

*Mary's apostolate possesses
the unmistakable characteristic
of intimacy with Christ,
which is why her actions
are not simply "doing"
but actual apostolic mysticism.*

Giuseppe Forlai, igs

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A TIME OF MERCY AND PEACE



Dearest Sisters,

I must admit I have never liked iconographic pictures that show the Risen Jesus emerging triumphantly from the tomb, his body and face bathed in light, carrying in his hand a white flag emblazoned with a big red cross.

I have never liked these images because, as I already mentioned in my Easter letter, when I scroll through the Gospels I do not find anything impressive or dazzling mentioned in the resurrection accounts. No cheering crowds have gathered to view the unprecedented spectacle of the crucified Jesus coming out of the tomb. The God who descended to earth, who divested himself of his divinity, who came to share the same fate as all human beings, gives no sign of his omnipotence.

But even though I have never liked those artistic depictions, today they prompt me to reread Christ's infamous death on the cross and his resurrection in a new key. They motivate me to seek the true meaning of what it means to *surrender in order to win*.

Violence produces an unending chain of violence. Instead, the Cross "traps" violence. The Son of God chose to take evil upon himself, to stop it in his body, not to repeat it and make it proliferate. And what seems to be defeat and surrender is mysteriously transformed into victory. On Easter night, "a night brighter than day," Christ emerges from the tomb with the banner of his victory over death—a banner for which to live, not for which to die. He breaks the spiral of hatred with the gentleness of love. He brings about unity wherever division and hatred reign. He creates a bridge of peace. And the dawn of God brightens the nights of our world.

"Love one another, otherwise you will destroy yourselves. That's what the Gospel is all about" (D.M. Tuoldo). Love is the true fruit of the Lord's resurrection. We will be women of resurrection—and therefore artisans of peace—only if we live in love, only if we are instruments of peace in our communities. Peace means forgiveness. It means renewed faith in others. It means walking to-

gether along "the best path of all": the path of love (cf. 1 Cor. 13). Maestra Thecla spurred us on many times to do this, saying:

Let us transform ourselves into instruments of peace.... Peace is the fruit of love, understanding and harmony... So let us learn to suffer with, bear with and excuse each other. Let us hold our tongues and accept the small wrongs done to us, even when we think we are in the right. (VPC137)

On the evening of that "first day," Jesus enters the house in which his disciples had barricaded themselves, filled with fear and anguish, and he says to them: "Peace be with you!" (Jn. 20:19) He shows them the signs of his crucifixion and then fills them with the breath of his Spirit. His breath rekindles life in his disciples, who had lost all hope. It calms their inner turmoil and fills them with the dream of a different, renewed, united humanity. From that moment on, the real proof of the Lord's resurrection is this small community that succeeds in overcoming its fears, experiences forgiveness and is prompt to forgive, courageously throwing open its closed doors so as to proclaim the power of the resurrection, which is a sign of the presence of the Risen Christ reflected in



Resurrection - Piero della Francesca



the mutual love and unity of its members.

The way to peace passes through the special form of love characterized by forgiveness. But how hard we find it in our communities to forgive one another, banish resentment, and forget offenses....

A few days ago, at a national assembly of women religious, the president of the Focolare Movement spoke about a very interesting “pact of mercy” that Chiara Lubich wanted to incorporate from the very outset into her Foundation. It involves waking up every morning with the yearning and resolve to welcome other people in a new way, indeed a very new way, namely: to refrain from focusing on their faults and instead to cover everything with love; to forget the wrongs or offenses we have experienced at the hands

of others, and to approach them “with complete amnesty of heart, with wholehearted forgiveness.”

A pact of mercy! Might this not be a concrete way to grow in benevolence and mutual love, a premise and proclamation of peace? May peace be with us and among us, Sisters!

I would be happy to know your thoughts concerning what I have tried to share. Please discuss what I said together, as a community, and offer me the gift of your reflections on it. Thank you.

Finally, I would like to take advantage of this opportunity to extend my sincere best wishes to the junior professed Sisters who in these days are making their perpetual professions in various circumscriptions: *May each of you fall always more deeply in love with Jesus. May you always long for and cultivate a profound relationship with him, because only in this way can you be communicators of the Good News “to the farthest bounds of the earth.” Do not be afraid. Remember that by ourselves we can do nothing, but with God we can do all things!*

With deep affection, in communion of joy and hope,

Sr. Anna Caiazza
Superior General

CALENDAR OF THE GENERAL GOVERNMENT

(April–June 2024)



3–7 April 2024	Visit for a specific purpose to France	Sr. Annamaria Gasser
15–24 April 2024	Fraternal Visit to the Congo	Sr. Anna Caiazza Sr. Annamaria Gasser
1–28 May 2024	Fraternal Visit to Japan	Sr. Anna Caiazza
20 May–21 June 2024	Fraternal Visit to EAMZZ	Sr. Donna Giaimo Sr. Micaela Pae Sr. Annamaria Gasser
	<i>From 3–21 June</i>	
1–25 June 2024	Fraternal Visit to East Asia	Sr. Bruna Fregni Sr. Shalimar Rubia

ITALY

12TH ASSEMBLY ON THE APOSTOLATE



The words of politics and the clarification of their function were the theme of the 12th Apostolate Assembly (19-20 February 2024), which saw the participation (both in person and online) of sisters and laity engaged in this mission.

Andrea Grillo, professor of Theology and Philosophy, highlighted how in the “society of dignity” even the culture of waste, which has always existed, can find its redemption.

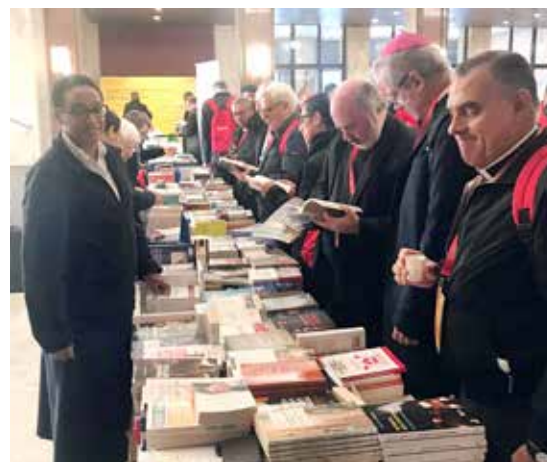
There was no lack of denunciation of how the communicative space of political leaders has undergone great change with the advent of the Internet. This was well highlighted by Anna Caspani and Francesco Cavalleri, authors along with others of the book “Is Good Politics Still Possible?” (FSP Editions), who reiterated that “our politicians, rather than worrying about finding projects/proposals for the good of citizens, are attentive to their own individual consensus, exploiting social media. Thus, the very model of politics remains profoundly changed: no longer an agora where debate and a comparison of ideas take place, but a ‘cheering ring’ to attack the opponent.”

An afternoon was dedicated to the figure of the bookseller, guided by Romano Montroni, a teacher at the booksellers’ school. The book market is based on dedicated readers he said, but also on the economic balance of the bookstore. Therefore, booksellers must pour passion, creativity and good relations into their work, avoid standardization, and ensure an assortment of cultural proposals in order to provide good customer service. Never forgetting that “books promote the circulation of ideas.”

In the opening greeting, the Provincial Superior reiterated how politics is a topic that “touches our lives” and cannot be marginal

“because we must take responsibility for the common good.”

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR THE ONGOING FORMATION OF PRIESTS



From 6-10 February 2024, the Dicastery for the Clergy sponsored an International Conference for the Ongoing Formation of Priests, entitled “*Fan into a flame the gift of God that is in you*” (2 Tim. 1:6): *The beauty of being disciples today: a unique, integral, communal and missionary formation.*” The encounter was held in the Paul VI Audience Hall, Rome.

About 700 priests from Italy and many other parts of the world participated in the event, during which they discussed and explored the practices, challenges, problems and future prospects of priestly formation.

Staff from the FSP International Book Center, Rome, were present with a large and beautiful display of publications in different languages that offered valuable resources and tools for the ongoing formation of priests.

MEETING ON THE THEME OF FRAGILITY



Held on 23 February in the FSP Treviso Book Center, the meeting was sponsored by Cittadinanzattiva Treviso in collabora-

tion with our local Pauline Book Center. The theme of the encounter, “*Fragility: ideas and facts, for the inclusion of fragile people*”, consisted of a reflection on human frailties triggered by the FSP initiative *Libro Sospeso 2024*. Book Center customers were invited to buy a book to contribute to this initiative and to write an inscription on its flyleaf, after which the books were sent to the inmates of Treviso prison. The FSP initiative to donate books to prisoners is very compatible with Cittadinanzattiva’s goal to reach out to people whose condition in life isolates them in various ways from society. In fact, feedback from the Association’s hospitality centers has revealed that many people who are imprisoned, who suffer from chronic diseases, who are senior citizens or housebound, etc., have a great thirst to broaden their knowledge, and a book can be an important tool to help satisfy that desire.

KENYA

PRESENTING THE NEW PAULINE TRADEMARK AND INSTITUTIONAL LOGO



Timed to coincide with the celebration of International Women’s Day, the Daughters of St. Paul of East Africa presented their sisters with the Congregation’s restyled Trademark and new institutional logo, which represent a visual renewal of the Pauline identity. This significant event was held in the Queen of Apostles Chapel in Nairobi on 8 March 2024.

The Archbishop of Nairobi, Philip Anyolo, officiated at the Eucharistic Celebration, and the circumscription’s novices and pre-novices enriched the Liturgy with meaningful songs, adding beauty and solemnity to the ceremony.

Sr. Praxides, the head of Pauline Editions East Africa, opened the event by expressing

her gratitude for the journey carried out by the Congregation to reach this point. She then explained the meaning of the restyled trademark, correlating it to the concept of “priestly zeal” associated with the Congregation’s founder, Blessed James Alberione.

Sr. Rosemary, Delegation Superior, explained the preceding trademark and the new logos, detailing the research and steps taken to achieve these new proposals.

The Archbishop praised the Daughters of St. Paul for their commitment to spreading the message of Jesus through various forms of communication and urged them to persevere in their mission with love and faith.

This new chapter of the Congregation’s journey offers the world a modern visual identity of the Daughters of St. Paul, while at the same time holding firm to the Institute’s core values and commitment to using innovative means to spread the Gospel in ways that will make an always-greater impact on people.

MADAGASCAR

NEW PAULINE BOOK CENTER



The inauguration of our new *Librairie Md Paoly* in Tamatave (now known as Toamasina, Madagascar’s most important port), took place on 20 January 2024, on the eve of the Sunday of the Word. The date was chosen to mark this ecclesial event and also to remind us of our mission as Daughters of St. Paul to spread the Word of God to everyone.

A very significant moment of the blessing ceremony was the enthronement of the Bible in the book center. During his homily, the vicar general of the diocese, who presided over the event, emphasized St. Paul’s apostolic zeal in taking the Gospel to all people and invited us, as daughters of this great Apostle, to imitate Paul in carrying out our mission

courageously, preaching the Gospel in good times and bad. He also thanked us for our presence in the diocese and offered us his best wishes for our collaboration in diocesan activities.

This new book center is the fourth *Librairie Md Paoly* the Congregation has opened in Madagascar since our arrival 41 years ago. The book center's chapel is open to everyone who wants to spend time in personal prayer with the Lord.

PAKISTAN

60th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH TO HEAVEN OF VEN. THECLA MERLO



On 5 Feb. 2024, our Divine Master community in Lahore, together with our young women in formation, our collaborators, and our Pauline Cooperators and their families, celebrated with great devotion and joy the 60th anniversary of Venerable Thecla Merlo's birth to heaven.

The day began with a consideration of the characteristics of Maestra Thecla, which helped the community reflect on the values of prayer, self-surrender, trust, faith, love, sacrifice and obedience to which she witnessed.

The Holy Mass was celebrated by Archbishop Sabastian Francis Shaw of Lahore. He emphasized the importance of prayer because the Holy Father has announced that 2024 will be observed by the Church as a *Year of Prayer*. On our part, we linked this theme to the life of Venerable Thecla Merlo, who said prayer is as necessary to the soul as oxygen and water are to life.

The families of our Cooperators were delighted to learn more about Maestra Thecla

through the songs, dramas, poems and video animations presented by the community.

We are thankful to the Lord for giving us this opportunity to praise and thank him for choosing and confirming Sr. Thecla Merlo as the wise mother and sure guide of the Daughters of St. Paul. We pray and desire to follow her exemplary life for the sake of God and humanity.

PAKISTAN

CELEBRATING THE SUNDAY OF THE WORD



On 28 Jan. 2024, the Daughters of St. Paul of the Karachi Archdiocese joyfully celebrated the Sunday Dedicated to the Word of God. A catechist gave a stirring introduction to the Liturgy, inviting the faithful to gather at the entrance of the church and then re-enter it in procession with the Holy Bible borne aloft for all to see. The Bible was then solemnly enthroned in front of the high altar, adorned with flowers. After Communion, the pastor invited Sr Ghazia Akbar, FSP, to share her reflections with the assembly, which she did, urging them to draw courage from the inspiring words of St. Paul and reassuring them that nothing can separate us from the love of God.

Sr. Ghazia pointed out that the Daughters of St. Paul were the first to print the Bible in Urdu and the faithful expressed their appreciation and gratitude with warm applause.

The sisters set up a beautiful Bible display in this and two other local churches to underscore the significance of this particular Sunday in the Church calendar, established by Pope Francis as a time to celebrate, study and spread the Word of God.

INDIA

COURSES ON THE WORD OF GOD



The Daughters of St. Paul of Mumbai recently conducted two Bible courses aimed at enriching the minds and hearts of seekers of the truth by permitting the Word of God to permeate the participants and give impetus to their spiritual journey.

The courses, entitled *Growing with God's Word* and *Encountering God's Word*, offered a structured approach to the study of Scripture, bridging the gap between ancient wisdom and modern challenges, and providing relevant and self-transforming perspectives for spiritual growth.

The study of the Old Testament was conducted in a rich historical context, revealing the foundations of the Faith and showing the nature of God's promises. Explanations of the teachings of Jesus in the New Testament led everyone to a deeper understanding of love and compassion. The structured approach, combined with the communal learning experience, created an environment conducive to personal and spiritual development, offering not only knowledge but also inspiration from the collective wisdom of the participants. The courses not only broadened the sisters' knowledge of the Word but also provided them with practical insights for dealing with the challenges and joys of daily life.

UNITED STATES

CONFERENCE ON THE SHROUD OF TURIN

On 17 March 2024, the Pauline Books & Media Center in Dedham (Massachusetts), USA, hosted a fascinating presentation on the Shroud of Turin by Dr. Gibert Lavoie, a medical doctor who has pursued a forensic and scriptural study of the Shroud for more than 40 years. His juxtaposition of scientific



findings with John's Gospel account of the death and resurrection of Jesus roused great interest in the more than 100 people present for his talk. Dr. Lavoie's input came alive through relatable, real-world scientific witnesses who explored whether the image on the Shroud was the work of human hands, a natural phenomenon, or a supernatural event.

The participants in the encounter expressed their gratitude for the opportunity to come to a deeper understanding of the spiritual and scientific explanations of the world-famous Shroud. Copies of Dr. Lavoie's book presenting his findings were on display during his talk and nearly all the attendees purchased the text. The doctor autographed the copies of his book and readily answered questions from the audience, making it a truly enriching and meaningful experience for everyone.

FIRST PROFESSIONS

January–March 2024



SEOUL-MIARI, KOREA

25 January 2024

**Hae In-Caellainna Goo
Su Hyeon-Marianna Jang**

BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA

18 February 2024

Cinthia Rocío Bogado

PROFESSIONAL DEGREE IN WEBMASTER, COMPUTER GRAPHICS AND MULTIMEDIA

STUDY AND DEVELOPMENT OF A CENTRALISED UNIVERSITY DIGITAL LIBRARY FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF SCIENTIFIC WORK IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO



CATHERINE NTANDA MUNGONGO KAFUTI, FSP

Based on the theme, Sr Catherine outlined a general presentation of the project in 6 points:

1. CULTURAL CONTEXT OF THE PROJECT

Surveys conducted in ten renowned universities in Kinshasa province.

2. PROBLEMS

Giving an effective response to the various problems plaguing the world of scientific research.

3. HYPOTHESES

Organisation and archiving of scientific work within a digital library for the preservation of content over time and easy access to data.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE *BIBLIONUNIVE* PROJECT

To realise a centralized university digital library for the management of scientific works in the DR Congo, basing the system on three components for archive management: database, content display system (web interface) and search engine (browser).

5. VISION, MISSION AND RESULTS OF *BIBLIONUNIVE.COM*

- To promote scientific documents and works through easy online publication and consultation;

- To combat plagiarism of topics already covered and published online;
- To protect and promote the preservation of scientific works by prohibiting downloading, copying and pasting files and sharing them;
- To introduce researchers to a spirit of scientific competition in order to produce papers that meet the real needs of their nations and humanity;
- To offer authors visibility for their works, the possibility to express themselves through their writings and to benefit from remuneration for their works through monthly and annual subscriptions paid by readers.

6. WHAT *BIBLIONUNIVE* OFFERS

1. An author account to access and submit documents in electronic format (PDF);
2. A subscription to consult the works online.

CONCLUSIONS

“I am satisfied,” says Sister Catherine, “with the results of my online student experience, despite the difficulties and sacrifices I had to face. I would like to thank my Congregation, represented here by our delegation from the DR Congo/Ivory Coast, for its openness to the signs of the times, and for the trust and responsibility placed in me for starting the digital apostolate from scratch with the e-commerce site.”



As requested by the General Government Planning for 2023-2025 Animation on the “mysticism of living together” (page 10), in the next issues of the *PaolineOnline Bulletin* we will begin a new column with the writings of Don Giuseppe Forlai, of Jesus the Priest Institute.

His reflections propose Mary as a model of Community Mysticism.

LIVING MARY TO COMMUNICATE CHRIST



Baptism marks the mystical birth of Jesus within us and unites us with the community of believers. Just as in Mary’s womb human and divine nature were united without being confused, similarly at the baptismal font the irruption of grace into our mortal flesh takes place. Everything is founded on the DNA of Christ who heals and reintegrates us into truth. This principle and foundation places us in a vital space, that is, in the itinerary of Christification to which we are called and where we can already contemplate his *Christ-formed* Mother. Mary’s immaculate conception prefigures the baptism of grace in which we are cleansed of any aversion toward God; his assumption and kingship in the communion of saints anticipates the entry of our entire being into heaven, to take our place in the celestial Church.

Giving yourself to Mary is a response to the gift of Christ from the Crucifix. Welcoming his Mother as ours involves the conscious choice to welcome the grace of baptism, so that Christ may reach full maturity in us. The free act with which we surrender to this transforming dynamic involves following the Master by renouncing oneself and taking up one’s cross. In a word, we must choose for ourselves the humility and expropriation of Jesus, his *kenosis*. “Taking Mary into one’s home” and “choosing for oneself the humiliation of the Son”, are almost equivalent gestures and the greatest act of love possible for a creature. For there is no Christianity without self-denial, just as there is no Marian spirituality that rejects the mystery of the Cross.

The gift of baptism launches the commitment to make Christ, Priest of humanity, missionary of the Father, live within us. Giving

Jesus to others is a natural consequence of having met him. Saint Vincent de Paul once said: “It is not enough for me to love Christ if my neighbor does not love him”. Mary gave her only begotten Son to us after conceiving him. She, the model apostle, offers him to us with extended arms. The Scriptures do not allow us to settle into a passive mode of proclamation. We announce grace to a world that often does not want it because it does not understand it: “He came to his own home, and his own people received him not.” (Jn 1:11). Anyone who dreams of success in the apostolate or counts numbers is a poor deluded person! People rarely praise those who tell them the truth taught by the Master. The cross and struggle against the apathy of indifference are the daily bread of a true apostle!

Mary’s apostolate possesses the unmistakable characteristic of intimacy with Christ and of hiddenness, which is why her actions are not simply “doing” but actual *apostolic mysticism*. Her Christified nature flows into her gestures in a natural way, due to the con-



templative heart given to her. More intimate to her than her very self, to paraphrase St. Augustine, the Master breathed and acted in her even before she gave birth. Therefore if this way of acting was already that of her Son, who humbled himself by taking the form of a servant, then the way in which Mary gives herself cannot be anything other than remaining hidden from the eyes of the world, far from any spiritual pride or pretension.

Giuseppe Forlai, igs

“READING” THECLA MERLO TODAY



I want to tell you about my first “meeting” with Thecla Merlo. As a child I was always in love with books, but these were very few in my home. It is no coincidence that I bought my first book from the

Daughters of St. Paul, in a small town in the State of São Paulo, Brazil. It was a sunny Saturday and the sisters were in front of our local church displaying their books. I was 8 years old. But time passed and those sisters who traveled the world in a van full of books disappeared and only some years later returned to enter my story once again as well as that of my family. This time they entered not only with their books, but with the call of the Lord, extended first to my sister Rosa, who today is also a Daughter of St. Paul.

AN ALMOST “FORBIDDEN” BOOK

I was 14 years old when Rosa, then making her vocational discernment, received a book on Thecla Merlo. But that book was to some degree “forbidden” for me, in the sense that I didn’t want my parents and sisters to think that I also wanted to be a religious. In truth I didn’t think about being a Daughter of St. Paul at all. Yes, of course they were nice and very happy people and I liked their simplicity, joy and the open way in which they came to my house. But still not the Daughters... I wanted to follow another path, one that was more contemplative. However, I was drawn by their books. I devoured them. When no one was around, I read the same ones again and again. But that book, with a picture of a sister on the cover, was always there in my sister’s drawer and those pages were patiently awaiting me. And the golden opportunity arrived! On the day my sister left our home to enter the Congregation of the Daughters of St. Paul, my parents accompanied her to São Paulo. This was the perfect opportunity to take that “forbidden” book and read it. I did so that afternoon, anxiously devouring it so as not to be caught by anyone.

THE “TASTE” OF GOD IN MY MOUTH

I like to think that every book leaves a “taste” in the mouth of its reader. And what I read that day remained with me. I recall only the physical sensation, a “taste”, and a deep feeling: my heart was beating strongly. The “flavor” remains with me until today: the “taste” of God in my mouth after I finished reading it left within me the peace and certainty that Thecla was a woman of God, a contemplative woman.

Other chapters followed in my life story. Today I am a Daughter of Saint Paul. Today that sister on the cover of the book is not simply called Thecla Merlo, but she is my Prima Maestra. For a long time, during my formation years, I couldn’t understand Father Alberione. He was a man of difficult words. It was Prima Maestra who helped me understand and know Alberione more profoundly and to be able today to call him Primo Maestro. For me this is a “grace” that I obtained through the intercession of Sr. Thecla Merlo. Her closeness to Fr. Alberione helped me discover this man of God who was contemplative and yet became *all things to all people* for the proclamation of the Gospel.

“READING” THECLA MERLO TODAY

Years have passed and now I have the grace of being even closer to Prima Maestra Thecla. Close to her intimate writings, letters, conferences, etc. to her sisters. I am graced, together with other sisters, to try to “read” her words in depth, valuing everything that has already been achieved and seeking to take a vital step to grasp her message for me today. With every discovery, even the simplest one, I confess that I relive the experience of my adolescence: a strongly beating heart, the “taste” of God in my mouth and the certainty of being in front of a woman of God.

Sixty years have now passed since the “transfer” of our dear Prima Maestra to heaven. Now our challenge is to welcome her message today, to go beyond the “surface” of language and to “dive” into the profound meaning of her person, of her gestures as a “mother”, of her words, “swimming” in the depths of a life that has the “taste” of God.

Ana Paula Ramalho, fsp

I FELT ATTRACTED TO THE THINGS OF GOD



I believe that the story of my vocation began on the day I was born.

It was Sunday at midday in Autumn, the church bells rang for the Angelus just a few meters away from my house. My mother recounted this to me several times. My parish priest, a man of God and a man with a profound spiritual and cultural life, told me that: “Your first cry at the sound of the Angelus bells was a Yes to life and will be your Yes to the Lord’s call: Here I am!”

My father soon taught me to say frequently the ejaculation: *Ecce ancilla Domini* (“Behold the handmaiden of the Lord”) which, when I was studying Latin as an aspirant, I changed to: *Ecce ancilla tua Domine* (Behold your handmaid, Lord), a more personal form.

During my adolescence and youth, I matured within the “Catholic Action” group. I felt attracted to the things of God. I felt his continual presence, along with that of Mary. I told them everything. Even my dreams... I received Communion often and enjoyed reading spiritual books. I wasn’t yet thinking about consecrated life. My mother frequently asked me what I wanted to do in life. “I don’t know yet, I’m not sure”, I replied.

When I turned twenty, I thanked Jesus because I felt him close to me. I offered my life to him to do what he wanted with it, and asked him: “Please don’t allow me to follow the wrong path”.

The next day, my mother became seriously ill. She was 52 years old. There was an overwhelming change in her. Our conversations were always very profound. One day—one of the final days of her presence on this earth—she told me: “I want you to be happy in life, make your choice by listening only to your conscience, do what you feel within yourself.” A few months later she had a stroke, followed by a second one that took her to heaven.

My vocational discernment was difficult and painful, largely due to my father’s resistance. But my discernment matured through my conversations with him, as well as through my reading of two Encyclicals that my parish priest gave me: *Casti connubii* and *Sacra virginitas*. (A *Chaste Marriage* and *Sacred Virginity*).

Reflecting on marriage, notwithstanding its great and beautiful values, made me sad—it would be like putting myself in a cage. But reflecting on the consecrated life gave me joy: it was a space of freedom to love many. My father said to me: “I feel that I must leave you free so that you can be happy.”

On 8 September, 1958, I arrived in Rome. I was filled with joy. In my heart, I said a complete, definitive Yes to Jesus, even though I still had to follow the normal stages of religious formation.



The choice to be a Pauline was offered to me by my parish priest, who greatly admired Fr. Alberione and our apostolate, inspired by St. Paul.

My encounters with Primo Maestro and Prima Maestra were not many, but they were always beautiful, intense and inspiring, and they helped me live my Pauline vocation with joy and commitment. I enjoyed everything and I was very enthusiastic. I never looked for special things. I followed my path as best I could, always marked by the gift of myself in what was asked of me.

The years in which I lived as an FSP missionary in Peru, Venezuela and Bolivia left a profound mark on me. I believe that what

I received, especially in regard to human and fraternal relationships, true and lasting friendship, and fruitful goodness, is much greater than what I gave through my mission. Now I am in Rome and have been at the Generalate of the Daughters of St. Paul for almost 30 years, to collaborate in the service of welcoming our sisters from all over the world. Prior to this, I dealt with the administrative procedures required by the Italian civil authorities for each of the sisters and for the community.

With my 88 years of life and much gratitude in my heart, little by little I am letting go of what I formerly did to live better who I am, as well as saying Yes to everything I can still do for the good of others.

I have discovered an unexpected gift: social media. Through these technologies, I can enter with faith and love into communication with many people throughout the world so as to make Jesus Christ Way, Truth and Life and his Gospel alive and active among us.



Venezuela.
Sr. M. Pia with Fr. Arturo Paoli, Sr. Cristina Mei,
Sr. Isabel La Cruz, and friends

Thus, in the time I still have left, my Pauline vocation of evangelization continues.

And when my hour comes, I want to say to the Father: *Ecce ancilla tua Domine*. (Behold your handmaid, Lord). Here I am—ready to go with you!

Maria Pia Michelini, fsp

ITALY

“WALKING TOGETHER”



Inspired by this slogan, the team coordinating the *Formation Course on the Charism of the Pauline Family* celebrated the 25th anniversary of this Course by looking back over its journey and identifying prospects for the future. The encounter, which was held on 19 March in the SSP community, Rome, was introduced by Course coordinator, Sr. Marta Finotelli, sjbp. Special guests present for the occasion were Sr. Joseph Oberto, pddm, Fr. Giancarlo Rocca, ssp, and Sr. Ana Paula Ramalho, fsp.

The event opened with a video made by the students of this year’s Course, aimed at memorializing its 25-year history, so as to help everyone acquire an overall knowledge of the Pauline Family and its complementary

charisms. The video highlights the wealth of content available in the Charism Course and suggests the possibility of dedicating a time of study and research to its journey in order to come to a deeper grasp of the Pauline Family’s service to the Church and the people of God.

Sr. Joseph emphasized that the Formation Course, from its beginnings, has been aimed at helping Pauline students get to know Fr. Alberione and his works—a path that has also involved the development of the Pauline Spirituality Center, study conferences, the making of films, and pilgrimages to the PF’s sites of foundation. All this has provided the students with opportunities to enter better into the context of the life of young James Alberione, discover that our family spirit is an essential element of the Pauline charism, and offer tools for a biographical work that takes as its point of departure the writings of the Founder.

The celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Charism Course will have another significant online moment on 8 June 2024. The event is reserved for the Course’s alumni, who now number: more than 500, scattered on five continents, where they continue to spread the immense wealth of the Pauline charism.

EVERYTHING STARTS IN THE HEART



We can consider each of the Messages proposed in the last four years by Pope Francis for World Days of Social Communications as a phase of a very specific journey on how to remain in information and communication, while remaining credible witnesses of what is happening around us. The themes of these past years, from 2021 to 2023, helped us reflect on the verbs that are the essence of professional journalism: *go*, *see*, *listen* and *speak* from the heart. They are all dynamic verbs which imply stopping to ensure attention to proximity and professional quality. In 2024, for the 58th World Day of Social Communication, which will be celebrated on 12 May 2024, Francis invites us to focus on the theme of the current historical moment: *Artificial Intelligence and the Wisdom of the Heart: Toward a Fully Human Communication*.

There is no exact way to enter into the mechanisms of so-called “artificial intelligence”. But there is a clear intent to ask questions: two in the introduction and eleven in the fourth and final part of the Message. The first two: “What is the nature of human beings, our distinctiveness and the future of the species *homo sapiens* in the age of artificial intelligence? How can we remain fully human and guide this cultural transformation to serve a good purpose?”. Therefore, how can we always remain “fully human” in the use of technologies in continual transformation? In the first part of his message, Francis recalls a reflection by theologian Romano Guardini on industrial civilization included in his 1927 *Letters from Lake Como*: «We are constantly in the process of becoming. We must enter into this process, each in his or her own way, with openness but also with sensitivity to everything that is destructive and inhumane in

it.... These are technical, scientific and political problems that cannot be resolved except by starting from our humanity.” A word from Guardini recalls the title of this Message and the two previous ones: *heart*. In 2022 Pope Francis invited us to “listen with the ear of the heart”, in 2023 to “speak from the heart”. This year he tells us that “our reflections must begin with the human heart. Only by adopting a spiritual way of viewing reality, only by recovering a wisdom of the heart, can we confront and interpret the newness of our time and rediscover the path to a fully human communication. In the Bible, the heart is seen as the place of freedom and decision-making. It symbolizes integrity and unity, but it also engages our emotions, desires, dreams; it is, above all, the inward place of our encounter with God. Wisdom of the heart, then, is the virtue that enables us to integrate the whole and its parts, our decisions and their consequences, our nobility and our vulnerability, our past and our future, our individuality and our membership within a larger community”.

Therefore, the heart—the involuntary muscle that gives oxygen to our actions and our professional being in information and communication—remains at the center for reading and interpreting the innovations of our time, including artificial intelligence.





In regard to opportunities and dangers, the Pope warned that wisdom cannot be expected from machines: “Although the term artificial intelligence has now supplanted the more correct term, *machine learning*, used in scientific literature, the very use of the word *intelligence* can prove misleading. No doubt, machines possess a limitlessly greater capacity than human beings for storing and correlating data, but human beings alone are capable of making sense of that data”.

The eleven final questions are an incentive to be vigilant and also to concern ourselves about producing sustainable rules. The Pope’s first question is: “How do we safeguard professionalism and the dignity

of workers in the fields of information and communication, together with that of users throughout the world?” One could respond that it is not human to replace the workforce with a machine called “artificial intelligence” that does not think, does not search for news, cannot carry out checks and balances, does not meet people and does not grasp the nuances of dreams, hopes, desires and the affective aspect of human relationships. Francis responded thus: “The use of artificial intelligence can make a positive contribution to the communications sector, provided it does not eliminate the role of journalism on the ground but serves to support it. Provided too that it values the professionalism of communication, making every communicator more aware of his or her responsibilities, and enables all people to be, as they should, discerning participants in the work of communication”. Thus, it cannot annul the role of the journalist who is in the “front lines” with dirty and worn-out shoes.

Maurizio Di Schino

Journalist for TV2000
and president of UCSI Lazio

ITALY

PRESENTATION OF THE BOOK: *A JOYFUL WITNESS OF THE GOSPEL*



The presentation of the book *Sr. Maria Rosa, FSP: A Joyful Witness of the Gospel*, followed by information concerning the Project: *The Bible for Zimbabwe*, took place in the parish hall of Grezzana (VR).

The event was hosted by His Excellency Giovanni Tonucci, Archbishop Emeritus of Verona, who had collaborated for years with Sr. Maria Rosa in holding Bible Days in Kenya when he was Apostolic Nuncio there. The message of Sr. Teresa Marcazzan (co-author with Fabiola Ballini of the newly-released book) was read aloud to the participants since Sr. Teresa was unable to attend the event.

Fabiola Ballini, the niece of Sr. Maria Rosa, introduced the text and explained the origins of Sr. Maria Rosa’s *Diary*, on which it is based. Her input was followed by a number of testimonies.

In his talk, Father Rinaldo Ronzani, a Comboni priest, emphasized the joy that had always characterized Sr. Maria Rosa. He then went on to speak about the importance of *the Bible for Zimbabwe initiative*, not only as a fruit of the overall FSP African Bible project, but also as an expression of the resolve of the FSPs to continue their mission of spreading the Word of God throughout the world.



KOREA

FSP–SSP MEETING IN SEOUL: THE JOY OF SHARING THE SAME “DREAMS”



Fr. Dominic Soliman (Superior General of the Society of St. Paul) and Sr. Anna Caiazza (Superior General of the Daughters of St. Paul) left together from Rome on 10 February 2024 for a fraternal visit to Korea. It was a very meaningful departure, reminiscent of the days when Fr. Alberione and Prima Maestra Thecla went on visits together.

The Fraternal Visit began with an animation meeting held on Ash Wednesday, in which the participants were urged to open their hearts to the providence of the Holy Spirit as a preparation for living like the Apostle Paul today.

In the morning, Fr. Dominic Soliman gave a talk on *The Joy of Sharing the Same Dreams*, in which he encouraged the assembly to return to the dreams and visions of Blessed James Alberione, emphasizing that members of all generations can dream together and cultivate an intimate relationship with the Lord (cf. Joel 3).

He also explained how the message of Pope Francis for the 58th World Day of Communications, entitled *Artificial Intelligence and Wisdom of the Heart: for a fully human communication*, allows us to reflect on the question raised by Blessed James Alberione: “Where is humanity going?” by applying it to the peoples and cultures of the digital age.

After the conference, the participants gathered in small groups to share their reflections and voice their dreams.

In the afternoon, Sr. Anna Caiazza spoke on the theme *Dialogue in the Holy Spirit*, inviting everyone to dialogue in the Spirit, who is the icon of communication. The Spirit enriches the Pauline Family with the flame of the passion of the Apostle Paul, helping the group to reflect on the spiritual and apostolic aspects of the life of Blessed James Alberione.

The day-long encounter, animated by two major superiors of the Pauline Family, was truly historic. It was evident that, through their words, the Lord was prompting everyone to keep the flame of the Holy Spirit alive in the hearts of all Paulines.

The Society of St. Paul and the Daughters of St. Paul, who were born together from a small seed, prayed together that, as apostles of the Word and of Communications, they would succeed in bringing the great gift of God to the people of today.

ITALY

TRAVELING EXHIBITION “TEACH US TO PRAY”



On 16 March, the traveling exhibition “Teach Us to Pray,” arrived at the Queen of Apostles Sanctuary in Rome. It is an engaging exploration of the *Lord’s Prayer* presented by the San Paolo Cultural Center to mark its 25th anniversary.

Featuring nine panels, a user-friendly web app, and the *Lord’s Prayer* at its core—the exhibition offers a rich tapestry of testimonies, meditations, and photographs suitable for both adults and children.

Through these elements, visitors are invited to delve into the origin of the prayer and its timeless significance.

Additionally, the exhibition shines a spotlight on inspiring stories of faith. Each panel is equipped with a QR code, granting access to further insights via a dedicated web app: a simple scan allows visitors to explore various phrases of the Lord’s Prayer.

Furthermore, the exhibition’s dedicated website, crafted by San Paolo Digital, is now online. Here, visitors can delve into the project’s background, featuring authors, texts, and many photo galleries:

<https://mostrapregare.sanpaolo.org/#progetto>.

The journey of the exhibition will continue, with opportunities for it to be showcased in cultural venues, schools, parishes, and youth centers upon request.

WINDOW ON THE CHURCH

**SOUL FESTIVAL:
CELEBRATING THE BEAUTY OF WONDER**



From 13-17 March, the first edition of *Soul: A Spirituality Festival* was held in Milan, with the participation of many of the best-known protagonists from every cultural sphere: writers, philosophers, theologians, scholars, etc. Organized by the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart and the Archdiocese of Milan under the patronage of the Municipality of Milan, the Festival sought to put people in everyday settings in contact with the contemplative dimension of life through a wide range of lectures, dialogues, shows, concerts, artistic performances, experiential workshops, meditative moments, music and activities for schools, developed around the theme *Wonder: the Source of Everything.*”

A special feature of the *Soul Festival* is its openness, not only the physical openness characterized by typical urban venues, but also the openness of dialogue extended to all religions and all cultural, and artistic expressions. The organizers of the event said they wanted to offer the general public the chance to interrupt their usual routines so as to explore various themes of spirituality because everyone needs a balance between the ideal and spiritual dimensions of life.

**THE SCHOOL OF SYNODALITY:
*THE MISSION OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH***



Through its World Women’s Observatory, the World Union of Catholic Women’s Organizations (UMOFC) launched a new

initiative on 27 February 2024. Known as *The School of Synodality: Women’s Mission in the Synodal Church*, the project began with a series of Webinars held from 27-29 February in Spanish, English and French, with the primary objective of analyzing the progress of the synodal process and the key contents of Chapter 9 of the Synthesis Report presented in the first phase of the Synodal Assembly.

Each Webinar was animated by two speakers: a member of the laity and a woman religious, both of whom had participated in the 16th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops in October 2023.

WINDOW ON THE WORLD

**INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY:
AN ECUMENICAL AND INTERRELIGIOUS ONLINE
GATHERING**



Entitled “Women Cultivating Peace and Nurturing,” this event, held on 5 March, was organized by the World Union of Catholic Women’s Organizations (WUCWO), in collaboration with the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development.

This virtual gathering served as a commemoration of International Women’s Day 2024, bringing together women of diverse faiths from across the globe. Its purpose was to reflect on the crucial role women of faith play in fostering a culture of peace and dialogue. Inspired by the message of Pope Francis on the 56th World Day of Peace, particularly the words “our greatest treasure, even in the midst of fragility, is the human fraternity grounded in our common divine parentage, and that no one can save themselves alone,” the event highlighted the interconnectedness of humanity and our collective responsibility to promote peace.

**GRANDPARENTS' PRAYER:
"DON'T ABANDON US TO LONELINESS"**



"Do not cast me off in my old age." This is the theme of the Fourth World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly. This year, the World Day falls on 28 July, the Sunday closest to 26 July, the day on which the Church celebrates the liturgical memorial of Saints Joachim and Anne, the grandparents of Jesus. A press release from the Dicastery for the Laity, the Family and Life says that the theme wants to emphasize how loneliness is unfortunately a bitter companion in the lives of many elderly people, who are often victims of today's "throwaway culture." So in this year of preparation for the Jubilee of 2025, which Pope Francis has chosen to dedicate to prayer, the theme of Grandparents' Day is drawn from Psalm 71—the invocation of an elderly person reflecting on his/her story of friendship with God.

**WINDOW ON COMMUNICATIONS
COMMUNICATION AND SYNODALITY:
LABORATORY FOR A NEW RELATIONSHIP**



On 7 March 2024, personalities from the Holy See, journalists, and professors in this particular sector debated during a Webinar/Lab organized by a network of communicators and media professionals to explore the topic in the wake of the Pope's magisterium.

The last Synod opened the doors of the Church to create and facilitate laboratories. After three years of preparation, the assembly at the Vatican last October gave form and content to the method of synodality, which the Pope had called for, asking that it become the

"face" and also the way of expressing ecclesial life at every level, in the sense of a communion that involves all the parishes of the Church from the biggest to the smallest, and, transversally, every cultural and geographical context in which the Gospel is lived. A laboratory which, in a certain sense would be universal, and from which the sphere of communication is no stranger.

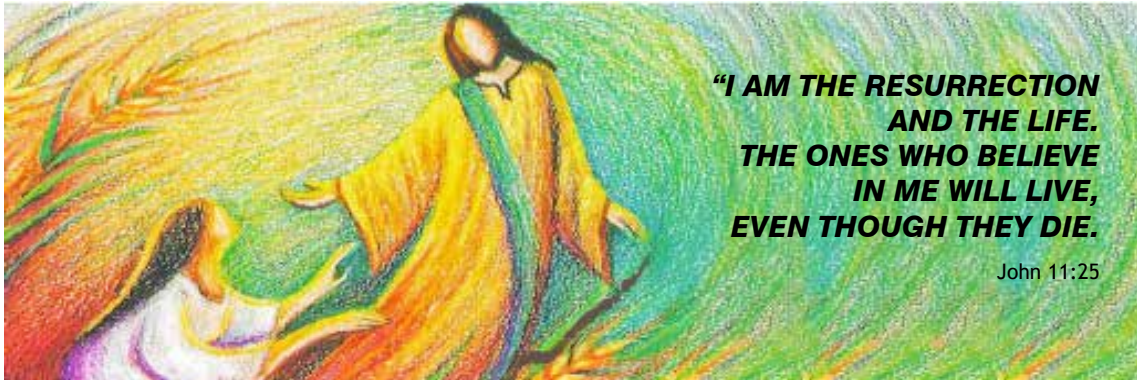
In 2023, a diverse group of journalists, communicators and professors launched a workshop in the school of synodality through monthly webinars and labs. "In these encounters," a note from the organizers explains, "the participants have sought to dialogue and promote in-depth studies and exchanges of experiences among professionals from different newspapers and nationalities, united by the desire to participate in a synodal journey. As Pope Francis said, this means 'welcoming one another in the awareness that we all have something to witness to and from which to learn.'"

**THE CINEMA AND AUDIOVISUAL
PUBLISHING IN ITALIAN UNIVERSITIES**



The Sistine Hall in the Vatican Apostolic Library recently hosted the semi-annual assembly of the University Cinema Council, which brings together university professors and researchers of cinema, television, photography and audiovisual media in order to promote, encourage and coordinate scientific and cultural initiatives aimed at expanding and strengthening the presence of disciplines relating to cinema and audiovisuals in Italian universities. Among the topics discussed were the relationship between academia and audiovisual publishing, artificial intelligence in the cinema, and the teaching of audiovisual languages in schools, along with mention of the opportunities and warnings concerning the use of artificial intelligence.

The event opened with an address by Monsignor Dario Edoardo Viganò, vice-chancellor of the Pontifical Academies of Sciences and Social Sciences and president of the Audiovisual Memories of Catholicism (MAC) Foundation. The gathering was held in synergy with the Foundation, created by papal decree in 2023, which involved the Vatican Library and Archives in the study and enhancement of the audiovisual heritage of Catholicism.



DAUGHTERS OF ST. PAUL

- Sr. M. Bernarda Carmela Maiorano, age 79 - 08.01.2024, Albano TM, Italy
- Sr. M. Filippina Rosa Gigliotti, age 99 - 10.01.2024, São Paulo CR, Brazil
- Sr. Assunta Menegat, age 97 - 20.01.2024, Curitiba, Brazil
- Sr. Marina Mary Vadakapuracal, age 79 - 01.02.2024, Mumbai, India
- Sr. Rosario Gutierrez Lobete, age 87 - 10.02.2024, Madrid, Spain
- Sr. M. Luisa Funiko Yamamoto, age 94 - 11.02.2024, Tokyo (Hospital), Japan
- Sr. Bruna Pezzato, age 84 - 12.02.2024, Alba, Italy
- Sr. Francesca Narcisa Mariano, age 86 - 15.02.2024, Pasay City CP, Philippines
- Sr. M. Augusta Luigina Baldini, age 98 - 20.02.2024, Albano TM, Italy
- Sr. Josefina Basurto Maciel, age 57 - 20.02.2024, Mexico City, Mexico
- Sr. M. Alberta Carmela Giuzio, age 82 - 04.03.2024, Messina, Italy
- Sr. Mary Giovanna Alie Marottikudi, age 83 - 06.03.2024, Mangalore, India
- Sr. Beatrice Emma Mossio, age 100 - 09.03.2024, Alba, Italy
- Sr. M. Giuditta Adele Tassinari, age 89 - 09.03.2024, Albano GA, Italy
- Sr. M. Teresa Nalesso, age 83 - 10.03.2024, Albano GA, Italy
- Sr. M. Celeste Akiko Nagahama, age 87 - 20.03.2024, Hiratsuka (Hospital), Japan
- Sr. Adelia Moreira Lopes, age 90 - 25.03.2024, Lisbon (Hospital), Portugal
- Sr. M. Mercedes Livia Mastrostefano, age 98 - 29.03.2024, Rome DP, Italy
- Sr. Idalina Margarida Gallinari, age 84 - 02.04.2024, São Paulo (Hospital), Brazil

PARENTS OF OUR SISTERS

- Sr. Birkumari Dung Dung (Father, Elias), of the Mumbai, India community
- Sr. Bernadette Nakagawa Lutaaya (Mother, Alexandra), of the Kampala, Uganda community
- Sr. Luisa Damonte (Father, Antonio), of the Novara, Italy community,
- Sr. Clara Gab Ji Seo (Mother, Sun Ki Francesca), of the Seoul-Miari community, Korea
- Sr. Agnes Wha Yong Cheon (Mother, Chung I Maria), of the Busan community, Korea
- Sr. Marie Madeleine Mag-Dal Kim (Mother, Jeong Soon Adela), of the Seoul-Miari community, Korea
- Sr. Evangelina Gye Shun Kim (Father, Sun Tae Bonaventura), of the Seoul-Daehakro community, Korea
- Sr. Anne Masafu (Mother, Genevieve) of the Abiddjan, Ivory Coast community
- Sr. Anna Maria Moretto (Mother, Maria), of the Brescia, Italy community

THE PAULINE FAMILY

- Fr. Luigi (Gino) Valtorta, ssp, age 79 - 06.01.2024, Verduno CN (Hospital), Italy
- Sr. M. Ildegarda Angela Maria Camedda, pddm, di anni 93 - 08.01.2024 Verduno CN (Hospital), Italy
- Sr. M. Lucis Nobu Domenica Fujiwara pddm, age 89 - 13.01.2024, Hachioji (Tokyo), Japan
- Fr. Efrem Siro Marziano Gamba, ssp, age 86 - 15.01.2024, Milan (Hospital), Italy
- Sr. Grazia Maria Pappalardo, pddm, age 49 - 30.01.2024, Rome, Italy
- Sr. M. Nirmala Teresa Chowattukunnel, pddm, age 75 - 05.02.2024, Bangalore, India
- Sr. M. Salette Gertrudes Duz, sjbp, age 80 - 06.02.2024, São Paulo, Brazil
- Sr. M. Epifania Maria Brignone, pddm, age 91 - 10.02.2024, Sanfrè, Italy
- Sr. M. Fidelis Tomoko Cecilia Asano, pddm, age 94 - 11.02.2024, Hachioji (Hospital), Japan
- Sr. M. Lilian Teresinha Dal Santo, sjbp, age 82 - 20.02.2024, Caxias do Sul (Hospital), Brazil
- Br. Valentino Vaglietti, ssp, age 73 - 20.02.2024, Rome, Italy
- Sr. M. Grazia Gesuina Santus, pddm, age 89 - 24.02.2024, Rome (Hospital), Italy
- Br. Rodolfo Dominic Egida, ssp, age 87 - 25.02.2024, Makati, Philippines
- Sr. M. Aurea Maria Eugenia Pedrosa, sjbp, age 88 - 28.02.2024, São Paulo (Hospital), Brazil
- Sr. M. Serafina Antonietta Santus, sjbp, age 95 - 03.03.2024, Albano Laziale, Italy
- Sr. M. Speranza Giulietta Ciacchini, sjbp, age 78 - 11.03.2024, Rome CG, Italy
- Sr. M. Ulderica Annita Ciccomartino, sjbp, age 91 - 25.03.2024, Albano Laziale, Italy
- Sr. M. Rosaria Uliana Di Virgilio, sjbp, age 84 - 26.03.2024, Albano Laziale, Italy