

*The virtual community can inform us,
but it cannot convert us.
Conversion passes through the fatigue of encounter,
and this is the heart of the Gospel.*

Fr. Gaetano Piccolo, sj



DEAREST SISTERS...

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Dearest Sisters, this letter will reach you at a very important and evocative moment of the liturgical year, marked by the cry: “Come, Lord Jesus!” Never has a plea been more heartfelt and shared than in this night of the world in which ev-

everything has changed, in which all humanity has suddenly found itself vulnerable and powerless, a prey to fear, uncertainty about tomorrow, the loss of control of the time so well programmed in our schedules....

We did not have the courage to stop and let ourselves be questioned by what was happening around us. On the contrary, as Pope Francis sadly reminded us last 27 March, kneeling all alone in St. Peter’s Square in an extraordinary moment of prayer for the pandemic: “We continued undeterred,” he confessed, “thinking that we would always remain healthy in a sick world.”

During the first wave of this insidious evil, we said and heard others say repeatedly that we would never be the same again, that we would emerge from this nightmare different, better. That might be true, but we should not take it for granted.... In this regard, I was deeply struck by the words of an Italian Bishop, His Excellency Derio Olivero, himself a victim of this once-in-a-century malady:

In these months, we either begin to change the Church or else it will remain unchanged for the next 20 years. Please listen carefully to what this time is whispering to us and to what Pope Francis is telling us with such keen insight. We need to rediscover the beauty of relationships within the Church: between catechists, animators, collaborators and practitioners.

We need to create in the parish a place where we are happy to be, where we can say: “How wonderful it is to be here and breathe the atmosphere of community!” Not closed communities, focused on themselves and on their own organization, but open, humble communities, filled with hope; communities that infect others with their

own passion and trust. Not a Church that goes to church, but a Church that goes out to everyone, vibrant with enthusiasm, passion, hope and affection.

Forgive me, sisters, for this long premise, but it helps me forge a link with the letter I wrote in the previous issue of *PaolineOnline*, in which I discussed the subjects of *communion, which gives rise to community, and fraternal correction*, a precious instrument for growing together in communion.

I am infinitely grateful to those of you who sent me a summary of your personal ideas and community sharing on these subjects, which cast light on my reflections and integrated them. I was deeply moved to read the wise comments of the members of our James Alberione community, Albano, some of whom are very old and sick, but who still have the courage to dream and to preserve in their hearts those dreams, which can be translated into prophecy.¹ And I was profoundly interpellated by the questions another sister asked herself—difficult questions that force us to dig deep within ourselves:



- Are we really interested in the sisters with whom we live? Do we look at them as a reality that is part of our own life or else do we see them as part of a world unrelated to us?
- Is there a sense of mutual belonging among us or just polite disinterest?
- Are we concerned about helping and supporting one another on our journey or do we live, day after day, adapting ourselves to forced solitude?

It is important to ask questions, to be “inhabited” by questions, to live them...without trying to find quick answers. As Rilke says: those who live their questions will one day, without realizing it, live their answers.

¹ Cf. Homily of Pope Francis for the Feast of the Consecrated Life, 02.02.2017.

I believe, however, that an answer to those questions can be found in the characteristics of *love* underscored by St. Paul in chapter 13 of the First Letter to the Corinthians, from which the tradition of our Congregation has always drawn inspiration. In fact, as early as the 1930s, the text was on display in our communities and was even included in an integral way in our Constitutions of 1953:

Let the sisters recall the teaching of St. Paul: "Love is patient; it is kind. It is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It is not self-seeking; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing but rejoices in the truth; it bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things" (1 Co. 13:4-7) (FSP-SdC, pp. 231-232).

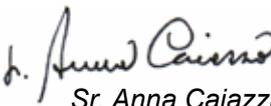
Fr. Alberione frequently cites 1 Co. 13:1-13, underscoring the communicational dimension of love: loved by God, we can establish relationships marked by love in virtue of this divine manifestation. This gives rise to prophetic communities that witness to the joy of being together and that proclaim the Gospel with renewed passion; "open places," where others feel welcomed and that breathe, in the climate and gestures of communion, the presence of the One who becomes flesh in us and who, through us, continues to speak his words of blessing and life on humanity.



Sisters, once again I would like to compare ideas with you, so I will be waiting to receive a summary of your reflections and sharing on this subject. Thank you.

Very best wishes for a fruitful beginning of our Bible Year. Let us go forth together to meet the Lord who comes. Let us arise and set out on our journey, walking in his light, with hearts attentive to his Word, joyously alert to hear his knock on the door of our heart. He is waiting for us to open that door so as to *go forth* with us to meet others in a spirit of comradeship, in a *diakonia of love* that extends to the ends of the earth.

With affection and in communion of prayer and hope,


Sr. Anna Caiazza
Superior General

REMEMBERING FR. BARTOLOMEO SORGE, SJ



The Daughters of St. Paul remember with affection and gratitude Fr. Bartolomeo Sorge, sj, who was called to heaven. A person of profound faith, deeply in love with Mary, "Mother of Divine Grace," a keen and forthright observer of ecclesial and civil life, he was for the Daughters of St. Paul a wise teacher, sure guide and dear friend.

The words he addressed to us on the Centenary of our foundation (1915-2015) remain in our hearts:

"Sisters, I don't want to frighten you, but look at the big task you have ahead of you! The dynamic fidelity of the Daughters of St. Paul to humanity and its history will be to

ensure that, through communication, the intercultural and interreligious dialogue currently underway reaches everyone.

"More than a goal, a Centenary is the beginning of a new season. This is what I would like to leave you as a fond memory, because we have known each other for many years now and we esteem each other. Therefore, while thanking and praising the Lord for the graces he has poured out on you and for the amazing things you have accomplished in these decades, let us ask the Queen of Apostles, the Mother of the Pauline Family, to guide you toward the great things that Pope Francis, the Church and the contemporary world expect of you."

Thank you, Father Bartolomeo, for honoring us with your esteem and friendship. We will continue to feel you close to us. You are in our prayers and grateful memory.

May you rest in peace!

BRAZIL

A MONTH DEDICATED TO THE BIBLE



September is always a special month for the Church in Brazil. In 1971, the Diocese of Belo Horizonte, in the southeastern part of the country, asked the help of the Daughters of St. Paul to organize a singular initiative: that of dedicating an entire month to the promotion of the Bible. (One of the reasons for choosing the month of September is that the Feast of St. Jerome, one of the greatest biblical scholars in the history of the Catholic Church, falls on Sept. 30.)

At the end of the initiative, the FSPs continued to promote and hold an annual “Bible Month” through their Bible Animation Service (BAS). Gradually other dioceses around the country and then Brazil’s National Bishops’ Conference began to support and participate in the event and September was officially declared “The Month of the Word of God.”

Today, a team of biblical scholars and representatives of various Bible study and research groups meets each year to select a specific text for deeper reflection during Bible Month. Based on this common theme, each Catholic publishing house then produces a basic text on which local parishes and study groups focus their animations.

The Daughters of St. Paul, with the collaboration of their young people in formation and cooperators, hold meetings and lectures each year on the chosen theme in their Pauline book centers, as well as encounters on the diocesan and parochial levels, using the Word of God as their basic text. The FSP biblical sector (BAS) sees to it that the content of these animations is also available online.

This year, to celebrate the golden anniversary of Bible Month, the theme chosen was: “Open your hand to your poor and needy neighbors” (cf. Dt. 15:11). Currently, in addition to Brazil, several other countries in Latin America and also in Africa now celebrate Bible Month every September.

KOREA

NEW LOGO FOR THE PAULINE BIBLE INSTITUTE

Ever since the *Ut Unum Sint Center* opened in Korea in 1978, its main focus has been on Bible study by correspondence, which is why it was called *The Bible Correspondence Institute*.



In 2011, the Institute launched an e-learning Bible Study course to provide an easy way to study the Bible anytime, anywhere, via a PC or mobile device. Recently, to attract more students, the school’s name was changed to *The Pauline Bible Institute* and a new logo was created for it: one that is simple, easy to understand, brightly-designed and inviting, while maintaining the same website address: uus.pauline.or.kr. Through this Institute, it is possible to systematically study the entire Bible over a 6-year period.

The content, which has been enriched with animated lessons, will make it easier for students to understand the sacred texts. Additional help is available through the 1-on-1 tutorials that accompany the lessons.

One of the programs of the Institute is entitled *Bible Study for Rebirth*, which offers a new series of YouTube videos in various areas, such as *Preparing Food in Biblical Times*, hosted by Sr. Ilma Yun, fsp (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GBiD6RF7QmM>). Before demonstrating how to prepare these foods, Sr. Ilma presents the customs, lifestyle and meaning associated with food in the biblical culture.

**HYEHWA NAMU:
NEW APOSTOLIC CENTER IN SEOUL**



The Daughters of St. Paul of Korea reflected at length on the possibility of building a new apostolic Center in Seoul and their dream has finally come true. After leaving their old premises, located in a central but not functional part of the city, they built a new multimedia center in the most cultural and artistic part of the capital. The zone, Daehakro, is filled with theaters, restaurants, cafes, universities, and various meeting places. Our sisters have named their new Paul-

ine Multimedia Center *Hyehwa Namu*, a play on the Chinese word for “scholars’ tree,” which connotes reflection, resonance and nostalgia.

The new FSP Center consists of a bookshop, a snack bar, several rooms in which to hold one-day workshops, a religious articles display and a small theater for various programs and performances. In this setting, our sisters can offer people the chance to deepen their spiritual lives, pray, receive consolation and enter into communion and communication with others.

The new venue, launched on 18 October 2020 with an exhibition of biblical illustrations, was inaugurated and blessed by Cardinal Andrea Soo-jung Yeom, Archbishop of Seoul.

We want to extend our warmest best wishes to our sisters of Korea and our gratitude to all the people who will make the most of newly-born *Hyehwa Namu*!

ITALY

FORMATION COURSE: *DIGITALMENTE PAOLINE*



In harmony with our Chapter Document, which directs us to “facilitate moments of formation and updating on the digital media so as to make the most of the perspectives that they offer to evangelization” (CD 45.3), our Italian Province has programmed a course entitled

DigitalMente Paoline—a formative proposal of the Provincial Government in the area of ongoing formation and studies. The initiative springs from an analysis of the results of two surveys sent to all the circumscription’s communities, with the aim of “photographing” personal and community needs concerning a deeper study of digital culture and the use of today’s new technologies.

The replies to the surveys revealed a desire for formation regarding how to understand the general principles, mechanisms and logic behind evolving digital technologies, as well as the desire to get to know the function and use of different devices. In addition, the sisters expressed their need to understand how digital technologies can help communication, creativity, innovation and everything related to our specific apostolate.

The course consists of two modules:

- *theoretical*: ten videos (each about 30 minutes long) on the main themes of the digital culture, to be watched as a community;
- *practical*: four *online* workshops, for which personal registration is required.

This formation initiative was realized thanks to the collaboration of some Daughters of St. Paul with external experts who, with professional skill and experience, offered their contributions on specific issues.

LITERARY FESTIVAL IN MANTUA



For the third consecutive year, the members of our FSP Book Center in Mantua participated in *Festivaletteratura*, the city’s annual Literature Festival. The 5-day program, which featured input by authors from all over the world, consisted of about 200 events, which are usually held in historical locations throughout the city. But this year, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, many of the events were held via radio and the Internet. As their contribution to the program, the FSPs organized 3 meetings with authors to enable participants to dialogue with them on important cultural, societal and ecclesial topics.

His Excellency Marco Busca, the Bishop of Mantua, had this to say about this year’s Festival:

“First of all I would like to greet all those who have worked so hard to stage this literary event, which I consider to be also an ecclesial event, since it attempts to interpret what people are living today.

May we apply many of the things we hear in these days to our own lives so as to reform ourselves and thus contribute to the reform of the great universal Church.”

NIGERIA

ANIMATION EVENT FOR CHILDREN



1 October is a public holiday in Nigeria because it is the nation's Independence Day and the Solemnity of Our Lady, Queen of Nigeria. This year the country is commemorating its 60th anniversary of independence.

There, as in every part of the world, the Covid-19 pandemic brought about several months of lockdown, which meant that schools were closed and children had to stay indoors. Our FSP community is located in Kado Kuchi, a fast growing part of Abuja, Nigeria's capital. Despite the growth in infrastructure in the city, there still exists an "urban village" where many poor people live. The parents of the children do menial jobs to earn a living, struggling to provide food for their large families.

During the Covid-19 lockdown, the children in Kado Kuchi did not have access to online studies, like the students in the city's private schools. The many hours and days without in-person classes meant that these youngsters were trapped in environments that made them more prone to abuse, especially sexual abuse. (In fact, there has been a sharp increase in rape cases in Nigeria since the lockdown.)

The Daughters of St. Paul of Abuja took advantage of the holiday to gather together children from this less-privileged zone to create awareness about the evils of abuse and human trafficking in society. They say that about 100 children, ages 4-15, from two nearby parishes, participated in the encounter and that it was very touching to see them all sit and listen attentively to the input, and to participate actively as well, asking many questions.

Afterward, they were divided into four groups, according to their ages. They shared ideas with one another and then each group presented a brief report to the larger gathering concerning what they had learned.

At the end of the event, each child received a packet of book published by Paulines Publications Nigeria on the topics treated. The gift was made possible thanks to generous local benefactors who supported this initiative. Our sisters hope that they will receive more help and funding for the programs they are organizing to empower children in the fight to overcome and eradicate abuse and human trafficking in Nigerian society.

TANZANIA

50 YEARS OF PAULINE PRESENCE

The Daughters of St. Paul recently commemorated the Golden Jubilee of our FSP presence in Tanzania. The anniversary Mass was celebrated by Bishop Jude Thaddeus Ru-



wa'ichi, Archbishop of Dar es Salaam, in St. Peter Parish, Oyster Bay. A large group of people participated in the simple event.

Fifty years have gone by since April 1970, when Cardinal Laurean Rubambwa, on a trip to Rome from Tanzania, paid a visit to Sr. Ignazia Balla, at that time Superior General of the Daughters of St. Paul, to ask her once again for some sisters to take over the management of the Dar es Salaam bookshop. "I will not move from here," he said with determination, "until you, trusting in divine Providence, agree to send at least two sisters to run my bookshop."

Maestra Ignazia accepted the Cardinal's challenge and in September 1970 Sr. Damiana Guerresi and Sr Noemi Bergamin arrived in the Tanzanian capital, accompanied by a third FSP, Sr. Daniela Baronchelli, who had been asked to introduce them to the Cardinal, to the country and to their new mission. Her presence gave the new arrivals the chance to take turns going to school to learn Kiswahili, the official language of the country.

The celebration of the anniversary of our foundation in Tanzania is a wonderful opportunity to thank the Lord for his unfailing support and guidance of our sisters during their long years of service to the Local Church.

The Congregation's gratitude extends in a special way to the many priests, sisters, missionaries and laity who helped to root the Pauline charism in this fertile African soil so as to respond in a suitable way to the many situations, problems and needs of the country.

With the passing of the years, the Daughters of St. Paul have been blessed by the Lord with the gift of local vocations, for which the Congregation is deeply grateful to him. Today, the Dar es Salaam community is made up of five sisters from our East Africa Delegation, plus a group of young aspirants who are the seed and hope of a renewed and vibrant flowering of the Pauline mission in this part of the world.

MADAGASCAR

**INAUGURATION
OF THE FIANARANTSOA BOOK CENTER**

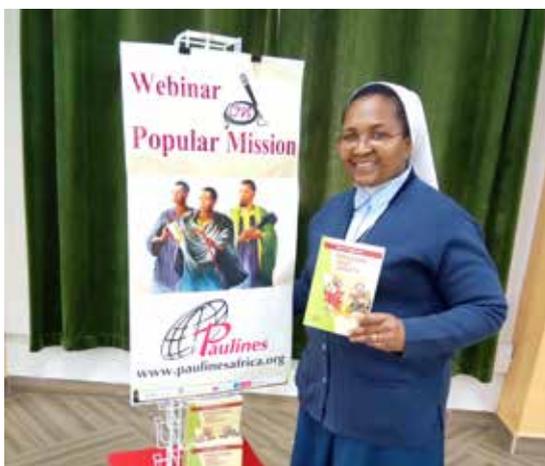


Our delegation of Madagascar has opened its fourth Pauline Book Center in the country, this one in the diocese of Fianarantsoa. The locale was inaugurated on 31 October 2020 by Right Reverend Vincent Rakotozafy, Bishop of Fort-Dauphin. In her welcome speech, Sr. Solange Randrianirina, Delegation Superior, reminded everyone that a Pauline book center is by nature a place of communication and dialogue, where everyone can find light and inner peace. She then read aloud a message from the Institute’s Superior General, who expressed her deep joy for this event and said she joined the Daughters of St. Paul throughout the world in offering our sisters of Madagascar the Congregation’s best wishes for this new Center of light.

A very meaningful moment in the inauguration ceremony was the enthronement of the Bible in the book shop. We thank the Lord for this latest “pulpit” of evangelization and ask the Holy Spirit to help the FSP presence in Fianarantsoa attract new vocations to the Pauline mission.

KENYA

ONLINE SEMINAR



Taking advantage of digital forms of communication, the Daughters of St. Paul of Nairobi organized an online seminar on the theme of *mission to the people* to help raise awareness about World Mission Day. The event, in which more than 600 people participated, was an excellent opportunity to address the challenges of Covid-19 by placing digital technology at the service of the Gospel.

Two Consolata missionaries with experience in Colombia and Brazil were invited to offer viewers their input on the following themes:

- *Biblical-Pastoral Approach to the Mission to the People* in light of the Message of Pope Francis for World Mission Day, by Fr. Joakim Kamau.
- Presentation of the book *Freedom and Trinity: Pastoral Perspectives for Today’s World*, by Fr. Nicola Fogliaco.

The initiative, the result of collaboration between our different apostolic sectors in Nairobi, represents a new and creative way of holding Pauline encounters and served to underscore digital technology as an important communication strategy. In her address to the participants, Sr. Anna Caiazza, Superior General of the Daughters of St. Paul, said: “This is truly the time to carry out our mission through digital forms of evangelization, which allow us to speak to others by means of the media languages they use most frequently.”

**CALENDAR
of the General Government**

- 23-26 *September*: Formation via video conferencing for the new government of Southern America
- 5-7 *October*: Formation via video conferencing for the new government of Central Europe
- 12-14 *October*: Formation via video conferencing for the new government of Pakistan
- 20-21 *November*: Video conference meeting with the Commission for the Redesigning of Europe
- 9 *December*: First meeting (via videoconferencing) with the international consultation team of young FSPs
- 14-16 *December*: Formation Encounter via videoconferencing for the new government of Venezuela – Puerto Rico – Dominican Republic

SACRAMENTALITY BETWEEN THE BODY AND VIRTUAL REALITY

VERONICA BERNASCONI, FSP JUNIOR



Among other things, the pandemic has put to the test faith and pastoral practice as a consequence of the impossibility of celebrating the sacraments through one's physical presence and preventing believers from gathering together as a community. This situation

has heightened awareness of the role the human body plays in the believing experience.

At the heart of the dissertation submitted by Sr. Veronica to the Faculty of Theology of the Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome, Italy, in pursuance of a baccalaureate degree, lies the question:

What is the relationship between corporeity and sacramentality? How should this be lived in a time and culture permeated and conveyed by the digital connection?

Any profound theological reflection on the subject is called to help believers discern the presence of the living God today, and to view pastoral action from the logic of the Incarnation. The first two chapters of Sr. Veronica's dissertation present the body-virtuality diptych and highlight the reality and potential of the sacraments, helping the reader to understand what is at stake in the human perception of "real" and "virtual." In the third chapter, the author explores possible ways to pursue this journey.

The starting point of the first chapter, which focuses on the relationship between the human body and the sacraments, is provided by anthropological acquisitions that, using the biblical vision and the human sciences in a phenomenological approach, see in corporeity the unity between human identity and the need to express this identity in corporeal relationships. In sacramental rites, every act of worship of God is a human act and every human act is an act of God, which makes the rite both symbolic and communitarian.

The second chapter questions how to live the sacraments through the mediation of virtual technology. Taking the idea of the human being from the technological mentality as its point of departure, a "sacramental dimension" beyond the sacraments can be glimpsed as a category of union between God and the human being in daily life.

In the third chapter, the confluence of anthropology and the sacraments opens new possibilities to be explored in this regard. The dialogue between the two disciplines raises ulterior questions and increases interweavings with other areas of theology, ranging from ecclesiology to pastoral ministry.

The author says that the word "conclusion" does not befit the perspective of her small investigation, which is a simple attempt to highlight attitudes that can lead to interaction between theological fields.

What remains to us, on the personal level, is the need to accept and live the tensions and complexities involved in the process and to respectfully welcome the sacramental breath of the Spirit.

VOCATION ACCOMPANIMENT TOWARD HUMAN GROWTH OF THE GIRLS IN INITIAL FORMATION IN THE CONTEXT OF PAKISTAN

SR. YASMEEN FOUZIA GEORGE, FSP



Sr. Yasmeen F. George, a member of our Pakistani Delegation, completed a two-year course at the St. Peter Favre Institute of the Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome, from which she earned a diploma for *Formators to the Priesthood and Religious Life*. Her dissertation focuses on

the importance of accompaniment in the human growth of young Christian women in Pakistan.

The text is divided into three chapters: Chapter I defines the concept of accompaniment and the important role it plays in formation to the religious life; Chapter II presents the story of Emmaus as a biblical icon of accompaniment in the formation process today, and Chapter III focuses on the need to appropriately accompany Pakistani vocations in the light of the country's religious, social and cultural norms, in particular its Muslim-based mentality about feminism, which has a strong impact on Christian girls and influences their human growth.

The dissertation sketches out the pedagogical elements of accompaniment and sets forth the qualities and role of the formator in her accompaniment of Pakistani vocations interested in the Institute of the Daughters of St. Paul. The author urges formators to pay particular attention to the human dimension so as to help indigenous vocations overcome the shortcomings and influence that the local culture and social norms have had on their personalities.

She then proceeds to offer some guidelines and tools for the effective accompaniment of Pakistani vocations, saying that formators should pay attention to certain issues that might prove to be a hindrance to the psycho-social growth of the young women and thus pose obstacles to a fruitful outcome of the accompaniment process.

The dissertation concludes with the author's affirmation that just as bread nourishes the whole body, so too a good accompaniment of fledging vocations lays a solid foundation for formation to the religious life and that the formator-formandee relationship is a collaborative one in which both parties must invest willingly and intensively. Nevertheless, in the end each candidate is responsible for her own growth and it is the grace of God that will water the plant and enable it to reach maturity.

SATELLITE NAVIGATOR DT10-11

USER INSTRUCTIONS – FOURTH STEP



In the three previous issues of our bulletin, we reflected on the conditions necessary for the Chapter slogan to serve as a spiritual navigator on the road of our life. A navigator can function properly only if it has first pinpointed its current position and has been carefully set up. The goal we want to reach is now clear: *to become prophets in today's world*. So all that remains is to finally press the green button and...

START THE NAVIGATION PROCESS...

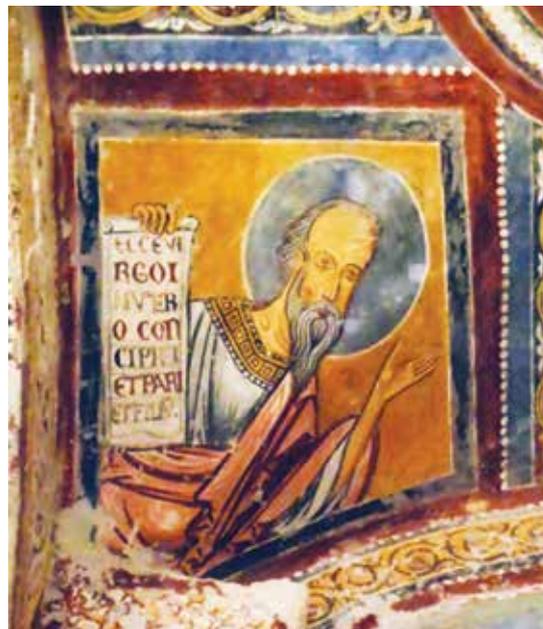
...or, in other words: allow ourselves to be truly guided by the Word of God, to the point of gradually becoming his “spokespersons” wherever we are. “But how?! We already do this every day!” every Daughter of St. Paul in the world might rightly answer because each day she takes the Word in her hands to read it, meditate on it, pray with it and try to live it. And yet our daily experience reveals that despite our assiduous contact with the divine Word, our life on the human level is not as transformed as we would like it to be... Why not?

I don't presume to offer you new answers in this regard because, after all, as the Book of Ecclesiastes says: “There is nothing new under the sun” (1:9). In fact, very often it is precisely our desire for the ever-new and our frantic search for things never before seen or heard that distracts us from what really matters and “works”—even in the spiritual life. So what is that ancient and ever-new secret on which the proper functioning of the navigator of the Word of God in our lives depends?

Once again, we find the key in the Bible. In the Book Isaiah, when urging the Israelites to abandon the wrong path they have taken and return to the Lord, the prophet quotes a divine oracle:

“My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord. As high as the heavens are above the earth, so high are my ways above your ways and my thoughts above your thoughts” (Is. 55:8-9).

In essence, these words make us understand that in order to take the right path, to finally start navigating the Lord's way, it is first of all necessary to harmonize our way of thinking with God's way of thinking. The good intentions that flow from our prayerful reading of the Bible focus our attention on behavior and attitudes that are immediately visible and verifiable while very often overlooking our deep-seated motivations.



Cattedrale di Anagni. Cripta: ISAIA - Foto sergia fsp

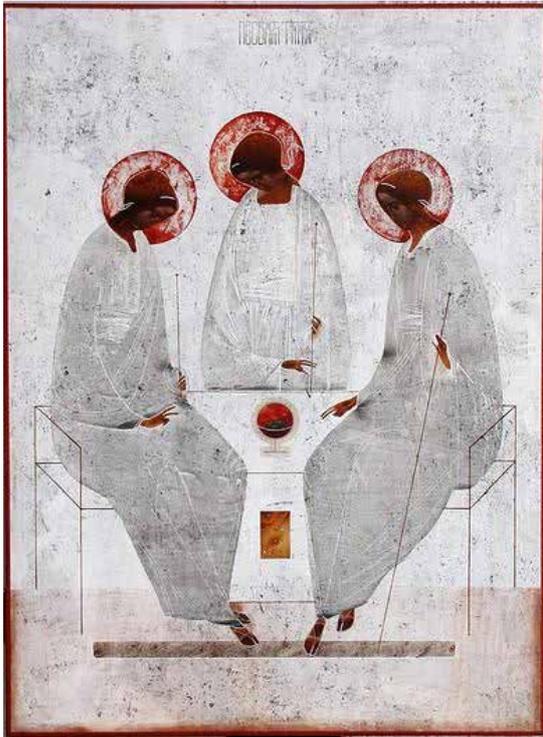
In order to ensure that we initiate a successful navigation in our relationship with the Word of God, it is not necessary that we push the “button” of our actions more forcefully or frequently. Instead, we have to harmonize our way of reasoning with the reasoning of God. This harmonization takes place in different areas. Let us take a look at two of them that correspond in a particular way to the concept of navigation and direction.¹

THE PERCEPTION OF SPACE

As human beings, we behave as if our task is to fill all the available space around us with things we consider “useful.” Just look at how we behave with nature: once we have settled down in a place we like, we do everything we can to “root ourselves there” forever. We do the same thing with regard to a type of work with which we feel comfortable. Instead, God acts in such a way as to create a space in which others—that is, his creatures—can act. What is more, he creates

¹ The following material is freely drawn from several reflections guided by Fr. Giuseppe Forlai, i.g.s.

Arise and set out...



many things that are not immediately “useful” but simply beautiful.

To give us an even clearer idea of the way he acts, it is enough to look at the dynamics of revelation: the Father reveals himself by leaving space for the Son who, in turn, brings his mission to completion by leaving space for the Holy Spirit. The Spirit does not occupy any space. Instead, he urges the disciples of Jesus to go forth to the ends of the earth.

THE MAIN ORIENTATION OF OUR MOVEMENTS

We are convinced that we must aim on high, that we must *ascend* to arrive at who knows where. Because of this, we admire greatness and do everything we can to become great. God instead looks down upon those who are small and *descends* so as to arrive precisely where we don't want to be. For this reason, his Word became small and continues to use instruments that are small and despised.

To grasp this contrast, it is enough to once again leaf through the pages of the Bible. The divine paradigm par excellence is presented to us by Jesus himself, who “though he was in the form of God, emptied himself and became like human beings” (cf. Phil. 2:6-7).

To return to our image of the Word of God as “navigator”: a successful navigation of the Word could mean that our prayerful reading of it prompts us to ask ourselves these questions:

- How does the biblical passage I am reading bring to the fore the contrast between my way of reasoning as compared to God's way of reasoning?
- In what way does the Word in this passage heal my “mental pathologies”?

Anna Matikova, fsp

PERPETUAL PROFESIONS 2020



SEOUL-MIARI, KOREA

8 September 2020

Sr. Adria Kim
Sr. Martha Kim
Sr. Theresa Kim
Sr. Via Lee

ANTANANARIVE, MADAGASCAR

26 September 2020

Sr. Paul Francklina Henintsoa
Sr. Laingoharisoa Michaelle Randrianah

KINSHASA, CONGO

17 September 2020

Sr. Suzanne Kangaj Kayij
Sr. Jacqueline Ondey Ongenge

MUMBAI, INDIA,

25 October 2020

Sr. Maria Vencila Marshal
Sr. Lucy Thesiirou Shea
Sr. Regina Tho Rune

A MOTHER AND BEACON



The word “mother” is non-temporal in character because it is a reality that goes beyond space and time. This is true of both physical and spiritual motherhood. A mother is a person who welcomes life in all its stages and expressions. A mother is a person who knows

how to understand and love, even when her role and mission in life are not recognized. That role and mission continue even after her children leave home, sometimes forgetting her years of self-denial and gratuitous love.

In my opinion, the word “mother” is the one that best defines Prima Maestra Thecla. “You will have many teachers,” our Founder said, “but only one mother.”

I remember my first meeting with this wonderful Mother. I had gone to visit the Naples/Capodimonte community of the Daughters of St. Paul and I was told with great enthusiasm that their Superior General, Maestra Thecla, was also there. The sisters had spoken to me about her on several previous occasions, their words filled with affection, veneration and filial love. But since my family upbringing had taught me to remain unswayed by the words and emotions of others, I reserved judgment and waited to see this personage myself. When she came into the room, I saw a dignified and gentle woman with a penetrating gaze. She spoke simply but her words were filled with humanity and love. She greeted me cordially and then asked me about myself, my family, my studies, my hopes and my thoughts about the Pauline mission and spirituality. I was struck by her insight into people and situations, and by her ability to connect with others. She asked me what I would like to do in the future. Because at that time I was working as a teacher, even though I was still in high school, she assured me: “You can be a teacher here too,” and she was right!

My first meeting with Prima Maestra Thecla made an impact on me and filled me with the certitude that the Lord had placed at my side a person who would be a beacon for me, illuminating the path of my religious life. In fact, whenever I went through difficult times later, the advice she gave me was both en-

couraging and enlightening—words that only a true mother could speak.

Leafing through the pages of memory, I once again see her kneeling in chapel, absorbed in prayer, her gaze fixed on the Tabernacle. I recall my personal and communitarian encounters with her, when she would gather us together on Sundays to offer us guidance on both big and small things, share her joys and worries concerning the different countries and continents she had visited, invite us to pray for new apostolic initiatives, pass on to us the directives she had received from the Founder, and urge us to lead always more faith-filled lives.

My “book of memories” also includes an important page concerning the period of Vatican Council II. The Council’s deep sensitivity and breadth of vision gave us the chance to see “up close” the universality of the Church, the problems of the Third World and the yearnings of peoples, which prompted us “to do something” for our brothers and sisters by preparing, holding and animating a big *Exhibit on the Church*.

In sketching out (albeit in a very small way) the gigantic figure of Maestra Thecla, I cannot fail to mention her important and concrete collaboration with Fr. Alberione in the foundation of the other Pauline Institutes, her love for priests and for the Pauline Family, her passion for the apostolate.

The last time I saw Maestra Thecla was when she was hospitalized and, with the awareness of a mother, was serenely preparing herself to say “goodbye” to her daughters, realizing that her meeting with her Lord and God was imminent. Still very lucid, she asked me about my mother, whom she had met many years ago at our family home in Naples. Her words and gestures were tender and I was deeply moved, realizing that this would be my last meeting with this woman who had truly been a second mother to me.

On 5 February 1964, after a lifetime spent traveling the globe by land, sea and sky, Prima Maestra made her final and definitive trip—her flight to heaven, where she was welcomed into the arms of our loving God and Father.

Fifty-six years have passed since our Institute was orphaned through the loss of its Mother and Superior General, but Prima Maestra continues to walk with us, to watch over our Institute, and to serve as a beacon illuminating the path of her daughters, in keeping with her role as a vigilant and loving mother.

Anna Pappalardo, fsp

THE LORD CAUSED MY VOCATION TO BLOOM



« A rose does not ask *why*: it blooms because it blooms, without thinking about it, and it does not ask you to take notice of it” (*The Cherubic Pilgrim* I, 289).

Looking back over my vocational journey, this statement popped into my mind. The Lord caused my vocation to bloom. It is a vocation without *why*'s: it blossoms anew each moment because the grace of the Lord stimulates it to do this.

I grew up in a Christian family. In our house, personal and family well-being was translated into comforting others, helping people in difficult situations and meeting their needs. This way of living shed light on my path. My dear aunt, Sr. Domina Yun—a Daughter of St. Paul who was a missionary in Russia for many years—supported me on the human and spiritual levels in my efforts to get to know Jesus and Gospel values.

One day, when I was in high school, I watched a documentary about a special education teacher who had dedicated his life to disabled children. I said to myself: “How wonderful! What a beautiful life! I want to do something like that.” So I decided that I too would become a special education teacher. My studies, internship and also volunteer work in my parish made me feel like an instrument in the hands of the Lord who, through me, caressed physically and psychologically challenged people.

One day some of my fellow-teachers and I took a group of disabled children to swim in a local pool. Suddenly, one of the children began to flounder and risked drowning. As the person in charge of the group, I accompanied the little boy on the ambulance trip to the hospital. It was a very serious situation. Feeling helpless, I waited in the emergency room, my mind blank. Just then, a nun wearing a veil passed by. When I saw her, my anguish came to the fore and I began to cry out interiorly to the Lord, begging him to save the child.

When the little boy's mother arrived, she consoled me, saying: “Don't worry. It's not your fault. The Lord will take care of him because he is His son.” I learned that the child was

born disabled because when his mother was pregnant with him she was in a car accident in which she also lost another child. Listening to that woman, I interpreted her words of comfort as a proclamation of her faith in God, which was an extraordinary experience for me.

This potentially tragic event was transformed into a precious and unexpected gift because in my fear and suffering I met Jesus, my Lord, and saw his merciful face. The French poet Charles Péguy says that Jesus gathers into himself all our sufferings and transforms them. In fact, he transformed my own brush with tragedy into an opportunity to call me to a more extensive charity—namely, intellectual charity. I had autonomously planned my life to work in a charitable way for children, especially disabled ones. But the Lord asked me to “put out to sea,” “throw out my net” and fish for true life. At that moment I came to realize that trying to plan my life independently of God was pointless because he was the true Master of it.

I entered the Congregation of the Daughters of St. Paul on the Feast of St. Joseph 2007. I am currently living in one of our communities in Rome while I complete my theological studies and continue my Pauline journey in the concrete circumstances of daily life. Right now, we are in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic—a dramatic period that has helped me better understand the greatness of the Pauline charism, which guides people's thinking in the direction of faith, hope and charity by enlightening their minds. As FSPs, we are called to help the poor in spirit and the suffering, who need the support of love and prayer.

The greatest and most powerful allure of the Pauline life is the Word of God. Each day, Jesus Master nourishes us with his Word and, at the same time, uses us as instruments to proclaim it. I am coming to understand always more profoundly that proclaiming the Word does not only mean preaching, teaching and giving talks about the Bible. Instead, it involves above all *living* that Word, *living* Jesus.

On my first summer vacation in Italy, I went to Verona to help out in our book center. Unfortunately, I wasn't much of a help because my Italian was still too poor. So my apostolate turned out to be that of offering a smile to every person who came into the Center. One day, a gentleman said to me: “You have such a welcoming smile, Sister. It does me good to see it!”

Susanna Lee, fsp

RELIGIOUS LIFE AND THE NEW MEDIA: BEING IN RELATION OR BEING CONNECTED? *



Religious life always mirrors the changes taking place in society. Religious communities are microcosms within which people who enter it bring with them all the baggage they acquired prior to their entrance, but also all the material received from contact with the outside world. In this way, the religious community finds itself managing all the stimuli introduced into it through its members. In recent years a good part of this material has been mediated by new communication tools: cell phones, the Internet, e-mail, social networks....

When a person enters religious life, he/she still has a considerable amount of work to do on the psycho-affective and spiritual levels. It is therefore necessary to be vigilant to see if the times and spaces offered by real interactions are sufficient or if they are progressively replaced by virtual connections.

Beyond the risks that must be monitored, the problem raised by the new media, their rapid diffusion and the immediacy of their use is, in my opinion, mainly anthropological and educational, and could be summed up in the distinction between the more superficial "being connected" and the more profound "being in relation." The risk is that the *superficial* becomes normal and the *more profound* becomes uncommon. Monitoring this difference is vital for the quality of relationships within the religious community and the life of the religious.

It is inevitable that in religious life there will be a gradual increase in what is happening in the secular world: a large part of life takes place online. In fact, the very image of the Web can offer us an opportunity for deeper spiritual reflection.

The element to reflect on from a spiritual point of view is what pushes a person *toward* the Net. The desire for communication, which often takes the form of a desire for friendship, cannot be understood solely in the light of the development of the new technologies. Rather, it expresses a desire for relationships—a thrust rooted in human nature.

Communion is possible only where communication is active. The desire for connection is therefore not simply a modern form of relating to others, but the outward expression of a deep-

er need for what is in fact human. However, it is necessary to take advantage of this desire for connection to help ourselves and help others discover the deeper and more divine identity present in us.

The question we face as religious is not simply if and how we use the new media, but rather if we are mindful of the time in which we live and in which we are called to proclaim the Gospel. The difference between two different ways (being connected or being in relationship) may say something about ourselves, but it says even more about the spirit of the time in which we live.

We must ask ourselves if and how it is possible to integrate the use of new communication technologies into religious life. Since religious life is called to play a serious educational role, that is, to be a model for others, it is necessary for religious to question themselves about how use of the new means of communication is influencing their lives as consecrated persons.



The advantages and resources offered by the new technologies are undeniable, including with regard to the proclamation of the Gospel. The commitment of the believer, and in particular of the religious, must be to reject compromises that affect the quality of one's relational life, and instead to safeguard empathy and responsibility, expressed as care of others.

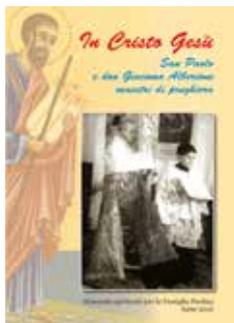
In the context of community life, this means not replacing one's own community, with its inevitable hardships and misunderstandings, with a virtual community, where it is certainly more rewarding to be because it is a community that can be turned off when we are tired or busy with other things. But the virtual community, although it is a place where we can proclaim the Gospel, is not a community that helps us grow. The virtual community can inform us, but it cannot convert us. Conversion passes through the fatigue of encounter, and this is the heart of the Gospel.

Fr. Gaetano Piccolo, sj

*This summary by SICOM was authorized by the author.

ITALY:

IN CHRIST JESUS: SPIRITUAL ITINERARY FOR THE PAULINE FAMILY 2021



The Spirituality Team of the Pauline Family in Italy has prepared a Spiritual Itinerary for the PF for 2021. In keeping with the current triennium’s second year, which addresses the “wheel” of piety/holiness, the Itinerary focuses on the journey of prayer sketched out by St. Paul and Blessed James Alberione. *In Christ Jesus: St. Paul and Fr. James Alberione—Teachers of Prayer*, the theme of the spiritual exercises programmed for this year, is developed in consonance with two very significant ecclesial events.

The first is the Special Year dedicated to *Laudato si’*, which in 2021 celebrates its fifth anniversary of promulgation, in the hope that communal reflection and prayer will help to create and strengthen constructive attitudes for safeguarding creation. The second is the Pauline Family’s Year of the Bible, viewed as a further opportunity to conform our whole life to the Word of God. The biblical section of the Itinerary was written by Fr. Agatino Gugliara, ssp, while the charismatic section on prayer in the thought of the Founder was written by Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan, fsp.

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SONG FOR THE YEAR OF THE BIBLE



The Central Commission for the Year of the Bible has decided to accompany this event of the Pauline Family with four songs that promote different musical styles and tastes from various parts of the world. The au-

thors of the songs are musicians of the Pauline Family.

The first of the four songs was composed by Sr. Verônica Firmino, a Brazilian Daughter of St. Paul, who released the song simultaneously in four languages: Portuguese, Italian, English and Spanish. Sisters from other countries and continents were involved in this initiative: Sr. Anne Nikki Ramos (Spain), Sr. Veronica Bernasconi (Italy), Sr. Emily Beata Marsh (United States).

The interpretation of the Portuguese version is by Karla Fioravante, the musical arrangement by Renato Palão, the recordings were made with the help of FSP collaborators in Brazil, and the connection between Italy and Brazil was realized by Sr. Rosa Maria Ramalho and Sr. Ana Paula Ramalho.

Thanks to all these people and their valuable collaboration in the realm of music, the Word has already begun its “race” for the Year of the Bible and we hope that it will continue its journey throughout the world, reaching beyond the Pauline Family.

KENYA

BIBLE YEAR OF THE PAULINE FAMILY

The FSPs of Nairobi, in union with the rest of the Pauline Family there, have organized a series of events (both in person and via video-conferencing) on 28 November to celebrate the opening of the PF’s Bible Year.

Two of the main features of the day will be:

- a conference by Fr. William Owire, svd, on the theme: “The Word of God in the Life of the Christian Community”
- a solemn concelebrated Eucharist, presided over by Archbishop Hubertus Matheus Maria van Meegen, Apostolic Nuncio to Kenya.

The Paulines Communication Center will make all the events available online.

FINESTRA SULLA CHIESA CHURCH STATISTICS IN THE WORLD



On the occasion of the 94th World Mission Day (18 October), Fides News Agency published a report on Catholic Church statistics throughout the world. The information was taken from the Church's *Book of Statistics*, updated to 31 December 2018. The data reads:

There has been no halt to a phenomenon that has been going on for years now—that of the declining number of vocations throughout the world. But with a new aspect: it is not priests who are in sharp decline, but rather women religious, who decreased by 7,249 in Europe, America and Oceania comprehensively. Africa and Asia, instead, registered a slight increase compared to the previous year.

The report says that at the end of 2018, out of a world population of about 7.5 billion people, Catholics numbered 1,328,993,000, with an overall increase on each continent compared to the previous year. The worldwide percentage of Catholics (17.73%) remained unchanged. Instead, the number of bishops in the world decreased by 12 to a total of 5,377; catechists (especially in America) decreased by 43,697 to a total of 3,076,624, while diocesan priests dropped by 517 to a total of 414,065. Once again, Europe leads in these declines, followed by America.

For the sixth consecutive year, there was a decline in the number of religious priests to a total of 50,941 worldwide, with Europe still leading the falling statistics (-591). The data confirmed the trend toward a global decrease in the number of women religious to a total of 641,661.

However, there are some positive variations in the data, which reveals that there was an increase in the number of lay missionaries to a total of 376,188, and also in the number of major seminarians (both diocesan and religious), to a total of 115,880.

A CATHOLIC ACADEMY OF ARTS OPENS IN SEOUL

To spread awareness of Church art and manage it more professionally: in view of this goal, the Archdiocese of Seoul, South Korea,



decided to open a Catholic Academy of Arts. The Academy, reports Ucanews Agency, plans to collect art and artifacts both within the Archdiocese itself and from other parts of the country, so as to oversee their maintenance, preservation and study. Planned as a non-profit organization, the Academy will be officially launched on 29 November, the first Sunday of Advent.

“The establishment of a Catholic Academy of Arts is a major milestone in the Archdiocese’s pastoral ministry,” says Fr. Mattias Heo Young-yup, head of the archdiocesan public relations committee, adding that the director of the Seoul Catholic Artists Association, and other senior priests are also part of the Academy project. Fr. Young-yup then went on to say that the Archdiocese plans to include a museum in the project so as to showcase local Catholic history through the arts. The museum will bring together artworks under one roof and arrange them in a more systematic, objective and professional way.

The press conference concluded with the news that the art lectures and seminars that were suspended because of the Covid-19 pandemic will be resumed under the Academy’s banner and conducted online.

WINDOW ON THE WORLD AFRICA’S TECHNOLOGICAL INVENTION AWARD 2020 GOES TO A WOMAN



Twenty-six-year-old Charlette N'Guessan, a citizen of Ghana, has won the 2020 Royal Academy of Engineering's *Africa Prize for Engineering Innovation*. She is the first woman to win this prize, conferred in recognition of her invention of Bace Api, a digital verification system that uses artificial intelligence and facial recognition to verify the identities of Africans remotely and in real time. The system could

revolutionize cyber security and help curb identity fraud on the continent.

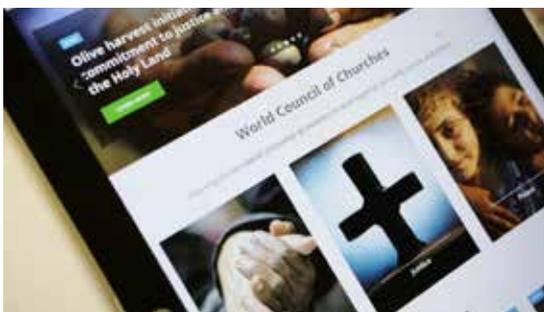
The *Africa Prize for Engineering Innovation*, established in 2014 by the Royal Academy of Engineering of the United Kingdom, is one of the main awards dedicated to engineering innovation. Its website says that the prize is awarded to “African engineers who address crucial issues in their communities in new and appropriate ways.”

32 REPORTERS KILLED SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR



Thirty-two journalists and press collaborators have been murdered since the beginning of the year while doing their jobs. Although the number of deaths is down compared to 2019 due to the world health crisis, it still remains worrying emphasized NGO *Reporters sans frontières* on the occasion of “International Day To End Impunity for Crimes Committed Against Journalists” (2 November). The NGO renewed its appeal to UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, to create a post of “special representative for the safety of journalists.” In 2019, forty-nine journalists were killed throughout the world, a sizeable decrease compared to the previous year.

WINDOW ON COMMUNICATIONS NEW WEBSITE FOR THE WCC



The World Council of Churches (WCC) has launched a new portal, inaugurating an online community. The website, which will act as an “ecumenical window,” wants to be a center of

digital communication to promote multilingual communion.

In its efforts to share insights and news, it will hopefully be refined thanks to the feedback of the ecumenical community. It will also offer various resources concerning the ecumenical efforts of the Churches and provide extensive documentation on various topics.

The Acting Secretary General of the WCC, Reverend Ioan Sauca, has encouraged the ecumenical family to feel included in the new website and take an active part in it because it can serve as a tool to bring the Churches even closer together. “Technology,” said Reverend Sauca, “can help us improve our spiritual commitment to working together by offering us a further way to support each other.”

THEME FOR THE 55TH WORLD DAY OF SOCIAL COMMUNICATION



“Come and see” (Jn 1,46). *Communicating, encountering people as and where they are* is the theme that Pope Francis has chosen for the 55th World Day of Social Communication which will be celebrated in 16 May 2021. We read in the statement from the Press Office of the Holy See that the words of the Apostle Philip are central to the Gospel: “The Christian proclamation, before words, is made up of looks, testimonies, experiences, encounters, closeness. In a word, life. In the epochal change we are experiencing, in a time that obliges us to social distance due to the pandemic, communication can make possible the closeness that is necessary to recognize what is essential, and to understand the true meaning of things. We do not know the truth if we do not experience it,” continues the statement, “if we do not meet people, if we do not participate in their joys and sorrows. The old saying ‘God meets you where you are’, can be a guide for those engaged in media or communications work in the Church. In the call of the first disciples, with Jesus going out to encounter them and invite them to follow Him, we also see the invitation to use the media, in all their forms, to reach people as they are and where they live.”



*"I am the resurrection
and the life.
The ones who believe
in me will live,
even though they die.*

John 11:25

DAUGHTERS OF ST. PAUL

Sr. M. Clemens Etsuko Koyama, age 92 - 02.09.2020 – Hiratsuka, Japan
Sr. Sидiana Maria Hoss, age 46 - 27.09.2020 - São Paulo, Brazil
Sr. M. Fatima Machiko Gemma Takeuchi, age 91 - 08.10.2020 – Albano RA, Italy
Sr. M. Serena Haru Kanazaki, age 88 - 12.10.2020 - Kanagawa, Japan
Sr. M. Dolores Eulalia Melis, age 93 - 19.10.2020 – Albano RA, Italy
Sr. Matilde Amelong, age 67 - 19.10.2020 - Buenos Aires, Argentina
Sr. M. Giacomina Cecilia Cabucos age 78 - 30.10.2020 - Pasay City, Philippines
Sr. M. Teodora (Dora) Maria Carmela Piroli, age 91 - 15.11.2020 - Rome AP, Italy
Sr. M. Ida Mafalda Santini, age 92 - 21.11.2020 - Alba, Italy

PARENTS OF OUR SISTERS

Sr. Sara Gilvaz Andrade (mother, Rosa De Jesus), of the community of Madrid, Spain
Sr. Maria Casilda (Aida) Adriano (mother, Estefania), of the community of Lahore, Pakistan
Sr. Franca Pigozzo (mother, Maria) of the community Roma DM, Italy

THE PAULINE FAMILY

Sr. M. Pacis Antonina Di Maggio, pddm, age 84 - 02.09.2020 - Albano, Italy
Br. Matías Francisco Morán Pérez, ssp, age 76 - 04.09.2020 - Madrid, Spain
Sr. M. Saveria Ludgarda Battistino, pddm, age 86 - 05.09.2020 - Cinisello B., Milan, Italy
Br. Rufus Pancratius Tirkey, ssp, age 89 - 08.09.2020 - Jorhat Mission House, India
Sr. M. Gracia M. Carmen García Arellano, pddm, age 78 - 13.09.2020 - Mexico City, Mexico
Fr. Horacio Agustin Solis Iglesias, ssp, age 79 - 17.09.2020 - Madrid, Spain
Sr. M. Anastasia Adele Brogi, pddm, age 101 - 18.09.2020 - Sanfrè, Cuneo, Italy
Sr. M. Evelina Yolanda Arenas Rivera, pddm, age 72 - 19.09.2020 - Mexico City, Mexico
Sr. M. Dorotea Caterina Bruno, pddm, age 91 - 25.09.2020 - Sanfrè, Cuneo, Italy
Sr. M. Elisabetta Fabia Ferro, sjbp, age 80 - 26.09.2020 - Negrar, Verona, Italy
Fr. Antonio Vincenzo Tergolina, ssp, age 87 - 04.10.2020 - Alba, Italy
Br. Graciliano Francisco Javier Bañuelo Díez, ssp, age 84 - 06.10.2020 - Madrid, Spain
Fr. Ricardo Anselmo Rojas Sarmiento, ssp, age 81 - 14.10.2020 - Guadalajara, Mexico
Sr. M. Simonetta Eleonora Chinello, pddm, age 86 - 18.10.2020 - Cinisello B., Milan, Italy
Fr. Ricardo Santiago Ares Cerqueiro, ssp, age 90 - 18.10.2020 - Madrid, Spain
Sr. M. Speranza Agnese Leonardi, sjbp, age 89 - 22.10.2020 - Negrar, Verona, Italy
Fr. Tommaso Angelo Coscarella, ssp, age 85 - 30.11.2020 - Cinisello B., Milan, Italy
Br. Cheol Seon Filippo Lee, ssp, age 57 - 31.10.2020 - Busan, Korea
Fr. Orlando Domenico Zambello, ssp, age 87 - 06.11.2020 - Verduno, Cuneo, Italy
Br. Bruno Cleto Tamai ssp, , age 82 - 09.11.2020 - Verduno, Cuneo, Italia
Br. Carmelo Giulio Frau ssp, age 85 - 10.11.2020 Alba, Cuneo, Italy
Fr. Aldo Guido Primo Gollo ssp, age 88 - 12.11.2020 Alba, Cuneo, Italy
Sr. Valentina Maria Maddalena Farci sjbp, age 91 - 15.11.2020 Albano Laziale, Italy
Fr. Renato Francesco Gallo ssp, age 73 - 23.11.2020 Alba, Cuneo, Italy