



Rome, 20 August 2016
Anniversary of the Foundation of the PF

To All the Sisters

Dearest Sisters,

We still carry in our hearts a picture of the thousands of hands joined together as dusk fell on the *Campus Misericordiae (Field of Mercy)* in Krakow, Poland—the most beautiful and meaningful image of World Youth Day, chosen by Pope Francis as the setting from which to launch his message of peace, reconciliation and love at this very difficult moment in human history.

In fact, it seems that in these days more and more space is being given to every kind of violence, to frequent and sudden terrorist attacks, to the mass migration of peoples: phenomena to which we cannot and must not remain indifferent.... It is truly a challenging time—one that can be compared to the period of “serious upheaval” (cf. AD 48) during which, with extraordinary faith, our Founder laid the foundations for what would become the Pauline Family. The date was August 1914, the eve of a horrendous world war.

But for the Pauline Congregations, tragic moments such as this have also been occasions for growth in faith, in reciprocal communion, in a spirit of atonement, in a more conscious apostolic participation “in the many sufferings of the world” (VPC 66).

Today too, the response to the darkness that surrounds us is faith and a reinvigorated witness to communion. Let us ask ourselves: “How can we, all together, try to *conquer evil with good*? How can we make our voice heard in this time in which millions of our brothers and sisters are suffering?” The Pope reminded us that “our response to a world at war has a name: its name is fraternity, its name is brotherhood, its name is communion, its name is family.”

As a community, let us reflect together on what our response should be today and ***dedicate the day of 20 August to prayer in a spirit of atonement***, focusing above all on the intentions in the Pauline Offertory.

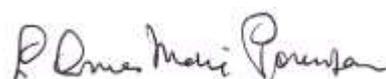
Experts have said that “a specific feature of terrorism is that it is a communications phenomenon.” We have a tremendous responsibility to pray that communications will offer people increased opportunities to meet one another and manifest solidarity in our divided and war-torn world. And since our **230 FSP communities** extend from the Far East to the Far West, from Australia and Papua New Guinea to Hawaii, we are assured of 24 hours of uninterrupted prayer before Jesus in the Eucharist. Let us spend the day in active and heartfelt mercy toward one another, putting into practice the invitation of the Apostle Paul:

“Let no offensive talk pass your lips, only what is good and helpful to the occasion, so that it brings a blessing to those who hear it. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, for that Spirit is the seal with which you were marked for the day of final liberation. Have done with all spite and bad temper, with rage, insults and slander, with evil of any kind. Be generous to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another as God in Christ forgave you” (Eph. 4:29ff.).

How wonderful it would be if we could put to death the bad in us before externalizing it in actions and words that wound and compromise our communion!

So then: let us observe a day dedicated to “building bridges,” to “holding hands” with one another, to spreading mercy, love, communion and tenderness first of all in our own communities and from there outward to the broader communities of the Congregation, the Pauline Family, the world....

My warmest and most affectionate best wishes to all of you.


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan
Superior General