilee, you shall not sow, nor shall you reap the aftergrowth or pick the grapes from the untrimmed vines. ¹²Since this is the jubilee, which shall be sacred for you, you may not eat of its produce, except as taken directly from the field. ¹³In this year of jubilee, then, every one of you shall return to his own property.

²³The land shall not be sold in perpetuity; for the land is mine, and you are but aliens who have become my tenants. ²⁴Therefore, in every part of the country that you occupy, you must permit the land to be redeemed.

³⁹When your countryman becomes so impoverished beside you that he sells you his services, do not make him work as a slave. ⁴⁰Rather, let him be like a hired servant or like your tenant, working with you until the jubilee year; ⁴¹when he, together with his children, shall be released from your service and return to his

³ The texts from Scripture and the proposed texts from the Magisterium of the Church may accompany the various stages of the itinerary, since they recall the global meaning of the jubilee.

kindred and to the property of his ancestors. ⁴²Since those whom I brought out of Egypt are servants of mine, they shall not be sold as slaves to any man. ⁴³Do not lord it over them harshly, but stand in fear of your God.

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The people of Israel must remember that they do not own the land, but they are God's tenants and the gifts belong to him.

From the book of Leviticus (27:24)

²⁴At the jubilee the field shall revert to the hereditary owner of this land from whom it had been purchased.

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The third Isaiah presents the Messiah with the awareness of his prophetic vocation that begins an era of salvation in forgiveness, in freedom, in integral well-being.

From the book of the Prophet Isaiah (61:1-11)

¹ The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; He has sent me to bring glad tidings to the lowly, to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners, ²to announce a year of favor from the Lord and a day of vindication by our God, to comfort all who mourn, ³to place on those who mourn in Zion a diadem instead of ashes, to give them oil of gladness in place of mourning, a glorious mantle instead of a listless spirit.

They will be called oaks of justice, planted by the Lord to show his glory. ⁴They shall rebuild the ancient ruins, the former wastes they shall raise up and restore the ruined cities desolate now for generations.

⁵Strangers shall stand ready to pasture your flocks, foreigners shall be your farmers and vinedressers. ⁶You yourselves shall be named priests of the Lord, ministers of our God you shall be called. You shall eat the wealth of the nations and boast of riches from them.

⁷Since their shame was double and disgrace and spittle were their portion, they shall have a double inheritance in their land, everlasting joy shall be theirs.

⁸For I, the Lord, love what is right, I hate robbery and injustice; I will give them their recompense faithfully, a lasting covenant I will make with them. ⁹Their descendants shall be renowned among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge them as a race the Lord has blessed.

¹⁰I rejoice heartily in the Lord, in my God is the joy of my soul; for he has clothed me with a robe of salvation and wrapped me in a mantle of justice, like a bridegroom adorned with a diadem, like a bride bedecked with her jewels.

¹¹As the earth brings forth its plants, and a garden makes its growth spring up, so will the Lord God make justice and praise spring up before all the nations.

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Jesus fulfilled the prophecy by inaugurating a jubilee year that has no end, since his presence will not be lacking in history, but will continue to favor the lowly, opening for us a path of discernment for our fidelity to the reception and witness of his message.

From the Gospel according to Luke (4:14-31)

¹⁴Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit and the news of him spread throughout the whole region. ¹⁵He taught in their synagogues and was praised by all. ¹⁶He came to Nazareth, where he had grown up, and went according to his custom into the synagogue on the sabbath day. He stood up to read ¹⁷and was handed a scroll of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and found the passage where it was written:

¹⁸*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives
and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free,
¹⁹and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord.*

²⁰Rolling up the scroll, he handed it back to the attendant and sat down, and the eyes of all in the synagogue looked intently at him. ²¹He said to them, “Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing”.

²²And all spoke highly of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They also asked, “Isn’t this the son of Joseph?” ²³He said to them, “Surely you will quote me this proverb, ‘Physician, cure yourself,’ and say ‘Do here in your native place the things that we heard were done in um.’” ²⁴And he said, “Amen, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own native place. ²⁵Indeed, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah when the sky was closed for three and a half years and a severe famine spread over the entire land. ²⁶It was to none of these that Elijah was sent, but only to a widow in Zarephath in the land of Sidon. ²⁷Again, there were many lepers in Israel during the time of Elisha the prophet; yet not one of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian”. ²⁸When the people in the synagogue heard this, they were all filled with fury. ²⁹They rose up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town had been built, to hurl him down headlong. ³⁰But he passed through the midst of them and went away.

³¹Jesus then went down to Capernaum, a town of Galilee. He taught them on the sabbath, ³²and they were astonished at his teaching because he spoke with authority.

**FROM THE APOSTOLIC LETTER
“TERTIO MILLENNIO ADVENIENTE”
OF JOHN PAUL II⁴**

11. The *custom of Jubilees* began in the Old Testament and continues in the history of the Church. Jesus of Nazareth, going back

⁴ November 10, 1994.

one day to the synagogue of his home town, stood up to read (cf. Lk 4:16-30). Taking the book of the Prophet Isaiah, he read this passage: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good tidings to the afflicted; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor" (61:1-2)..

The Prophet was speaking of the Messiah. "Today", Jesus added, "this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (Lk 4:21), thus indicating that he himself was the Messiah foretold by the Prophet, and that the long-expected "time" was beginning in him. The day of salvation had come, the "fullness of time". *All Jubilees point to this "time" and refer to the Messianic mission of Christ*, who came as the one "anointed" by the Holy Spirit, the one "sent by the Father". It is he who proclaims the good news to the poor. It is he who brings liberty to those deprived of it, who frees the oppressed and gives back sight to the blind (cf. *Mt 11:4-5; Lk 7:22*). In this way he ushers in "a year of the Lord's favor", which he proclaims not only with his words but above all by his actions. The Jubilee, "a year of the Lord's favor", characterizes all the activity of Jesus; it is not merely the recurrence of an anniversary in time.

12. *The words and deeds of Jesus thus represent the fulfilment of the whole tradition of Jubilees in the Old Testament.* We know that the Jubilee was a time dedicated in a special way to God. It fell every seventh year, according to the Law of Moses: this was the "sabbatical year", during which the earth was left fallow and slaves were set free. The duty to free slaves was regulated by detailed prescriptions contained in the Books of Exodus (23:10-11), Leviticus (25:1-28) and Deuteronomy (15:1-6). In other words, these prescriptions are found in practically the whole of biblical legislation, which is thus marked by this very specific characteristic. In the sabbatical year, in addition to the freeing of slaves the Law also provided for the cancellation of all debts in accordance

with precise regulations. And all this was to be done in honor of God. What was true for the sabbatical year was also true for the jubilee year, which fell every fifty years. In the jubilee year, however, the customs of the sabbatical year were broadened and celebrated with even greater solemnity. As we read in Leviticus: "You shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants; it shall be a jubilee for you, when each of you shall return to his property and each of you shall return to his family" (25:10). One of the most significant consequences of the jubilee year was the general "*emancipation*" of all the dwellers on the land in need of being freed. On this occasion every Israelite regained possession of his ancestral land, if he happened to have sold it or lost it by falling into slavery. He could never be completely deprived of the land, because it belonged to God; nor could the Israelites remain for ever in a state of slavery, since God had "redeemed" them for himself as his exclusive possession by freeing them from slavery in Egypt.

13. The prescriptions for the jubilee year largely remained ideals—more a hope than an actual fact. They thus became a *prophetia futuri* insofar as they foretold the freedom which would be won by the coming Messiah. Even so, on the basis of the juridical norms contained in these prescriptions, a kind of *social doctrine* began to emerge which would then more clearly develop beginning with the New Testament. *The jubilee year was meant to restore equality among all the children of Israel*, offering new possibilities to families which had lost their property and even their personal freedom. On the other hand, the jubilee year was a reminder to the rich that a time would come when their Israelite slaves would once again become their equals and would be able to reclaim their rights. At the times prescribed by Law, a jubilee year had to be proclaimed, to assist those in need. This was required by just government. *Justice, according to the Law of Israel, consisted above all in the protection of the weak*, and a king was supposed to be outstanding in this regard, as the Psalmist says: "He delivers

the needy when he calls, the poor and him who has no helper. He has pity on the weak and the needy and saves the lives of the needy" (*Ps 72:12-13*). *The foundations of this tradition were strictly theological*, linked first of all with the theology of Creation and with that of Divine Providence. It was a common conviction, in fact, that *to God alone, as Creator, belonged the "dominium altum"*—lordship over all Creation and over the earth in particular (cf. *Lev 25:23*). If in his Providence God had given the earth to humanity, that meant that he had given it to everyone. Therefore *the riches of Creation were to be considered as a common good of the whole of humanity*. Those who possessed these goods as personal property were really only stewards, ministers charged with working in the name of God, who remains the sole owner in the full sense, since it is God's will that created goods should serve everyone in a just way. *The jubilee year was meant to restore this social justice*. The social doctrine of the Church, which has always been a part of Church teaching and which has developed greatly in the last century, particularly after the Encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, is rooted in the tradition of the jubilee year.

14. What needs to be emphasized, however, is what Isaiah expresses in the words "*to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor*". For the Church, the Jubilee is precisely this "year of the Lord's favor", a year of the remission of sins and of the punishments due to them, a year of reconciliation between disputing parties, a year of manifold conversions and of sacramental and extra-sacramental penance. The tradition of jubilee years involves the *granting* of indulgences on a larger scale than at other times.

15. *In the lives of individuals, Jubilees* are usually connected with the date of birth; but other anniversaries are also celebrated, such as those of Baptism, Confirmation, First Communion, Priestly or Episcopal Ordination, and the Sacrament of Marriage. Some of these anniversaries have parallels in the secular world, but Christians always give them a religious character. In fact, in the Chris-

tian view, every Jubilee—the twenty-fifth of Marriage or Priesthood, known as "silver", the fiftieth, known as "golden", or the sixtieth, known as "diamond"—is *a particular year of favor* for the individual who has received one or other of the Sacraments. What we have said about individuals with regard to jubilees can also be applied to *communities* or *institutions*. Thus we celebrate the centenary or the millennium of the foundation of a town or city. In the Church, we celebrate the jubilees of parishes and dioceses. All these personal and community Jubilees have an important and significant role in the lives of individuals and communities.

16. The term "*Jubilee*" speaks of joy; not just an inner joy but a jubilation which is manifested outwardly, for the coming of God is also an outward, visible, audible and tangible event, as Saint John makes clear (cf. 1 Jn 1:1). It is thus appropriate that every sign of joy at this coming should have its own outward expression. This will demonstrate that *the Church rejoices in salvation*. She invites everyone to rejoice, and she tries to create conditions to ensure that the power of salvation may be shared by all.

17. *In the Church's history every jubilee is prepared for by Divine Providence*. With this conviction, we look today with a sense of gratitude and yet with a sense of responsibility at all that has happened in human history since the Birth of Christ, particularly the events which have occurred between the years 1000 and 2000. But in a very particular way, we look with the eyes of faith to our own century, searching out whatever bears witness not only to man's history but also to God's intervention in human affairs.

31. In keeping with the unfolding of the Christian faith in word and Sacrament, it seems important, even in this special anniversary, to link the structure of *memorial* with that of *celebration*, not limiting commemoration of the event only to ideas but also making its saving significance present through the celebration of the

Sacraments. The Jubilee celebration should confirm the Christians of today in their *faith* in God who has revealed himself in Christ, sustain their *hope* which reaches out in expectation of eternal life, and rekindle their *charity* in active service to their brothers and sisters.

32. A Jubilee is always an occasion of special grace, "a day blessed by the Lord". As has already been noted, it is thus a time of joy. In the Jubilee year, the thanksgiving of Christians will embrace the *fruits of holiness* which have matured in the life of all those many men and women who in every generation and every period of history have fully welcomed the gift of Redemption. Nevertheless, the joy of every Jubilee is above all a *joy based upon the forgiveness of sins, the joy of conversion*, which is the precondition for reconciliation with God on the part of both individuals and communities.

33. Acknowledging the weaknesses of the past is an act of honesty and courage which helps us to strengthen our faith, which alerts us to face today's temptations and challenges and prepares us to meet them.

41. The commitment to make the mystery of salvation sacramentally present can lead, in the course of the year, to a *renewed appreciation of Baptism* as the basis of Christian living, according to the words of the Apostle: "As many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (*Gal 3:27*).

42. Everything ought to focus on the primary objective of the Jubilee: the *strengthening of faith and of the witness of Christians*. It is therefore necessary to inspire in all the faithful *a true longing for holiness*, a deep desire for conversion and personal renewal in a context of ever more intense prayer and of solidarity with one's neighbor, especially the most needy.

45. The primary tasks of the preparation for the Jubilee thus include *a renewed appreciation of the presence and activity of the Spirit*, who acts within the Church both in the Sacraments, especially in *Confirmation*, and in the variety of charisms, roles and ministries which he inspires for the good of the Church: "There is only one Spirit who, according to his own richness and the needs of the ministries, distributes his different gifts for the welfare of the Church (cf. *1 Cor* 12:1-11).

50. The sense of being on a "journey to the Father" should encourage everyone to undertake, by holding fast to Christ the Redeemer of man, a journey of authentic *conversion*. This includes both a "negative" aspect, that of liberation from sin, and a "positive" aspect, that of choosing good, accepting the ethical values expressed in the natural law, which is confirmed and deepened by the Gospel. This is the proper context for a renewed appreciation and more intense celebration of the *Sacrament of Penance* in its most profound meaning.

56. For her part the Church "seeks but a solitary goal: to carry forward the work of Christ himself under the lead of the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete. And Christ entered this world to give witness to the truth, to rescue and not to sit in judgment, to serve and not to be served".

58. The future of the world and the Church belongs to the *younger generation*, to those who, born in this century (XX), will reach maturity in the next, the first century of the new millennium. *Christ expects great things from young people*, as he did from the young man who asked him: "What good deed must I do, to have eternal life?" (*Mt* 19:16). Young people, in every situation, in every region of the world, do not cease to put questions to Christ: *they meet him and they keep searching for him in order to question him further*. If they succeed in following the road which he points out to them, they will have the joy of making their own

contribution to his presence in the next century and in the centuries to come, until the end of time: "Jesus is the same yesterday, today and for ever".

59. The Church believes that Christ, who died and was raised up for all, can through his Spirit offer man the light and the strength to measure up to his supreme destiny. Nor has any other name under heaven been given to man by which it is fitting for him to be saved. She likewise holds that *in her most benign Lord and Master can be found the key, the focal point, and the goal of all human history*. The Church also maintains that beneath all changes there are *so many realities which do not change and which have their ultimate foundation in Christ, who is the same yesterday and today and for ever*. (GS 10).

FROM THE CHARISMATIC TEXTS

*A pact with the Lord*⁵

Last night our dear father invited all of us to make a pact with the Lord. The pact that he himself had made: to study for one hour and learn for four. This morning in the meditation he repeated to us the importance, the basis, the conditions and the invitation. His words were full of fire, of conviction and very persuasive. The basis is: faith in God who has promised to grant wisdom to those who ask Him for it: he gave the examples of St. Alphonsus Rodriguez and the Cure of Ars.

The pleasure of God is that we confide in Him. The will of God that this house exists and that it prospers: and the impossibility we find ourselves in to study as much as would ordinarily be necessary in order to learn. Faith is lacking in the world, it is what the dear father has not yet found in anyone... but for us who trust in everything and everyone except God, we are stupid and crazy and

⁵ T. GIACCARDO, *Diario 1913-1925, 1942-1946. Select pages*, Ed. Centro di spiritualità paolina, Roma 1996, p. 250.

a long purgatory awaits us. Faith is the first means for learning: with it we, who study only one-fourth of the time, can even challenge all the other students. Therefore, it is necessary for those who come from the Seminary to divest themselves from the ideas of the Seminary: that is, they know what they studied; for those who come from home, divest themselves from the ideas they had at home.

The importance of the pact: it must be taken seriously, otherwise it loses its value, like using gold to make nails to mend one's shoes. It will give our studies a lift which have now fallen so low; with it progress will be made and miracles performed. It's true: God does not disappoint. It's true: practice proves it. We believe that it is so. The conditions:

1. Faith in God and good use of time. He who has enough faith to believe that he will do four with one, should make the pact. If not, he should not make it . But then neither should he study in the House.
2. Make good use of the time set aside for study. Promise this and do it, otherwise the pact is null and void.
3. Promise to make use of whatever is learned solely for the Good Press and the glory of God. The promise is a serious one to be kept even at the cost of sacrifice and little gain.

If these three conditions are not taken seriously, the pact should not be made since it would be null and void. He invited everyone to enter into this pact which he himself had made with God, but he left us absolutely free. God would be faithful. On our part, we must not fail no matter what. For this purpose during the Holy Mass the Litany of the Blessed Virgin, the *Veni Creator*, 3 "Our Father's", "Hail Mary's", "Glory Be", (one for each of the above three conditions) were recited.

Before the "Hail Mary", our dear father recited the formula of the pact; those who wished recited it in their hearts. The wisdom comes from God. In an instant, God can infuse more knowledge than many years of study, as he did with the Magi. He is independent of time and books: faith is necessary. The wisdom of

God is upright and true – God made everything good – and not like that of Kant, Carducci, Rousseau, and others like them. *Let him who can understand, understand.*

When our father speaks of faith in Divine Providence he does not find the word in preaching, he says it himself, the words coming out of him are enflamed, the periods are dictated by the heart, without a real connection in the parts, but they are persuasive.

From the internal bulletin, Divin Maestro, n.8, February 1948

The last Mass of a Saint

Besides the «Father» whom he had generated for us in Christ, God gave the Pious Disciples a “foster father”, a “guardian”, to help them to grow, to develop and to establish themselves in their own life. The Father was, and remains *Primo Maestro*, beside him as interpreter and most faithful collaborator: *Signor Maestro* Timothy M. Giaccardo. In a private note that he always carried with him, was a written testimony from *Primo Maestro* that he kept as a mandate: “Everything you have arranged for the Pious Disciples is good. I often meditate: I am sending you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord; he will remind you of my ways in Christ Jesus, just as I teach them everywhere in every church” (1 Cor 4:17).

The figure of *Signor Maestro* resembles that of St. John the Evangelist. Innocent, pure, sublime virgin like the “Disciple whom Jesus loved”. He leads us in an intimacy filled with the suffering and love of Tabor, of the Cenacle, of Calvary, of Patmos... Sometimes his eagle flights reached sublime heights, to the point of a supernatural gaze upon the divine Sun and immersing himself in the transforming Light... We, poor sparrows, less apt to fly so high, admired him and even tried to follow him and understand him.

Through the life and ministry of *Maestro Giaccardo*, our Father Saint Paul lives again in our midst. For the Pious Disciples, *Signor Maestro* represented the Apostle, especially in this attitude:

“To me, the very least of all the holy ones, this grace has been given, to preach the inscrutable riches of Christ...” (Eph 3:8) after having drawn from the very Heart of the Divine Master. So humble, so pious, so paternal, so zealous for the good our our souls which he loved intensely: “For as God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus” (Phil 1:8). He has loved us “until the end”, to the point of offering his life, to the consummation of a pure holocaust, that God seemed to ask and require as the price of our full juridical institution. The vocation, the life of the Pious Disciples must be sublime if the Divine Master asks for such a precious victim in order to bring it to completion! He followed the events of our Family, with the wisdom of a teacher, the goodness of a father, the tenderness and dedication of a mother. How many prayers, how many tears, how many sacrifices so that our Congregation might live!

Monday, January 12, 1948

The Holy Father, Pius XII, was to receive the Cardinal Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for Religious, to say, enlightened by the divine light, invested with unerring authority, the word of approval for the Institute of the Pious Disciples.

For some days, *Signor Maestro* was suffering from strong and unusual pain, in his soul and body. He was exhausted, but that morning he insisted and obtained the strength to celebrate the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. He slowly descended to the chapel of the General House of the Pious Society of St. Paul, without strength, with a weak voice, he approached the altar of God, to God who gives joy and perpetuates the youth of his chosen ones, that unites to the sacrifice of his Divine Son, their own sacrifice... He reached the end of the celebration with much difficulty. A last flight of faith and of piety, in union with the Beloved Disciple, still a longing for eternal blessedness “and we saw his glory...” and the holy Priest, the first Priest of the Pious Society of Saint Paul, by now unable to stand erect, fainted at the altar of his last Mass... In the same morning, the supreme authority of the Church accepted as a

Congregation of Pontifical Rite, the Pious Disciples of the Divine Master! *Signor Maestro*, from his bed of pain, received the news with emotion and trepidation. An entirely spiritual light surrounded his pale face, the expressive eyes, were reflections of Heaven! He could sing his “Nunc dimittis” [*Now you let depart*] and await the merited and near crown of glory. We would have wanted to hold him back. To us it seemed that there was still a great need for his presence, for his ministry! But God’s plans were unscrutable. Another altar awaited him. That of gold in heaven, which he had often spoken to us about... Now we think of him as being above, in glory incessantly offering the Host of praise that glorifies the Blessed Trinity and consumes itself in eternity... This Host is still and even more so for us: the sacrifice of life. One day we too will go up above to continue forever our vocation as Pious Disciples before the Lamb. In the meantime, we walk in this “worthily” as taught to us by the holy priest, who offered his life, to give us life!

On January 27, Primo Maestro gave the following meditation to the Pious Disciples:

... GIVE THANKS to the Lord for all the benefits received through this chosen soul, who passed upon the earth as the Saints pass. He was a violet of humility, most humble throughout his life. He was a lily of the most delicate purity. Everyone recognizes it, they say it, the secular people remained edified and I heard particular stories that manifest his singular delicacy. He was a rose of love. How great was his devotion to the Divine Master present in the Holy Eucharist! Especially since last August, those of us who had greater contact with him noted his ascensions, we noticed how he accelerated his steps toward the heights, like one who was hurrying to reach the goal. He was in continual prayer and union with God. In these last days he told me: “even when the others think I am dozing off, I continue to pray in my heart”. Let us give thanks to God for the graces granted

to the Institute through him, be especially grateful for the good done to the Pious Disciples. You owe him a great deal. In your midst there are souls in whom he left an imprint. Souls who live by his thoughts, by his ideals, by his piety, by his life.

... To those who ask what they must do to be a good Pious Disciple, I respond: Do as your Teacher taught you, follow him in the devotion to the Divine Master, in the total dedication of yourselves to him in fidelity to the true resolutions, in continuous prayer. In everything, everywhere, he always behaved in a manner that was edifying, constructive, radiating his soul, his piety, himself. This is a docile son, a true devotee of the Eucharist! I met him and first came to know him as a twelve-year-old child, just as St. Paul met and knew St. Timothy at an early age. At the same time, I recognized the great delicacy of his soul. I granted him and exhorted him to frequent and then daily Communion, which was very rare at that time. In the morning, when I opened the Church after the sound of the Angelus, I found him punctually at the door. He came to receive Jesus. The Divine Master instructed him, formed him according to his own heart.

Pious Disciples, follow him well! Listen and remember his words even in the smallest details, even in the nuances, even when you did not understand him. In him it was not a man who was speaking, it was the Divine Master. All of the instructions he gave you, he took from me; and if he sometimes preceded me, he had my approval and blessing.

Pious Disciples, know that his soul and his spirit live in our midst. He continues to live! He is very near.

We are all suffering the loss of this dear soul, but especially myself who was most affected.

He is near you in your Adorations, in your Eucharistic, priestly, liturgical apostolate. Someone who was suffering because he offered his life for the existence of the Pious Disciples. It is a fact that he celebrated his last Mass on January 12, the date of your Pontifical Approval. I bless you that you may follow his spirit in everything.

... From 1909 until 1914, when Divine Providence prepared the Pauline Family, he clearly had the intuition, without understanding everything. The lights he received from the Holy Eucharist, to which he was greatly devoted; his fervent Marian piety; the meditation, more than the reading, of the Pontifical documents enlightened him regarding all the needs of the Church and concerning the modern means for good. He entered in 1917 as the *maestro [teacher]* of the first boys gathered together to form the Pious Society of St. Paul. He was called, and always remained, *Signor Maestro*: beloved, listened to, followed, venerated within and without. He was the Teacher who preceded everyone by his example, who taught everything, who counseled everyone, who built up everything by his enlightened and warm prayer. He understood everything and communicated his soul to everyone; he always made himself all things to all people; the first, considering himself the last; most sensible, docile, delicate. It can be said that he wrote on every soul and transfused himself in every heart of the Priests, Disciples, Daughters, Sister Disciples, Pastorelle, and all those who approached him, for spiritual, social, or economic relationships.

The Teacher

Fr. Timothy was called, and truly was the *Signor Maestro*. He represented the Lord well: at the altar, in the Confessional, from the pulpit, in conversations, in school, in recreation, in relationships, in everything involving the offices he held and in his private life; always representing the Lord well, he was *Alter Christus [another Christ]*.

... He was the *Teacher*. He had a great mind: always in Christ and in the Church. Books, articles, homilies; he taught almost all the subjects, as the need arose; he was always prepared and always listened, although he was sometimes a bit high, because he was often leading...

The Teacher of every virtue

From the first evaluations of the Superiors in the Seminary concerning him, throughout the discussions regarding his life: “There are no points to be made; he does everything well”. His humility, his charity, his patience, his forbearance, his gentle firmness when dealing with the glory of God and the good of souls were well known.

The Teacher in piety

He knew how to speak to God! In particular: He lived of Eucharistic piety; of Marian piety; of liturgical piety; of love for the Church and for the Pope; of sweet and laborious charity toward his brothers and toward everyone; of thoughts and aspirations that were always elevated; of total religious observance.

“It is common opinion that a saint has passed among us, a virgin, a soul who brings to the tomb an unstained baptismal stole.” Approaching death, his only concern was this: “That they live in charity! This will prove to be the sweetness and the content and fruit of the religious life”. His words, his confessional, the pulpit, the pen, the recreation, even the least things reflected the abundant piety and charity of his heart. He wrote: “The foundation, the source, the method and the crown of the religious spiritual life of the Pious Society of St. Paul, the center around which our being and work revolves is the devotion to the Person of Jesus Christ, our Divine Master, present in the Eucharistic Mystery, and considered under the particular aspect of Way, Truth and Life”. He lived by these principles. To those who want to know who incarnated the total ideal of the Pauline in its integrity they would have to point to “*Signor Maestro*”.

Teacher in the Apostolate

He felt, loved, developed almost imperceptibly, since he was one who stirred up energy, supported the weak, he was light and salt in the evangelical sense. In the Pauline Families, he was like the heart and the soul. *Primo Maestro*, and everyone together with

him, owed him a great deal of gratitude, since all knew they were loved by him.

It can be said that, in fact, he was always the Vicar. And certainly I trusted in him more than in myself; I am happy that I was able to give testimony before our venerable Superiors even lately.

Conclusion

... Imitate him

From the day I knew him and pointed out the Tabernacle to him as light, comfort, salvation, his life was a continual, daily ascension: like the sun which timidly peaks over the horizon in the morning until noon, when everything is illuminated and warmed... Oh! How he preferred to say with St. Paul: “Until the full maturity of Christ...”

Meditations to the Pious Disciples of the Divine Master ⁶

In 1908 , I began to pray and to have prayers said that a religious family might come into being, a family marked by a hidden life, and dedicated to adoration and to the priestly and liturgical apostolate; a family which would completely belong to Jesus the Divine Master present in the Eucharistic Mystery. Why? So that it might become a source of grace from which other religious families, those more especially dedicated to apostolic life, could draw.

Later on, through prayer, the way of life of this Family and the concrete form of its relationships with the other families that were to be instituted, took shape ...

I was guided by what my Spiritual Director always told me:⁷ “Before beginning any work, make sure to have a proportionate number of persons who will pray and, if necessary, will sacrifice them-

⁶ For the excerpts from APD it was decided to choose them from the 3 years especially important in the meditations of the Founder: 1946-47, the time of suffering in preparation for the Diocesan approval, and then the first recognition of the specific life and apostolate; 1957, which follows the time of the Visitor and accompanies the General Chapter; 1963, a year of particular sanctification, in which the Congregation is in full expansion in Houses and members.

⁷ This refers to CANON FRANCESCO CHIESA (1874-1946).

selves for the external works, if you want these works to be life-giving”.

You have a fundamental and vital mission, hidden like the roots but nourishing the trunk, the branches, the flowers, the leaves, the fruit.

... Jesus Christ is physically present in the Tabernacle. Every good in the Church, in souls, comes from the Mass, the Real Presence, Communion; all the water as from a font that springs forth, all the lymph that rises in the sacraments and sacramentals. The souls must come to this font, to union with Jesus, all the rest is a means. Together with the eucharistic soul of Mary, we must ask everything of Jesus, the Divine Master, present in the Sacred Host.

This is your role before the Tabernacle:

Living Lamps before the Eucharistic Jesus.

Victims with Jesus: sacrifices are part of your apostolate.

Servants of honor of the Tabernacle and of its Divine Guest.

Angels of the Eucharist who receive and give.

Souls who hunger and thirst for the Eucharistic bread and for the waters of his grace.

Hearts that share the desires, intentions, loneliness of their Eucharistic Spouse for all, but especially for the person dearest to his heart: the Priest.

The first confidants of Jesus Host, listening to every word of life that comes from him and meditating on it in your heart, as Mary did (cf Lk 2:51).

May the Divine Master look upon you with eyes of predilection; may he teach you his ways; may he fill you with the joy of your vocation; may he live in you with the fullness of his virtues. Have faith, do not doubt; this Jesus is infinitely faithful to his promises.⁸

In 1908 many of you were not yet born. One day, during that year, while I was teaching Church history to the seminarians, we were considering the religious state of the world. Jesus our Savior

⁸ APD 1946-47, 21-31.

came into the world to bring us grace, salvation. Without grace there is no entry into Paradise. But what is the state of the world 1900 years after the coming of Jesus Christ? At present, the population of the world is about two billion and of these, one billion two hundred thousand do not know Jesus Christ yet. Four hundred million are heretics and schismatics, that is outside the Catholic Church, outside the institution established by Jesus Christ for salvation, either because they deny truths of the faith or because they do not recognize the authority of the Pope; it is therefore a lack of faith or a lack of obedience. The other millions are made up of Catholics. But are all those who say they are Catholics really so? In Italy, which is a Catholic country, the enemies of the Church have been victorious in the last government elections. Startled by these facts, the seminarians jumped to their feet and asked me: "What must we do to bring about salvation for so many souls? Tell us!" I answered: first, is to pray. And we prayed that in the Church there might be instituted a religious family who would dedicate themselves to prayer to obtain the grace for humanity to accept, listen to and love Jesus Master and Savior. On that day your family was born in my mind and in my heart. Yours is an apostolate which is insuperable, the most wonderful; and because it is the most wonderful, the devil must wage war on it. The beautiful things are those that are worth something, the most beautiful things are those that persons try to fake. Fulfill the duty of Our Lady; may you be the sentinels of the tabernacle; raise up your pure hands, unite to Jesus Host. ... Do not disparage your vocation; esteem it and make yourselves worthy of it. The apostolate you have is a precious one, carry it out in silence. I have had in my prayers the same intention for you since 1908. Not only have I and others prayed, but there are those who have offered up their life for you, for your apostolate. Yours is a fundamental apostolate; if satan attempts to wage war on your aposto-

late, have recourse to our Immaculate Mother. Then carry on with beautiful and good Adorations!⁹

FROM THE RULE OF LIFE

1.

On the memorial feast of St. Scholastica (February 10, 1924), Fr. James Alberione (1884-1971) establishes the Congregation of the Pious Disciples of the Divine Master in Alba (Italy).

He chooses Orsola Rivata (1897-1987) to be his collaborator in Christ. He gives her the name Scholastica, which means “disciple”, and entrusts the first community of sisters to her care.

2.

James Alberione is born into a poor family of farmers and is educated in a strong Christian life and work ethic.

At the age of seven he feels “enlightened” and declares: “I will be a priest.” In this path he directs “his study, prayers, thoughts, behavior and even his recreation”.

After ordination to the priesthood, he joins the Association of Priest Adorers.

In the seminary of Alba he dedicates himself to priestly formation, always attentive to socio-ecclesial movements of renewal.

3.

The Eucharistic experience which the seminarian James Alberione goes through during the dawn of the new century (1900-1901), is “decisive for the specific mission and particular spirit in which the Pauline Family would be born and live.”

In response to the evangelical call: “Come to me all of you”, he feels obliged to prepare himself to do something for the Lord and

⁹ APD 1946-47, 42-50.

for the people of his time, unifying everything in Christ the Master, Way, Truth and Life.

When the hour of God strikes, Fr. Alberione dedicates himself totally to the apostolate of the press, confirming the call to evangelization through the unexplored frontiers of the world of communication.

Open to the signs of the times, he involves women in the variety and complementarity of charisms for the life of the Church and its mission.

After careful consideration of the religious situation of the world at the time, from 1908 he begins “to pray and have prayers said” for the birth of a religious family that “belongs entirely to Jesus the Divine Master present in the Eucharistic mystery”.

Our Congregation is thus a memorial of the charismatic experience of our Founder: we pray and work that humanity may welcome, hear and love Jesus our Master and Savior.

4.

Guided by the Holy Spirit and encouraged by Fr. Francesco Chiesa (1874-1946), his spiritual director, the Founder gathers the first group of young women to the Divine Master House. In collaboration with Mother Scholastica, he forms them for a new mission for the coming of the Kingdom of God in the world.

In the emerging Pauline Family, the community of sisters grows in a spirit of adoration and service.

It is characterized by heroic faith, assiduous labor and reciprocal love, lived in joy, silence and habitual recollection.

This lifestyle has its origins in the Gospel passages which inspired the Bethany Prayer.

5.

The founding event of our Congregation develops within the Church through episodes that bear the seal of the Cross.

Fr. James Alberione initially establishes the Disciples of the Divine Master as “distinct and separate” from the Daughters of St. Paul. However, due to various canonical procedures they are joined under a single decree of approval.

The intervention of the Founder, of Mother Scholastica, and the life offering of Fr. Timothy Giaccardo (1896-1948), all contribute to the ecclesial and institutional recognition of our Congregation.

On Holy Thursday, April 3, 1947, the decree of diocesan approval is promulgated.

The universal nature and apostolic effectiveness of our charism is more decisively expressed through the Pontifical approval granted on January 12, 1948 and definitively ratified on August 30, 1960.

The ecclesial discernment expressed through the beatification of Fr. James Alberione confirms us in the vocation we have received.

6.

We are part of the unifying project of the Pauline Family: to live and communicate Jesus Christ Way, Truth and Life to humanity today with the fastest and most effective means made available by human progress.

Our Congregation, called upon to cultivate communion, “goes to the root of the vine to obtain the lymph which nourishes the plant so as to bear fruits of holiness and apostolate”.

7.

Taken hold of by Jesus Master, we contemplate and follow him in the Paschal Mystery.

He lives and is formed in us according to the dynamics of the liturgical year. Through the power of his Spirit, he transforms our life into worship pleasing to God.

Mary, Queen of the Apostles, introduces us into the school of Jesus Master and teaches us how to love and proclaim him in our daily life.

Saint Paul, Apostle and mystic, guides us in our passion for charity until “I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me”.

8.

In the mystery of the Church, the people of God, we form communities in which we welcome, hear and serve the Lord in the diversity of his manifestations through our specific mission.

Docile to the Spirit, like Mary, icon of the Church, we conserve the Word of God in our heart and put it into practice until we become one heart and one soul.

9.

Through the action of the Holy Spirit, we receive “the grace of the apostolate” in Jesus Master, Way, Truth and Life.

Like Mary, Mother of God, and the women of the Gospel, transformed by their meeting with the Risen Lord, the Beauty which saves the world, we are sent as apostles with the Apostles to proclaim, celebrate and serve him.

Our apostolate, dedicated to the glory of God and the peace of humanity, springs from love of Jesus living in the Eucharist, in the Priesthood and in the Liturgy.

In the spirit of the Apostle Paul, who made himself all things to all people, we judiciously welcome the values and traditions of different nations and we commit ourselves to ecumenical and interreligious dialogue for the proclamation of the newness of the Gospel.

11.

We continually give thanks to God that he has called us to be disciples of his Son Jesus, our Lord and Teacher.

In the depths of our heart, the Spirit’s voice unifies us to the charisma of Fr. Alberione, lived by the Pauline family generation after generation. “Everything comes from God; everything leads to the Magnificat!”.

12.

We follow the itinerary of Christification lived by our Founder. In Jesus Master Way, Truth and Life, he gradually allowed himself to

be transformed into a true man of God and apostle for his times. The words of Jesus also resound in us: “Come to me all of you”. In the Eucharist we renew the pact which binds us to trust in God and direct all of our energies toward the coming of his Kingdom on earth.

We allow ourselves to be led by the Spirit in our search for the face of God, as we follow the example of our brothers and sisters who preceded us in the vocation.

We persevere in the trials of our spiritual journey and in our apostolate strengthened by the promise of Jesus Master in the Eucharist: “Do not be afraid. I am with you. From here I want to enlighten you. Be sorry for sins”.

13.

Drawn by the love of Jesus Christ we cling to him freely and personally.

We enter into the new and living Way which leads us to the Father, to the Truth which sets us free and to the Life which fills us with joy.

We walk a new path of life which stretches toward our complete conformation to Christ in his Paschal mystery: “I have been crucified with Christ, and I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me. The life that I now live in this body, I live in the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me”.

SIGNIFICANT DAYS FOR GRATEFUL MEMORY

November 21, 1923: Orsola Rivata and Metilde Gerlotto are set apart to begin a new work in the Pauline Family.¹⁰

November 26, 1971: Blessed James Alberione, our Founder, dies in Rome.

November 29, 1936: Mother Scholastica and Sr. M. Elia Ferrero depart from the port of Naples to found a community in Egypt¹¹ and disembark on **December 2**, in Alexandria, Egypt.

December 9, 2013: the Servant of God, Mother Scholastica Rivata is recognized as Venerable by Pope Francis.

January 12, 1948: we receive the Pontifical approval.¹²

January 24, 1948: Blessed Timothy Giaccardo, the most faithful among those faithful to the Founder, dies.¹³

February 10, 1924:¹⁴ Memorial of Saint Scholastica, Fr. Alberione establishes the Congregation of the Sister Disciples of the Divine Master in Alba.

¹⁰ Cfr *L'albero* ..., pag.38-39.

¹¹ Cfr *L'albero* ..., pag. 92-94.

¹² Cfr *L'albero* ..., pag.195 ss.

¹³ Cfr *Divin Maestro*, n.8, February 1948, in the PDDM General Archives; among the texts included in the appendix.

¹⁴ In the meditation given on February 10, 1947 (APD 1946-47, 129), before the diocesan approval, Fr. Alberione said: "Today, let us give thanks to the Lord for all the graces he has granted to us since 1908, and then in the years that are particularly important for you: 1919, 1923, 1924, 1947. Giving thanks is always our first duty".

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