

Sao Paulo, 21 May 2010

Dearest Sisters,

We can't end our meeting and our last information exchange without thanking you profoundly for having accompanied us with so much affection and prayer. You expressed this in a wide variety of ways and made your presence strongly felt through a veritable "avalanche" of messages.

We want to thank in a special way our General Government and Sr. Battistina Capalbo, who guided our encounter with great wisdom and who is leaving America "with a more missionary heart."

Sincere thanks also to the sisters of our Brazilian Province for their warm welcome and very generous hospitality.

And finally, we want to thank all the sisters who participated in this meeting, each one making her contribution so as to help the grace of God reach every member of our Institute.

In these last days, after having reflected on all the input we received and on how to share our energies and resources, and after having drawn up communal itineraries to respond to the many appeals of God, we were suddenly confronted with a crisis, which emerged when we were preparing to draw up our Continental Project. But our "Latin" heart is a "missionary" heart...so we didn't let this stop us. The Spirit shone through the "cracks" of our crisis and our hearts were touched by the illuminating words of our Founder, who said: *"You are not limited to one small area in the Church; your distinguishing feature is universality.... Universality! Don't be petty minded. Don't focus on only your own small interests. Look at the needs of the other communities and try to help each other out."* As a result, we were able to make important decisions in a spirit of communion in all the areas of our life.

The last day of our continental meeting opened with a moving sharing session—a true work of grace on the part of the Lord—in which we highlighted all that we had received and lived during this intense period. Each sister was a ray of light for the others. Our journey is summed up in a small document that testifies to the fact that the goals of our meeting were successfully reached.

In her concluding address (*Led by the Spirit "into the city" so as to rediscover a prophetic spirit and communion*), Sr. M. Antonieta Bruscati reminded us first of all that we are here because the Lord freely loved us and chose us to be his disciples-missionaries. She urged us to allow ourselves to be led by the Spirit *"so as to build communities of true disciples, whom the Master recognizes, loves and continues to send out to the world."*

The Superior General strongly underscored the theme of unity, saying: *"Loving one another and working together in communion will give a new quality to our life, reinvigorate our apostolic thrust, multiply our creativity, and draw young women to follow Christ the Master."*

If we do this, then our efforts to redesign our presence on the American continent will be successful.

On this last day of our encounter, we also had the joy of spending some time with Cardinal Odilo Pedro Scherer, the Archbishop of Sao Paulo, whose words were very appropriate for us and our situation. The Cardinal said: *"We are called by the Church of this conti-*

*ment to proclaim to everyone that Christ is the Way, the Truth and the Life. The world has changed and our continent has also changed. But we must continue to proclaim Jesus Christ—him alone. Even though many things need to be changed, what is essential is to always start afresh from him....”*

As missionaries, we were deeply touched by the Cardinal’s pastoral anxiety. *“Our concern must be not only to proclaim the Word to those who are already in the Church,”* he said. *“We must also reach out to all the others—to the ones who don’t come to us. We must share what we have received with the world. The Word of God is for all humanity, not only for a chosen few.”*

The Cardinal ended his talk with these very meaningful words: *“A community that truly lives the wealth of the Christian life will draw many vocations.”*

Dom Odilo and several other priests, including Fr. Valdecir, Provincial Superior of the Society of St. Paul in Brazil, then concelebrated the Eucharistic Liturgy that closed our meeting. The sisters of our Città Regina community also participated in the Liturgy. After our Re-designing Project was carried to the altar, we placed the American continent in the hands of the Lord, asking him for the strength to implement our priorities.

Dom Odilo ended the Mass by conferring on us the solemn blessing for apostles and with that we are now returning joyously to our various circumscriptions, with a prophetic gaze and hearts brimming over with the Word.

Sincere thanks to all of you.

With deep affection,

*Sr. Iris Pontin and Sr. M. Rogeria Bottasso*