

***The Pope today asks  
the world of communication  
to “relearn to listen a lot”***

*Fabio Bolzetta*



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## CALLED TO ETERNAL LIFE



## BEGINNING AGAIN FROM THE MANGER



Dearest Sisters,

The most beautiful wish that we can exchange, at the beginning of this new year, is that the spirit of Christmas does not abandon us. It is possible to preserve it, as the days go by, if we live it not as the commemoration of a past event but as what it really is: a slow and continuous waiting for the “births” that must take place in our lives and in the womb of the history that God, who always comes, is fashioning with us.

I was astonished and delighted, on Christmas night, by Pope Francis’ invitation to Christendom to *return to Bethlehem* and, in contemplating the “wondrous sign of the manger,” to grasp the challenges of the way chosen and traced out by God: that of interior littleness, humility, service, tenderness....

I felt the need to thank the Lord for the teaching of our Founder who by word, and

even more by example, repeatedly urged his daughters and sons to “begin from the manger” (FSP46-49, p. 473), the “sublime school,” the infallible pedagogical method of poverty, humility, and love.

Thus I would like to encompass in the expression “beginning again from the manger” the desire for the good and for life that I nourish toward all of you.

*Beginning again from the manger* means returning, every day of the year, to the roots of our faith, to the rediscovery of ourselves and the meaning of our vocation. It means feeling loved so deeply that we are able to embrace our shortcomings and tenderly accept the poverties of others. It means undergoing a conversion to love and forgiveness. It means refusing to act inhumanely, living in trusting self-surrender to the providential hand of God, and rediscovering the things that matter.

*Beginning again from the manger* means contemplating, every day of the year, the mystery of the Word who took on flesh, concrete life—the true face of God and the true face of every human being. It means rejoicing in who we are and what we have, because “if God is with us in the little things of life, what else do we need? Let us stop pining for a grandeur that is not ours to have. Let us put aside our complaints, our gloomy faces, and the greed that never satisfies!” (Pope Francis)



Paola Baldo, FSP Provincial House

*Beginning again from the manger* means learning, every day of the year, to walk the path of humility, which leads to God and to a realistic understanding of ourselves, making us capable of a communion expressed as welcome, tenderness, solidarity, compassion, awe toward the future.

*Beginning again from the manger* means coming to understand that God places himself in our hands every day of the year, that he enters the world through us, and that we accompany him in his growth in the heart of the world, which is and remains his. But it is necessary to make room for him so that he can enter our lives where we are.

In this regard, I have always been fascinated by the story with which Martin Buber concludes his little masterpiece, *The Way of Man*. I would like to quote it here in its entirety, including the author's commentary:

"One day when he was receiving learned guests, Rabbi Mendel of Kozk surprised them by asking point-blank, 'Where does God dwell?' His guests laughed at him. 'What is the matter with you?' they asked. 'Isn't the world full of his glory?' The Rabbi replied: 'God dwells where you let him in.'

"Here is what ultimately matters: letting God in. But we can only let him in where we are—where we *really* are: where we live, where we lead authentic lives. If we establish a holy relationship with the small world entrusted to us, if, within the context of the creation with which we co-exist, we help the holy spiritual essence come to fruition, then we prepare for God a dwelling where we are and we let him in."

*So let us begin again from the manger*, remembering, however, along with Blessed James Alberione, that "the manger must first of all be fashioned in us: the Son of God must be incarnated in our heart, our mind, our entire being" (FSP50-53, p. 374), so that, in us,

Jesus can continue to be born, entering with us into the daily rhythms and rituals of the flow of life, going to everyone everywhere, filling empty jars, embracing every silence and solitude, wiping away tears, becoming the womb of new births.

This is also the meaning of the reflection/prayer of Madeleine Delbr el, a lay missionary among the ordinary people of the streets. I make her reflection my own and offer it to you as my best wishes for this new year blessed by the Lord:

Jesus, everywhere,  
never ceases to be sent.  
We cannot fail to be, at every moment,  
God's messengers in the world.

As this new day dawns,  
Jesus never ceases to be sent in us  
to all humanity,  
that of our time and of all times,  
of my city and of the world.

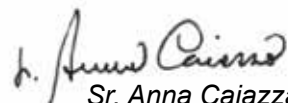
Through our closest brothers and sisters,  
whom he will make us serve, love and save,  
the waves of his love will reach  
the ends of the earth  
and will go on until the end of time.

Blessed be this new day,  
which is Christmas for the earth  
because, in me, Jesus wants  
to relive that event.

Dear sisters, how can we make this possible in our personal, community and apostolic lives? What does it mean for us to begin again from the manger in the situation that humanity and we ourselves are living today?

I await the gift of your reflections and sharing.

In communion of joy and hope,



Sr. Anna Caiazza  
Superior General

## CALENDAR OF THE GENERAL GOVERNMENT (January–March 2022)

### 8-11 January

XXXIX Meeting of the General Governments of the Pauline Family (online)  
*The Family Questions the Pauline Family*

The Fraternal Visitation of the Superior General to the communities of the Province of Italy will resume after mid-January, according to a schedule to be better defined due to the increase in Covid cases.



**PHILIPPINES**  
**BOOKINGAN SATURDAYS**



In September 2021, the Promotion/Marketing Department of our PMPT Province launched an initiative entitled *BOOKingan Saturdays: Books and Conversations with Pauline Authors*—a weekly program that gives Pauline book lovers the chance to

interact with the authors, readers, and reviewers of the featured books via livestreaming on the PMPT’s Facebook, Publishing House and Radio pages. The pilot program was also live streamed in three parishes.

The title of the program is a Filipino colloquial term that means “to find out/discover.” Hence, the initiative is a venue to discover treasures in the contents of the books featured and apply them to current life situations. Even more important, it is a means for viewers to share their faith experiences and the impact of the books’ content on their lives in the hope of forming a virtual community of readers inspired by Pauline publications who can offer their families and communities the witness of their strong faith and relationship with God.

In this time of ongoing pandemic concerns, *BOOKingan Saturdays* aims to enhance awareness of God’s presence in all the circumstances and challenges of life, communicate love, hope, joy and compassion, and encourage people to trust and turn to God in times of crisis.

**GREAT BRITAIN**  
**IN SOLIDARITY WITH COP26**



The FSP Book Center of Glasgow, Scotland lived 31 Oct. to 12 Nov. 2021 in solidarity with the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Meeting (COP26). Heads of state, climate experts, activists and business leaders from around the world gathered in Scotland to

come to an agreement on common actions to take with regard to climate change. Prayer initiatives were organized in various dioceses. The Daughters of St. Paul offered the hospitality of their book center’s conference room to young people, bishops (including Archbishop Claudio Gugerotti, Apostolic Nuncio to Great Britain), and various other participants in this important event. During that time, it was possible to receive and celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation in “the bus of mercy,” parked outside our book center.

**THE CHARISMATIC DIMENSION OF THE PAULINE BOOK CENTER**



The Daughters of St. Paul accepted the invitation to present the charismatic dimension of the Pauline Book Center, which Blessed James Alberione called “a center of light,” at the annual diocesan conference in Newcastle, a university city in the northeast of England. The meeting, organized for leaders of Catholic schools, was an auspicious occasion to promote resources and books for the catechesis and religious formation of children. The FSP Book Center in Newcastle, which opened in 2003, is run by lay people who receive ongoing training and accompaniment in the Pauline apostolate.

**INDIA**  
**ONLINE COURSE ON THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT**



Braving the pandemic to continue sharing the message of the Gospel, the Daughters of St. Paul of India organized an 8-day online course based on the book *Sermon on the Mount* by Scripture professor Fr. Harry A. Vaz. The contents of the book are gleaned from his memorable pastoral experiences. Speaking about the background of the book, he writes: "I recalled the confessions of my people, my accompaniment of children and youth.... I found human care and anxiety in Jesus' message.... This volume is the testament of my life...to look at the bright side at the end of the dark tunnel."

58 participants from across India, as well as the United States, Malaysia and Dubai, participated in the online course, which was held twice a week from mid-August to mid-September, 2021. Two of Fr. Harry's former students, Bishop Dominic Savio, Auxiliary Bishop of the Mumbai Archdiocese, and Bishop Barthol Barretto, were guests of honor on the program.

Sr Joeyanna D'Souza, one of the organizers of the initiative, said: "The *Sermon on the Mount* is an important part of Jesus' teachings. Our Pauline charism is to proclaim the Gospel but our outreach to schools and parishes came to a standstill during the pandemic. The online platform became an open door to continue our mission."

#### VIRTUAL BIBLE VISITS TO FAMILIES



During this pandemic period, the Daughters of St. Paul of our Bandra community, Mumbai, decided to do something new and different, in keeping with the signs of the times. In cooperation with the pastor and pastoral council of St. Teresa of Avila Church in Girgaum, they visited the families of the parish by means of "Virtual Bible Days."

The circumscription's novices helped the professed sisters provide formative input during or after Mass, as well as quizzes on the Bible and on St. Teresa of Avila. They also screened a short film about her life. Pauline

editions and religious articles were made available to the families so as to nurture this formation.

In his thank-you speech, the pastor said it was the first time a virtual visit to families had taken place—not only in his parish, but throughout the Archdiocese. He said he received many messages from parishioners expressing their appreciation of the Pauline apostolate.

Recalling the words of Teresa of Avila, "Let nothing disturb or frighten you. All things pass; God alone is unchanging," we are sure that the Lord has intensified the proclamation of his Word in the hearts of the members of St. Teresa Parish.

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#### ITALY

#### BIBLE MISSION



From 20-25 October, a Bible Mission was held in six towns in the Archdiocese of Potenza-Muro Lucano-Marsico Nuovo. The initiative was organized by the Holy Family Institute and the Daughters of St. Paul of Arezzo-Perugia in collaboration with the St. Paul Cultural Center and the Archdiocese's Biblical Apostolate.

In order that the Word "might speed forward and be glorified," the animators divided themselves into teams and spent 6 intense evenings visiting parishes in six different towns to talk about the importance of the Bible in the life of a Christian and teach the parishioners to pray according to the itinerary of the *Lectio Divina*. Their goal was to initiate a process, namely: to foster in the people a desire to "pause" on a Gospel page, so that the Word of God would not only be heard at Sunday Mass, but also be read, prayed and meditated upon each day, gradually becoming a way of life.

The Mission was a concrete experience of communion and synergy, both with the associated Institutes of the Pauline Family and with

the Diocese, which had incorporated the *Bible Week* initiative into its pastoral agenda. The coordinators of the event hope that once the ups and downs of the pandemic are over more itinerant Bible Missions can be scheduled in collaboration with the Pauline Family and the Diocese of reference, so that the Word might continue to “race ahead” and become better known, loved and lived.

**BOOK FAIR: MORE BOOKS, MORE FREEDOM**



Italy’s annual Book Fair for Small and Medium-sized Publishing Houses was not held last year because of the pandemic. This year it is back. Entitled *More Books, More Freedom*, the event took place from 4-8 December at the Nuvola dell’Eur, a futuristic and suggestive location in Rome. Promoted and organized by the Italian Publishers Association (AIE), the country’s most important publishing event is now 20 years old—an important milestone for publishers who are betting on the future: a tomorrow filled with unknowns, but also and above all characterized by great hopes and aspirations.

Happy to present their new products and catalogs to the public, 484 exhibitors participated in the 2021 edition of the Fair, whose theme was *Freedom*.

But the Fair did not consist solely of this. Its real heart was its cultural program. In fact, the 5-day event was marked by a continuous succession of events for all tastes and ages, including meetings with authors, readings, debates on current issues, initiatives for the promotion of reading, music and live performances.

Present at the trade fair from its very beginning, this year the Daughters of St. Paul took part in it with a wide variety of new editions, many very appropriate for Christmas. They too offered visitors a rich program of cultural events, including author presentations that gave the public the chance to enter into an enthusiastic comparison of ideas and debate with them.

Starting this year, the Fair now allows Internet users to follow its most important events via live streaming on a new platform—*Più Libri TV*—which enables them to watch the various encounters both live and on demand.

**MESSINA: DONATING A BOOK TO PRISONERS**



After its success in Brescia, Naples, Udine, Lodi, Novara and Palermo, the project to donate books to prisoners for Christmas was also carried out this year by our FSP book center in Messina. The Caritas Foundation of the Archdiocese of Messina, the D’arteventi Association and the Chaplains of the Messina and Barcellona Pozzo di Gotto prisons all collaborated with this initiative. It was a way for people to express their fraternal closeness to prisoners during this time of the year by offering them the opportunity to read some good books and mentally “escape” their confines, especially during the ongoing pandemic—a time in which even visits from family members were more difficult.

“A book can help you find your way back. A book can change your life,” read a reminder from the Messina diocese to the faithful. How could a person participate in this project? By going into an FSP book center participating in this initiative, buying an extra book in addition to one’s own purchases, and leaving it in the collection basket provided for this purpose.

Caritas representatives and prison chaplains passed by to pick up the donated books and give them to the inmates.

The initiative lasted throughout the Advent-Christmas season.

**KENYA LITURGICAL BOOKS IN SWAHILI**





On 12 November 2021, in the Major Seminary of Nairobi, several beautiful liturgical books in Swahili—*Misale Ya Kiroma* (Roman Missal), *Masomo Ya Misa* (Lectionary in 3 volumes) and *Misale Ya Kila Siku* (*Daily Missal*)—were presented during a solemn Eucharistic Celebration presided over by the President of the Episcopal Conference, His Eminence Martin Kivuva and all the Bishops of Kenya. Many priests, seminarians, religious and faithful participated in this significant event. The new texts are a great grace for the Catholic Church of Kenya because they will allow priests and faithful to participate more consciously, fully, actively and fruitfully in the Eucharistic Celebration.

In 2013, the Bishops' Conference of Kenya asked the Daughters of St. Paul of Nairobi to take on the project of translating the liturgical texts of the Church into Swahili. Since the Tanzanian Bishops' Conference was working on the same project, during the Regional Assembly of Bishops in Malawi in 2014, Sr. Teresa Marcazzan (at that time director of FSP Editions in Africa), proposed that the two Bishops' Conferences work together to prepare the new Roman Missal using the text of *Biblia ya Kiafrika*, published by the FSPs. Her suggestion was accepted.

The demanding work of revision and translation of the liturgical texts, which lasted seven years, was made possible thanks to the readiness of countless people to lend their skills to this project.

In her presentation, Sr. Praxides Nafula, the director of Pauline Editions Nairobi, gave an overview of this long journey and thanked all those who collaborated with it: the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, the liturgical commissions of Kenya and Tanzania, the many editors of the texts, the FSP editorial-graphics team, and Fr. Rinaldo Ronzani, a Combonian missionary. She also thanked the funding agencies and the project's benefactors for their assistance, including Mario Borello, director of the Graphic Arts Typography in Cuneo, Italy.

At the end of the solemn Eucharistic Celebration, H.E. Bishop Martin Kivuna addressed words of appreciation and thanks to everyone and in particular to Pauline Editions Nairobi.

The Daughters of St. Paul present for this joyful occasion said: "We truly felt like daughters of the Church! And we felt the beauty of our mission in a very powerful way. We are filled with joy and gratitude to the Lord!"

## CATECHETICAL ANIMATIONS



To celebrate the Pauline Bible Year, Paulines Publications Africa organized formation meetings for catechists on the theme: *The Bible and Catechesis*. The animations were held in the dioceses of Maralal, Isiolo and Marsabit—three of the poorest and most marginalized Kenyan dioceses. Due to economic problems, catechists here lack the essential tools they need for their work of evangelization. Paulines Publications Africa, with the help of South Korea's *Overseas Bible Outreach: Spread the Word* program, funded a project to help ensure that, in addition to animation sessions, the catechists would be provided with catechetical resources and Bibles. The bishops of these dioceses run by the Consolata Missionaries were very grateful for the support they received from the FSPs and their benefactors. We assure our sisters of our prayerful support for their unceasing commitment to evangelization.

## NIGERIA

### REMEMBERING BLESSED JAMES ALBERIONE



To commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Blessed James Alberione, the Daughters of St. Paul of Abuja organized an encounter on the theme *Abuse, Human Trafficking and Media Formation* for a group of Catholic students from the middle school of the Federal Government Boys' College in Wuye, Abuja.

Despite the fact that it is a government-sponsored school, 191 students participated in the very lively and interactive event, along with the school's principal and catechism teacher.



At the end of the meeting, each boy received a booklet on the life of James Alberione and a book on "Human Trafficking."

For the Daughters of St. Paul, it was a precious opportunity to relive the experience of Fr. Alberione, who started the Pauline Family with a group of young people in Alba.

Let us ask God to bless the work of our sisters and to raise up vocations for the Pauline Family from among the students who participated in this event.

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## BRAZIL

### 90 YEARS OF FSP PRESENCE AND MISSION IN BRAZIL



The 90th anniversary of the presence of the Daughters of St. Paul in Brazil (1931-2021) was commemorated throughout the country with celebrations, events, conferences, interviews and other modes of underscoring this big occasion.

Among the many events that highlighted the presence and apostolic activities of the FSPs in this nation was a tribute from Rio de Janeiro's Municipal House, which presented our Congregation with the Pedro Ernesto Medal, the highest honor bestowed by the country on those who distinguish themselves in Brazilian or international society. The ceremony was attended by religious and civil authorities, as well as distinguished people from the spheres of culture, education and commerce.

In her words of thanks, Sr. Renilda Formigão, on behalf of FSP Provincial Superior, Sr. Ana Marlene Konzen, said, "Our planet needs hope and, in view of this, the Paulines will continue to make their contribution to building just, fraternal and supportive societies." Those who attended the award ceremony were then invited to watch a video presenting the life and mission of the Daughters of St. Paul in Brazil over the past 90 years.

City Councilor Reimont Luiz Otoni Santa Barbara closed the ceremony with these words of esteem and appreciation for the apostolic presence of our Institute in this country: "We live in a secular state," he said, "but one

that is filled with people who believe, people of faith. We are proud to pay tribute to the Daughters of St. Paul, who are so precious to us. They have left their mark on our Brazilian life and history. The list of names that have received the Pedro Ernesto Medal is richer today. Long live the Daughters of St. Paul! Their presence here is a blessing for all of us!"

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## UNITED STATES

### READ THE BIBLE WITH ME!



When the Pauline Family launched its *Year of the Bible*, Sister Anne Joan Flanagan of the US-ESC province felt strongly inspired to read the Word of God from cover to cover

—but not by herself. On 24 November 2020 she sent the following invitation to her 28,000 Twitter followers: "Read the Bible with me!" Her daily blog posts suggested three chapters a day (adding two Psalms on Sundays, and a Psalm for each day of Lent), and provided links to the Bible on the US Bishops' Conference website. Her posts were often enriched with commentary, personal reflections, art, music, or book recommendations.

The initiative ended on Christmas Day 2021 with Revelation 21-22 and Psalm 150. Those who completed the Bible-reading project from beginning to end were invited to send Sr. Anne their mailing addresses so as to receive a specially designed bookmark. This gave some of them (both in the U.S. and abroad) the chance to express what participating in the experience meant to them:

#### *From Florida:*

God bless you and thank you for this year of reading the Bible. Your posts and the prayers were so helpful in preparing us to read. The year went by amazingly fast!

#### *From New Jersey:*

I want to thank you for this year-long Bible reading project. It was really great to read the whole Bible again for the first time in several years!

#### *From Australia:*

Thank you so much for your guidance throughout this time. I had never read the whole Bible before, and I found it to be a wonderful experience! I sincerely appreciated your comments and recommendations.

Our congratulations to Sr. Anne Joan for this wonderful initiative.

## SPIRITUAL ILLNESSES

### From Biblical-Patristic Anthropology to Pauline-Alberionian Spirituality

ANA PAULA RAMALHO, FSP



Sr. Ana Paula, a native of Brazil, defended her thesis for a Licentiate in theology with a specialization in spirituality, at the completion of her studies at the Institute for Spirituality at the Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome. The thesis sprang from her desire to explore on a deeper level the links between

the spirituality of the Fathers of the Church of the Christian East and the thought of Fr. James Alberione expressed in the pamphlet *La passione predominate divenga virtù e forza* (1931).

#### A THREE-PART WORK

Its starting point is the field of biblical-theological anthropology, where the author examines the spiritual meaning of the text of Genesis 1-3. In God the Father's project of Creation, she says, harmony, integral health and freedom reigned. But although they were healthy and free, Adam and Eve, deceived by the flattery of the serpent, made a selfish choice—they wanted to be like God, but without God, as Maximus the Confessor affirms—and thus sin entered human history. The Fathers of the Catholic Church's Eastern tradition often refer to the consequences of that free choice as *spiritual diseases*, while those of the Western tradition prefer to call them *sins* or *capital vices*. Alberione uses the term *predominant passion*.

The second chapter of the thesis presents some elements of Blessed James Alberione's text, *The Predominant Passion*, clarifying first of all the term "passion" according to Western patristic tradition, and then sketching out the evolutionary process of a spiritual illness. Fr. Alberione underscores the importance of patristic teachings concerning *philautia* (ego-centrism, self-love), considered by the Fathers as the mother of all spiritual diseases, in particular those of gluttony, avarice and vainglory. The author then describes the spiritual diseases of human beings, taking as her starting point the "eight evil thoughts" described by Evagrio Pontico of the Eastern tradition and its reinterpretation in the Western Church, and then compares this material to Pauline-Alberionian spirituality.

In Chapter 3, she proposes some therapeutic means for the diagnosis, treatment and

healing of one's particular predominant passion or spiritual illness, pinpointing some of the elements suggested by Christian asceticism, and then moves on to consider the need for a healthy and positive reawakening of Christian values today. The culminating point of this concluding chapter of the thesis is the author's description of the sick person's meeting with Jesus Christ, the Divine Physician—the only One who can heal the human heart of selfish love and restore it to its original state. In fact, she declares, the Divine Physician does not stop with the healing of spiritual illnesses but looks beyond them to the origin of human beings—to the time the human race was created by God the Father in his image and likeness, in that Garden in which beauty, harmony and spiritual health reigned.

## FINANCIAL POVERTY AND THE HYPERUSE OF MOBILE PHONES

### A Paradox within the Université Technologique Bel Campus

FANNY KAKUNDI, FSP



*Financial Poverty and the Hyperuse of Mobile Phones* is the theme of the dissertation submitted by Sr. Fanny Kakundi, an fsp from the Congo, at the conclusion of her undergraduate studies in Economics and Management at the Université Technologique Bel Campus. Her choice of theme was not by chance because as a member of a religious Congregation that evangelizes through the instruments of social communication, she feels it is the duty of the Daughters of St. Paul to educate people to the responsible use of these "marvels of humanity," as Vatican Council II calls them in its decree *Inter Mirifica*.<sup>1</sup>

Sr. Fanny's dissertation attempts to survey the university environment by asking the students to answer a few questions:

- Why should UTBC students use mobile phones?

<sup>1</sup> A. Falconi, *L'Eglise intervient. Anthologie des documents des Eglises sur les moyens de communication sociale à partir de la «galaxie Gutenberg» à nos jours*. Introductions et notes, Kinshasa, Médiaspaul, 1995, p.183-187.

- Is the overuse of mobile phones beneficial to UTBC students?
- What should a student living on a modest scholarship do to use mobile phones in a reasonable way?

OVERVIEW OF THE DISSERTATION

Chapter One offers general information concerning the use of cell phones and a theoretical framework of their use.

Chapter Two explains the methodology used by the author, namely: a random sample of students from the Faculty of Economics and Management was given a 9-item questionnaire to collect their opinions and views on the subject.

Chapter Three presents, analyzes and interprets the collected data, and adds the management challenge that these subjects face.

Mobile phones are a formidable tool for communication and for exchanging information all over the world. They are a positive sign of society's development.

Based on the questions asked and the results obtained, Sr Fanny came to the conclusion that the interviewees use their mobile phones rather thoughtlessly, and that their use of this instrument of communication does not always meet their needs. Her proposal is that this innovative device be used in a more disciplined way.

THE ESSENTIALITY OF TRUTH IN A POST-TRUTH AGE

Agapic Truth in the Thought of Franz Rosenzweig and Truth as a Narration of Love by Eberhard Jüngel

SUSANNA JIYEON LEE, FSP



Sr. Susanna Jiyeon Lee, of the Daughters of St. Paul of Korea, discussed her thesis, entitled *The Essentiality of Truth in a Post-Truth Age*, at the end of her studies for a Licentiate in Fundamental Theology, at the Pontifical Lateranese Uni-

versity, Rome, Italy.

The thesis opens by affirming that all those who reflect on the current state of religion agree that the perception of truth is disappearing from today's world. In 2016, the term *post-truth* was coined at Oxford and became the *word of the year*, sanctioning the distortion of truth, which has been replaced by personal beliefs and emotional appeals, and sustained

by the impasse between subjectivity and objectivity, resulting in a weakened way of thinking about faith.

In the light of this, Sr. Susanna sought to answer the question: "What does it mean to live revealed truth in a post-truth age?"

The goal of her research was to demonstrate that Christian truth does not conform to the trends of contemporary thought, but manifests itself through an agapic relationship with Jesus Truth and a narration of his love by means of listening to people and recounting their stories and the stories of their communities and territories.<sup>2</sup> In the first chapter of her thesis, the author analyzes both the causes that led to the disappearance of the perception of truth and the time in which this phenomenon emerged and became radicalized. In the second and third chapters, she examines the writings of two authors (F. Rosenzweig and E. Jüngel), whose works she considers fundamental to the task of a thorough and constant reconstruction of the truth. Thus her thesis strives to highlight the most significant thoughts of these authors on the subject.

According to Sr. Susanna, the phenomenon of the disappearance of the perception of truth in a post-truth age can be traced back first to the accentuation of individualism in our time. When detached from a relationship with the Other and with others, she says, an individual runs the risks of relativizing truth and, consequently, of extinguishing objective truth. A second reason for the disappearance of the perception of truth in a post-truth age is a deprivation of the narrative dimension of truth, which runs the risk of imprisoning truth in individual thought. According to F. Rosenzweig and E. Jüngel, the origin of truth is God, therefore we must recover God's truth.

Truth must hold the fragmented pieces of life together in a meaningful way. This cohesive truth is a Person—someone we can meet. In keeping with this line of thinking, Sr. Susanna affirms that truth is not simply a path; instead, it is the manifestation of a relationship.

She concludes by recalling the question she posed at the beginning of her thesis: "What does it mean to live revealed truth in a post-truth age?" saying that the answer is very clear: living revealed truth in a post-truth age means remembering the call launched by Pope Francis in his message for the 55th World Day of Social Communications: "We are called to be witnesses to the truth," he says emphatically, "to reach out to others so as to see and share."

<sup>2</sup> The Synodal Journey of the Church in Italy, URL: <https://camminosinodale.chiesacattolica.it/narrativa/>



**WOMEN OF THE COVENANT:  
QUEEN ESTHER**  
SWEET SCENT OF MYRTLE, HIDDEN STAR



The fascinating and surprising story of Queen Esther is found in a mysterious scroll that the Hebrew Bible calls *meghillah*. This feminine noun derives from the verb *gālal*, which emphasizes the opening and closing of a scroll. The *meghillah* must be unrolled and re-rolled several times—the only action that allows it to be read and therefore understood. The same is true of our lives: “In the scroll of the book it is written of me!” says Psalm 40:7. In order to understand the meaning of our days, it is necessary to roll and unroll events, times, encounters, doubts and silences, without being satisfied with what seems to be, but instead going deeper, beyond appearances. By penetrating their hidden mysteries, we glimpse the creativity of God. The scroll of Esther has come down to us in two forms: one in Hebrew (considered canonical), and one in Greek (considered deuterocanonical). The latter is marked by different variations and additions. These additions, which strive to fill the void and silence of the Hebrew text concerning God, give the book a religious tone, thus restoring God to his proper role. We therefore have the wealth of no less than two versions of the book of Esther, which are not interchangeable and which move in different directions. The Hebrew version is strongly secular in nature, while the Greek one is very religious.



But what is the correct name of this woman who continues to offer light to people who can't see a way out of impossible situations?

Some scholars say the name Esther derives from *Ishtar* (a Babylonian goddess), while others say it is from the Persian word *stareh* (star). However, the Jewish world prefers *Esther*, from the verb *satar* (i.e. *to hide*), perhaps because her story is that of a radiant star, hidden from the eyes of all (like the stars during the day), but whose intense splendor is revealed at the appropriate

time to guide pilgrims during the dark nights of their desert wanderings. It is charming to note how the canonical text has preserved the Queen's Hebrew name:



“*Hadassah*, that is, Esther,” the text reads, “was beautifully formed and lovely to behold. When her father and mother died, her cousin Mordecai raised her as his own daughter” (cf.

Est. 2:7). The word *Hadassah* means myrtle (*hadass*, cf. Is. 41:19), a graceful shrub with white flowers. The myrtle plant prefers to remain hidden and thus is hard to locate, but its scent immediately reveals its presence in an area. Its intoxicating fragrance gave it a very high market value in the Old Testament world. According to ancient traditions, the scent of myrtle infuses positivity, joy, energy, and dispels the fear of death. When used at weddings, the scent of myrtle is an expression of sincere well wishes to the bridal couple.

Hadassah's life was like a myrtle branch because she allowed herself to be transplanted without ceasing to bloom. The name-change



from *Hadassah* to Esther in the scroll may indicate the kind of beauty for which she is memorialized, namely: her transition from a humble, hidden woman to a determined and courageous queen. The daughter of Jewish exiles, the orphaned Hadassah would become a mysterious protagonist in the salvation of her people and a sign of God's covenant with them. This is how it happened:

The King of Persia, Ahasuerus, whose sovereignty extended over 127 satrapies (provinces), was a powerful and exacting ruler. One day his wife, Queen Vashti, refused to comply with his request that she appear before him in royal attire at a huge banquet attended by all the most important people in his realm so that he could present her to them. In the light of her behavior, the King's councilors advised him to divorce the Queen because they said that her defiance of his authority set a bad example for his subjects. The King's decision to set Vashti aside and choose another queen was greeted with wide approval.

The most beautiful girls in the land were summoned to his presence and out of them all his choice fell on Esther, which was how the Jewess Hadassah became the Queen of Persia. But a problem immediately arose. Haman, the King' prime minister, was an Amalekite and he hated the Jews. Unaware of Esther's background, he devised an ingenious plan to exterminate them. He told the King that the Jews were a disloyal people who were undermining his authority and consequently should be killed down to the last person. In this way, the prime minister duped the King into signing a decree that would annihilate all the Jews in the Persian Empire in a single day—the 13<sup>th</sup> of Adar, a date Haman chose by lot (*pur*).



Mordecai, Esther's uncle, sent word to his niece about Haman's despicable plan, asking her to intercede with Ahasuerus on behalf of her people. For their sake, the Queen courageously undertook what seemed to be an impossible task, knowing that she was risking her life to do so. The King listened attentively to the words of his wife. When provided with correct information, he was filled with disgust toward his prime minister and intervened to spare the Jews. Thus Esther's bold act saved her people and, from that day on, the annual Jewish feast of

Purim commemorates the famous reversal of fortunes in favor of the doomed Jews.

"The tiny spring that grew into a river, the light that shone, the abundant water: this river is Esther, whom the king married and made queen" (Est. 10:3a-c). The Greek text of the scroll uses these words of Mordecai to describe her, because she was indeed similar to a river of fresh water that fertilizes everything, making the land green and flourishing.

In the Hebrew version, instead, God hides himself, leaving Esther and her uncle Mordecai to act in his place. His divine benefits are linked to human responsibility and thus the concrete characters play a decisive role in this scroll. God steps into the background, allowing human choices to emerge in the variables of history. The faith of the protagonists and the faithfulness of God bring us to the heart of the Covenant. Esther's readiness to help her people reminds us of the self-offering of another woman (a Jewish convert to Catholicism), who, during World War II, did not hesitate to give herself up into the hands of the enemies of the Jews for the sake of her people, becoming a tangible sign of God's Covenant with them: "I always think of Queen Esther. God leads each person by a particular path and as a result some arrive at their goal more easily and sooner than others. What we can do, compared to what we are given, is always little. But that little we must do..." (Edith Stein, *Nostalgia for the Truth*).

Francesca Pratillo, fsp

## MISSIONARIES KILLED IN 2021



According to data collected by Fides News Agency, twenty-one missionaries were killed throughout the world in 2021: 12 priests, 1 male religious, 2 women re-

ligious, and 6 lay people. Regarding the continental distribution of those killed: the highest number recorded was in Africa, followed by the Americas, Asia, and lastly Europe.

In the collection of this data, Fides uses the term "missionary" for all the baptized, since by virtue of the Baptism, every member of the People of God is considered a missionary. None of the victims carried out any extraordinary deeds. Instead, they simply shared the same daily life as the majority of the people among whom they lived, offering everyone their witness to the Gospel as a sign of Christian hope.

## MY MEMORIES OF PRIMA MAESTRA THECLA



For me, sharing my memories of Prima Maestra Thecla is like talking about a beloved family member who, in various ways, enriched my life, consolidated my Pauline vocation and helped me to “think big” in order to open me to the vast horizons of our mission. *Universality* was a dimension of the Pauline vocation that struck me deeply, beginning with my first meeting with the Daughters of St. Paul in Verona, Italy.

Prima Maestra’s witness of life, her regular meetings with the community, the things she shared with us after her fraternal visits to various countries (including her last one to the Congo), her passion for the Pauline mission and for souls—none of this could leave us indifferent. She opened our minds and moved our hearts, making us understand that it was truly worthwhile to dedicate our lives to the Lord; to become, with his grace, signs of his presence, instruments chosen by him, loved by him, and sent to bring the light of the Gospel to everyone everywhere, in keeping with the example of Mary, the first great Apostle and our Mother and Queen of Apostles.

I had the opportunity to meet Prima Maestra personally several times. In the early days of my formation in Alba, I remember that it was always a celebration when she came to visit the community. She revitalized our enthusiasm and, as a result, reinforced my commitment to prepare myself well for what the Lord wanted of me.

In Rome, during my novitiate and in the following years when I was continuing my

studies, it was easy to run into her when she went to pray or visit the apostolate. Occasionally, I would see her speaking with Primo Maestro, Blessed James Alberione, after one of the functions in the Queen of Apostles Sanctuary. Whenever I saw her participating in various community duties like cleaning vegetables or performing other small services with the older sisters, I was always struck by her simplicity. She seemed to enjoy being with the sisters and her cheerful and friendly attitude was contagious.

It was also very edifying for me to see her absorbed in prayer and to be able to kneel in the same pew with her in church, in preparation for Confession. The intensity of her communion with the Lord shone in her spirit of recollection, and at the same time it was a message—a silent invitation to me to imitate her example.

After my profession, presided over by Primo Maestro himself in March 1956, our whole group went to his office, as was the custom, to have the small crucifix we had received pinned on our habits. On that occasion, Prima Maestra gave each of us a handkerchief and explained to us the meaning of that simple piece of cloth. From now on, she said, your life must be an unconditional gift for souls, in humility and total availability, just



like the handkerchief you keep in your pocket and use whenever needed. It was clear that this was what she had experienced herself in her role as the Founder’s collaborator. She was always docile and ready to cooperate with him in the development of the Congregation. I remember the “handkerchief moment” very well because it marked for me the start of a new stage of my Pauline journey, a



new sense of belonging to the Congregation and a renewed commitment to faithfully pursue the road I had undertaken.

In 1960 I had to temporarily suspend my studies in Rome in order to go home to assist my mother, who was in the hospital. Dad was alone at home and he was not well. My brother was away on military service. During this time, Prima Maestra was particularly close to me. After my mother's death on 29 March 1960, she sent me one of her precious notes, expressing her maternal participation in my pain. It was a great comfort to me. On my return to Rome, I immediately went to her with a swollen heart and tears in my eyes. She welcomed me with great affection, embraced me and with maternal tenderness whispered what she had already written to me: "Courage! Now I will take your mother's place." I will never forget the intensity of that moment and the grace of that gift. In my opinion, Prima Maestra's spontaneous gesture expressed more eloquently than words her place and role in the lives of all the Daughters of St. Paul.

She was truly a woman of great sensitivity—a strong, understanding and courageous mother. Primo Maestro said it well when he wrote to all the members of the Congregation after her death: "You will have many teachers but only one *Mother*. Prima Maestra was your mother to the point of *offering her life* for the sanctification of all the Daughters of St. Paul."

In June 1963 Sr. Sara Schena and I finished our studies and were waiting to be told what our new apostolic assignments would be. It was only in the year 2000 that I learned from Maestra Eulalia, who had returned from Korea for a short vacation in Italy, that the transfer of Sr. Sara to Korea and myself to England had been approved by Prima Maestra at the last council meeting she attended. This information gave me immense joy. The fact that I was in a specific place by her express wish was always a great support to me, especially in the most difficult moments. It heartened me to know that I was where the Lord wanted me to be.

In June of that same year, the spiritual exercises for the novices preparing for perpetual profession also ended. It was the last group guided by Maestra Nazarena and I was her assistant at that time. All the members of the group were looking forward to a personal meeting with Prima Maestra, but

everyone had to sadly accept the fact that this would not be possible because Prima Maestra had to be hospitalized at Albano. A sad premonition for us all!

Maestra Nazarena took Sr. Sara and I to say goodbye to Prima Maestra in the hospital before we left Italy. Our brief visit consisted of just a few words: her best wishes for the mission that awaited us, her repeated invitation to "become saints," accompanied by her embrace and a blessing sealed with the sign of the cross on our foreheads. Prima Maestra's intense, encouraging and eloquent gaze followed us as we left her room—a promise that her ever-vigilant and maternal presence would continue to accompany, guide and support us across the miles.



That was the last time I saw Prima Maestra Thecla but she has continued and will continue to accompany me in spirit on my Pauline journey. For all the Daughters of St. Paul throughout the world, she was always a shining beacon, illuminating our lives and incentivizing our efforts to be the holy Pauline apostles she desired, encouraging us to become ever-more effective instruments of light and signs of hope in the Church and world, open to all peoples and cultures, so as to share with everyone the incredible wealth of the Father's love manifested in Jesus, the *Truth* that enlightens everyone, the *Life* that nourishes and renews everything, the sole *Way* that leads to salvation.

I hope and pray that the Church, which Maestra Thecla loved so much and served so faithfully, will soon officially count her among its saints.

*Eugenia Campara, fsp*

I'D LIKE TO LIVE LIKE THAT!



I come from Slovakia, a country in which not even a single community of the whole Pauline Family is present. The years of my childhood were spent in the shadow of the five-pointed red star, the symbol of the communist regime, which controlled Czechoslovakia until 1989.

Despite the all-pervasive atheist ideology, my parents continued to practice the Catholic Faith, even if it meant giving up one's career, above all for my mother. It was she who held in her hands the reins of giving a Christian formation to me and my two older brothers. In addition to Sundays, she would often take us to Mass on weekdays as well. I have to admit, however, that when I was small, my mother's invitation to "seek first the kingdom of heaven" did not arouse great zeal in me, although I never had the courage to contradict her.

When I was in elementary and middle school, my family befriended a community of nuns in our area. They lived in an old castle near my town under the watchful eye of the communist regime, and my father helped the community with some maintenance work. Whenever we went to visit the nuns, I enjoyed playing in their big garden with my two brothers. With somewhat less enthusiasm, I allowed them to involve me in conversations about Jesus, prayer, etc.—subjects I viewed as "girl stuff."

Instead, I found it much more appealing to push a heavy wheelbarrow filled with weeds from the garden. It was a chance to imitate my big brothers! But in spite of my

rather down-to-earth preferences, I could see shining on the faces of those nuns the unmistakable joy springing from a life dedicated completely to God. This attraction—at first very vague—began to nestle more and more deeply in my soul to the point that gradually a concrete desire began to take shape. "I'd like to live like that!" I thought to myself.

There was nothing heroic about my day-to-day life. After the fall of the communist regime, the only situation I had to face "heroically" was that I was not considered "cool" by the girls and boys I knew. At this point, I was now spending a lot of time in church even without my mother's urging, and my interest in the things of faith and religion certainly did not increase my popularity among my peers.

I was a good student and my convictions earned me a certain amount of respect from everyone, but I was something of a non-conformist.

In the 1990's there was a notable flowering of religious initiatives in my zone and the nuns I knew began to organize school camps for girls. I can clearly remember participating in one of them with the specific intention of getting to know first-hand a way of life that, perhaps one day in the future, could also be mine....

But instead of savoring, as I had hoped, the "heavenly atmosphere" of a life consecrated to God, I experienced an almost suffocating fear. After four terrible days, I returned home with great relief and said to myself forcefully: "Well, I'll never do *that* again!" However, despite the trauma of that camp school experience, my inexplicable attraction to a life dedicated to God did not fade. During my high school years, I got to know nuns from different religious Congregations and I participated in their initiatives for young



Prague - New Book Center



people. On each of those occasions, the bitter taste of my first experience recurred. For some reason, I continued to feel suffocated in religious communities, which led me to tell myself with even greater conviction, "The religious life is not for me!"

The inexplicable tension between a certain attraction to consecrated life and the feeling of being suffocated in the environments in which it was lived lasted until my last year of high school. I was preparing for my final exams and trying to decide what university to enroll in when I read an article in our Catholic weekly about the Daughters of St. Paul, who had opened a community several years earlier in Prague, the capital of the Czech Republic. The photos showed the nuns surrounded by bookshelves. As I read the text describing the charism of the Pauline Sisters, the thought immediately crossed my mind: "Maybe *this* is something I could do..."

A rather hesitant exchange of letters ensued between myself and the sisters. The advice of the FSPs of Prague to avoid rushing into things and to continue my studies serenely made it sound like they were not very interested in me. But I was grateful for their advice and acted on it. The opportunity to visit them for the first time came about a year later. I was in my first year at the university and although I was legally an adult, my parents would permit me to make the overnight bus trip to Prague only if my mother went along with me. She justified her insistence on taking part in the adventure by saying she wanted to relive her memories of the city in which she herself had studied. On my part, I viewed this parental attitude as a compromise that I was willing to make in order to resolve a matter that gave me no peace.

Our visit was a very quick one: a night-long bus trip to Prague, a day with the sisters, and then another night-long bus trip home. In Prague, we were welcomed by Sr. Rosanna and Sr. Isi.

At that time, the sisters' knowledge of the Czech language was at beginner's level and my knowledge of Italian was zero so my mother's presence was providential. Thanks to her profession as a speech therapist, she was able to keep the table conversation flowing in spite of its linguistic hiccups. But what made talking with the nuns awkward for me was more than just the diversity of languages. I was literally baffled! Those foreign sisters did not fit into any of my ideas about religious life. There was nothing glamorous about their appearance. They lived in a very ordinary apartment in the center of town and their modest bookstore, still in the process of being set up, did not look like a fascinating apostolic work. Yet, the closed-in, trapped feeling that had characterized my previous experiences in various convents did not manifest itself.

Naturally, the restoration of my mental peace after two all-night bus trips did not take place immediately. However, after a few months I returned to Prague to spend about a week with the sisters. Several aspects of their life seemed unusual to me, yet a little interior voice whispered cautiously: "I think I could feel at home here.... I think I could give my life to God here." In the years that followed, I returned several more times to spend a few days of my school vacations with the sisters. Finally, the autumn after my graduation, I returned to Prague to stay.

Anna Matikova, fsp



COMMENT ON THE THEME  
OF WORLD COMMUNICATIONS  
DAY 2022: LISTEN!



This is probably the first time an exclamation point appears in the title of a Papal Message. This punctuation mark, which came into use around 1300 A.D., thus lends a touch of innovation to World Communications Day 2022. With its vertical rod springing up from a point, it emphasizes the necessity and urgency of the theme's plea.

But it also underscores its content. The exclamation point, as a rule, "has been entirely eliminated from legislative, scientific, and technical texts, since it is associated with emotionality, sentiment, and the expression of subjectivity" (Treccani, 2022). It is the warmth, after the chill of the pandemic, that heats the ink of: "Listen!" It is an encouragement—albeit in the verbal mode of the imperative—to rediscover a fundamental element of the communication process worn-out over time. Indeed, the instantaneousness allowed by digital media finds, in the word *listen*, a limit to its characteristic immediacy.

The waves of "infodemic" that have flooded the information scene, especially as a result of the pandemic, have accentuated



the phenomena of filter bubbles and echo chambers: bubbles on social media, favored by algorithms, where people with the same opinions meet and interact, and spaces in which listening is not necessary because what bounces back is the echo of one's own convictions.

And any contrary idea ends up breaking the algorithmic equilibrium by triggering heated reactions that polarize every comparison. Hearing is not the same as listening because it expresses an intentional choice. This is why the call of Pope Francis, in tune with the synodal path of the Church, cannot help but urge us to start by "looking inward."

In continuity with WCD 2021 (Come and See: Communicating by Encountering People Where and As They Are), the Pope today asks the world of communication to "relearn to listen a lot"—a concrete exercise of the grammar of every true encounter and dialogue to be rediscovered and applied "a lot."

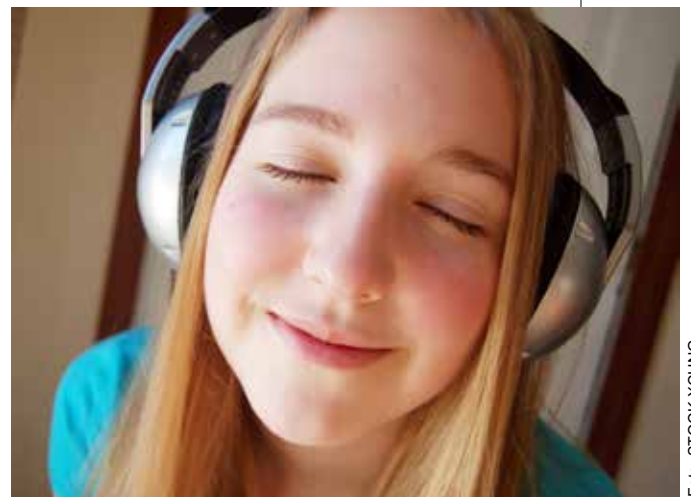


Foto: STOCK-XCHING

The pandemic has given an undoubted thrust to digital communication. Now that an "in-present" style of life has been resumed, parishes are the natural places for listening in our pastoral and cultural journey. It is important that communication does not find in the parish reality an end point but instead a bridge leading to every type of dialogue and relationship, starting from listening, if promoted with "courage, and a free and open heart, without prejudice." So that the physical distance imposed by the pandemic does not become social distance.

**Fabio Bolzetta**

National President of WECA (Association of Italian WebCatholics)

ITALY

AUDIENCE OF POPE FRANCIS WITH THE PAULINE FAMILY



On Thursday, 25 November, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Blessed James Alberione, Pope Francis welcomed in audience 150 members of the Pauline Family.

“In the footsteps of your Founder, continue to choose the media as your pulpit,” he told them, “so as to make Jesus Christ known to the people of our times using the means of our times.”

After the greetings of the Superior General of the Society of St. Paul, Fr. Valdir José De Castro, the Pope reminded the assembly of the picture that St. Paul VI had sketched out in 1969 of the future Blessed: “Humble, silent, tireless, ever vigilant, always recollected in his thoughts, which run from prayer to work, ever intent on scrutinizing the ‘signs of the times,’ that is to say, the most ingenious ways of reaching souls. He has given the Church new ways of expressing herself, new means of invigorating and broadening her apostolate, new capacities and a new awareness of the validity and possibilities of her mission in the modern world, with modern means.”

These words, according to Pope Francis, challenge all the members of the Pauline Family “in their concrete existence as consecrated persons, who from prayer receive the ability to scrutinize the signs of the times in order to adapt their apostolic projects to the situations and needs of people today.”

**SPIRITUAL ITINERARY OF THE PAULINE FAMILY**

From 9-17 November this year, about thirty brothers and sisters of the Pauline Family gathered at the FSP St. Paul House in Rome to make a course of spiritual exercises that launched the spiritual itinerary of the PF for 2022. The course, which sought to involve all the participants, focused on the Alberionian prayer which was originally called *For Those*

*Who Thirst for Souls Like Jesus* and which is currently known as the *Pauline Offertory* with its respective parallels, namely: the *Pastoral Offertory* of the Pastorelle Sisters and the *Vocational Offertory* of the Apostoline Sisters.

The theme, presented (by videoconference) under its biblical aspect by Fr. Boguslaw Zeman ssp, and under its charismatic aspect by Fr. Agatino Gugliara ssp, put the participants in tune with the thirst of Jesus (Jn. 19:28) by urging them to share his thirst for love, and come to better grasp and share his yearning for redemption.

The key points that illuminated those intense days of prayer, listening and reflection were: the invitation to quench our thirst at the fountain of life, to offer ourselves to the Father



in union with the sacrificial offering of Christ in order to collaborate in his plan of salvation, and to make atonement so as to heal a world lacking in solidarity. It gave the participants the opportunity to once again experience the centrality of the one and perfect Master, the true Shepherd of scattered humanity, the Eternal Priest from whom the efficacy of our mission derives.

The Itinerary for 2022, prepared by a team of PF members, concludes a three-year cycle of animations dedicated to the *spiritual life*—one of the “four wheels” of the Pauline “cart.” Its opening course of spiritual exercises enabled its participants to rediscover that “holiness ensures that our apostolate will bear fruit because true love of God arouses in the soul a zeal that is pure, calm, burning, constant and strong to the point of giving one’s life” (CISP, pp. 1354-1355).

The experience of coming together as sisters and brothers belonging to the various branches of the “admirable Pauline Family” reaffirmed the power of our communion and the beauty of our unity in diversity that makes it possible for the Word to continue to race ahead, bringing joy and salvation to all.

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## WINDOW ON THE CHURCH

### LAUDATO SI' PLATFORM



The *Laudato si'* Platform is an online hub that collects, directs and coordinates global and local initiatives inspired by the encyclical on the care of creation. The Platform is open to anyone who wants to participate in it. All human beings are invited to become ecological citizens of our common home, the earth. The Platform has seven sectors: families, individuals, parishes and dioceses, schools and universities, hospitals and health care centers, the economic world: businesses (including agricultural ones), cooperatives, the world of work, a large NGO subsector (groups, movements, organizations and even communication centers (which play a major role in this area); and finally both male and female religious orders. There is a beautiful paragraph in *Laudato si'* about the simple things everyone can do to help take care of creation, because, as the Pope writes, if we don't change our lifestyle, we won't save our planet.

### VATICAN: OPENING OF THE SYNODAL JOURNEY



On Sunday, 10 October 2021, Pope Francis officially opened the Synod on *Synodality* with the celebration of the Eucharist in St. Peter's Basilica. Thus an ecclesial journey has begun that will lead to the celebration of the Synod of Bishops scheduled for 2023. The opening in the Vatican was preceded by a time of reflection on Saturday, 9 October, in the Synod's New Hall.

In his talk, the Pontiff stressed that it is not necessary to create another Church but "a different Church, open to the innovations that God wants to suggest to her; a Church that listens and walks with the Spirit, because we

need the Spirit, who is the ever-fresh breath of God, freeing us from all kinds of closure, reviving what is dead and breaking chains."

Thanking the participants in the synodal itinerary, he reiterated that the Synod is not a parliament, nor is it a survey. It is an ecclesial moment and its protagonist is the Spirit. The Pope then re-emphasized the key words of the synodal journey: *communion, participation and mission*.

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## WINDOW ON THE WORLD

### FAITH AND SCIENCE: TOWARDS COP26



A year after the publication of the encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, the Vatican hosted a day-long meeting entitled *Faith and Science: Towards COP26*. Various religious leaders and scientists participated in the event.

At the center of it all was a Joint Appeal addressed to the participants in the annual UN Climate Change Conference (COP26), which took place in Glasgow, Scotland, from 31 October to 12 November 2021. A statement from the Holy See Press Office said that the Appeal was born of the proposal made by the Embassies of Great Britain and Italy to the Holy See, which the Holy See accepted and carried out with them. It was developed through monthly virtual meetings, starting in January 2021. On this journey, religious leaders and scientists were able to share their concerns and hopes regarding the need to take greater responsibility for the planet and the changes needed to achieve this goal. Exchanges at these meetings gave rise to the Appeal to take a common stand for the protection of the environment, which was signed on 4 October by those participating in the Vatican meeting. The Appeal was then delivered by Pope Francis to Alok Kumar Sharma, the president of COP26, and Luigi Di Maio, Italy's Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.



## TECHNOLOGIES, PEACE AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT IN THE POST-COVID WORLD



On 9 December, a meeting was held in the Vatican to highlight moral and ethical issues regarding the impact of today's new technologies in the post-pandemic world. The theme developed was "Promoting Integral Human Development and Peace in the Digital Age. New Technologies in the Post-Covid World." The meeting was organized by the Dicastery for the Service of Integral Human Development, the Vatican COVID-19 Commission, the Diplo Foundation, the Turin World Affairs Institute, Pax Christi International and the Catholic University of America.

A Vatican statement says that the purpose of the event was "to contribute to global dialogue on the role of new technologies in the post-pandemic era, in view of an integral ecology, justice, an integrated 'One Health for All' approach, and a more communal economic system."

Experts offered a general scientific and ethical analysis of the theme, showcasing how new technologies can be placed at the service of integral human development, especially in the fields of food security, health care (including fair and equitable access to Covid-19 vaccines), dignified labor, peace and security, and the promotion of a communal economy. Crucial questions were also raised regarding the use of modern technologies and their impact on society, drawing on Pope Francis' Encyclical Letters, *Laudato si'* and *Fratelli tutti*.

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## WINDOW ON COMMUNICATIONS

### NEW VERSION OF *CLICK TO PRAY*

The Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network has launched a new and updated version of *Click To Pray 2.0*, the papal app that helps people pray for the challenges of humanity and the mission of the Church.

The digital platform offers users a variety of specific propositions to pray together with

Pope Francis on a daily basis. Available in 7 languages, *Click To Pray* is an initiative that, since its launch in 2016, has reached more than 2.5 million users worldwide, between website, app, social media and newsletters. Each year, more than 400,000 users pray alongside Pope Francis for his prayer intentions.



Together with the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops and the International Union of Superiors General, the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network is now proposing new content for prayer and accompaniment of the synodal itinerary. It also suggests praying for the Local Church with the intentions of the Episcopal Conferences participating in the initiative. "Prayer," says the press release, "is like a seed which, in the darkness of the earth, will bear fruit in its own time."

This information was furnished in the statement of the Vatican Press Office that accompanied the presentation of the new version of *Click To Pray*.

## RELIGION TODAY FILM FESTIVAL 2021



*Nomads in Faith* is the title of the 24th edition of the Religion Today Film Festival, which was held in Trent, Italy. In an attempt to bring hope to people after the past two difficult years of the pandemic, this edition of the Festival explored the theme of searching for God and drawing closer to him and to others from the perspective of travel/journeying. Out of the more than 1400 films submitted, 83 of them, representing 36 different countries, were selected to participate in the competition. The films were divided into five categories: documentary, short documentary, feature film, short film and animation. The artistic director of the event, Andrea Morghen, said: "Focusing on *nomadism* is very significant at this time in history because it prompts us to reflect more profoundly on who we are, on our limitations, and above all on the importance of relationships."



*"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. Leticia Natalia Ferrareto - age 91 - 24.09.2021 - São Paulo, Brazil  
Sr. M. Renata Paola Vanzetta - age 88 - 07.10.2021 - Albano, Italy  
Sr. Gavina Giuseppa Campus - age 89 - 12.10.2021 - Rome (Hospital), Italy  
Sr. Adelaide Pia Agnese Simoni - age 90 - 25.10.2021 - Albano GA, Italy  
Sr. Jolly Carmela Cheriyanthanath - age 61 - 01.11.2021 - Mumbai, India  
Sr. M. Ambrogia Maria Giuseppa Sedda - age 88 - 07.11.2021 - Verduno CN (Hospital), Italy  
Sr. Leonilda Menossi - age 89 - 07.11.2021 - São Paulo, Brazil  
Sr. M. Dolores Kyoko Nakano - age 88 - 12.11.2021 - Hiratsuka, Japan  
Sr. Antonietta Colonna - age 89 - 12.11.2021 - Rome DP, Italy  
Sr. M. Ausilia Teresita Loresto - age 84 - 15.11.2021 - Pasay City, Philippines  
Sr. M. Elisabetta Teresa Riboni - age 90 - 15.11.2021 - Verduno CN (Hospital), Italy  
Sr. Martha Gomez - age 73 - 15.11.2021 - Bogotá (Hospital), Colombia  
Sr. Mary Scolastica Philomena D'Souza - age 88 - 18.11.2021 - Mumbai, India  
Sr. Lucia Carleo - age 90 - 27.11.2021 - Palermo, Italy  
Sr. Léa Raharisoa - age 43 - 29.11.2021 - Fianarantsoa, Madagascar  
Sr. Maria De Lourdes Herminia Berra Merlo - age 86 - 06.12.2021 - Mexico City, Mexico  
Sr. Mary Louise Helen Oddi - age 90 - 11.12.2021 - Boston RA, United States  
Sr. M. Angelica Maria Ana Michels - age 95 - 13.12.2021 - São Paulo, Brazil  
Sr. Andreia Catarina Zelinda Berta - age 82 - 17.12.2021 - Lisbon CD, Portugal  
Sr. M. Lorenzina Adelma Olga Guidetti - age 102 - 02.01.2022 - Rome DP, Italy  
Sr. Jane Gracias - age 88 - 02.01.2022 - Mumbai, India

## **PARENTS OF OUR SISTERS**

- Sr. M. Francisca Natsuoka (Mother, Fukuko M. Agnes) of the Tokyo community, Japan  
Sr. Bernadetta Kim (Mother, Yu Ye Clare) of the Macao community  
Sr. Lilly and Sr. Divya Vengaloor (Mother, Theresiamma) of the Mumbai community, India  
Sr. Lucy Joseph Attickal (Mother, Aleykutty) of the New Delhi community, India  
Sr. Neville Christine Forchap (Father, Charles) of the Johannesburg community, South Africa  
Sr. Julia Mary Darrenkamp (Mother, Jocelyn) of the Charleston community, United States  
Sr. Tecla Kyoung Hee Kim (Father, Gi Taek Paolo) of the Seoul-Miari community, Korea  
Sr. Saly Ann John Padinjaredath (Mother, Kathrine) of the Shillong community, India  
Sr. Sagaya Mary Philip (Father, Philip) of the Trichy community, India  
Sr. Sobia Ashiq (Father, Masih Gill) of the Rawalpindi community, Pakistan  
Sr. Wladyslawa Zasiura (Father, Casimiro) - at home, Poland  
Sr. Annette Oonnukallel (Mother, Martha Mariam) of the Panjin Goa community, India  
Sr. M. Elizabeth Borobia (Father, Juan Leonardo) of the Boston community, United States  
Sr. Cecilia Amarachi Okwor (Father, Martin) of the Lagos community, Nigeria  
Sr. Agnes Wong (Mother, Catherine) - at home, Malaysia

**PAULINE FAMILY**

Fr. Adolfo Segundo Carrillo Cerda, ssp, - age 72 - 17.09.2021 - Santiago, Chile  
Sr. M. Martina M. Carmen Garcia Magaña, pddm, - age 80 - 30.09.2021 - Mexico City, Mexico  
Br. Valentino Ignazio Rizzo, ssp - age 79 - 24.10.2021 - Rome, Italy  
Sr. M. Joseph Anna Capra, pddm - age 92 - 25.10.2021 - Sanfrè, Italy  
Br. Giovanni Maria Alfonso Vendrasco, ssp - age 81 - 28.10.2021 - Alba, Italy  
Fr Leopoldo Efrén García Ortiz ssp, age 80 - 08.11.2021 Guadalajara, Mexico  
Sr. Evangelina Luigina Vimercati, sjbp - age 93 - 10.11.2021 - Albano Laziale, Italy  
Fr. Fernando Oscar Teseyra, ssp - age 54 - 16.11.2021 - Buenos Aires (Hospital), Argentina  
Sr. M. Lucia Bernice Bouché, pddm - age 86 - 17.11.2021 - Albano Laziale, Italy  
Sr. M. Rosaria Aurea Gallardo, pddm - age 89 - 17.11.2021 - Fresno, United States  
Sr. M. Rosa Annateresa Pacchiarotti, pddm - age 79 - 20.11.2021 - Rome, Italy  
Sr. Elisabetta Loredana Manoni, sjbp - age 76 - 05.12.2021 - Albano Laziale, Italy  
Fr. Agostinho João Correia De França, ssp - age 79 - 18.12.2021 - Tabuaço, Portugal  
Fr. Francisco Jesus Ares Cerqueiro, ssp - age 87 - 23.12.2021 - Vizconde (Madrid), Spain  
Fr. Antonio Luigi Castelli, ssp - age 90 - 26.12.2021 - Alba, Italy  
Sr. Anna Maria Paola Burci, pddm - age 79 - 01.01.2022 - Nogent sur Marne (Paris), France