

CONCLUSION OF THE 10TH GENERAL CHAPTER

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Superior General*

With the grace of God and the collaboration of everyone, we have come to the end of our Chapter experience—an intense period of sharing, celebrating and deepening the wealth of the charism bestowed on us by the Lord.

We began our journey at a well, evoking images of the Gospel episode in which the Samaritan woman met Jesus, Living Water, at the well of Sychar. We found the Master waiting for us at the well of our poverty, where he revealed to us our thirst for him: a thirst for authenticity, communion and a return to the essentials; a thirst to transform our deserts into a garden and our aridity into more profound love. He also enabled us to be more sensitive to his thirst for us—his yearning to send us back to the immense field of our mission, poor in our own resources but rich in him.

From the very beginning, we were reminded that a Chapter is an *epiclesis*: a continual invocation of the Spirit. And we truly felt that everything moved ahead thanks to his presence among us. We felt the “breeze” of his passage during the most significant moments of the Chapter, when his grace diffused peace, joy, hope and communion among us; when he aroused in us a feeling of responsibility for the good of this big family, our Congregation; when he threw wide the doors of our hearts to welcome his fresh air and new light.

We rejoiced at the Congregation’s international “face”: its diversity of languages, cultures and backgrounds. *Together*, we examined the Institute’s situation, rejoicing in its beautiful aspects and suffering because of its fragile ones. *Together* we experienced the profundity of our vocation. Now we can repeat with greater awareness the Founder’s deeply moving words: “The Congregation is in your hands, which are good hands....”

For every gift we received in these days, we want to say *thank you* to the Lord.

I also want to take this opportunity to say thank you to Sr. M. Antonieta Bruscato for the twelve years in which she guided the Congregation with great wisdom, for her love for each sister and for her tireless efforts to reach every community so as to make herself, like Paul, “all to all.”

My thanks to Sr. Francisca, Sr. Luz Helena and Sr. Inocencia for the service they have now concluded.

My thanks to the Pre-Chapter Commission, in particular Sr. Solange, Sr. Letizia and Sr. Sandra, who are not here among us.

My thanks to our facilitator, Fr. José M. Arnaiz, who accompanied us with wisdom and benevolence.

My thanks to the members of the Central Commission and the editorial, communication, liturgical and recreational teams, as well as the team that read the minutes.

My thanks to our translators for making difficult things easier to understand, thus facilitating communication among us.

My thanks to our group moderators and secretaries.

My thanks to the sisters who quietly carried out many services to facilitate our life and activities.

My thanks to the sisters in charge of our Internet website, who brought our faces and voices to every corner of the world. My thanks to Sr. Samuela Lee for her quiet and rapid work.

My thanks to our infirmarian, for her solicitous attention to our health.

My thanks to our Pauline brothers and their collaborators, who welcomed us to this House of Prayer, which is permeated with a true family spirit.

My thanks to all our communities, to the Pauline Family and to the many cloistered sisters whose prayers obtained great light for us.

My thanks to our sick and elderly sisters, who offered their prayers and sufferings for us.

My thanks to all the members of this Chapter, for your hard work, commitment and sense of co-responsibility, all of which characterized this congregational event from beginning to end.

And finally, my thanks to the sisters who accepted the invitation to share with me the privilege of serving the Congregation as members of its new governing team.

Numerous cameras, computers and iPads have immortalized scenes of this event for posterity: times of prayer, which were always well-prepared and guided; joyous moments of celebration; intense times of study and reflection; lively assemblies in which everyone participated wholeheartedly, and lovely sunsets that prompted us to praise God for the beauty of nature in this particular corner of the world.

We will never forget the faces of the sisters whose presentations enabled us to glimpse the variegated aspects of their circumscriptions, the smiles of their young sisters and the serenity of the elderly ones. We will long remember the impassioned words of our guest speakers on the Chapter's theme, which has now become our objective for the next 6-year period.

Above all, we will continue to hear the plea to *revitalize our life of faith* so as to be genuine apostles and credible witnesses in the contemporary Church and world.

Several Emerging Lines of Action

The content of the Chapter Document and the various motions and proposals that were drawn up in these days can help us become a transparent "proclamation" of the Lord in the world of communications.

A crosswise and sapiential reading of the document offers us a glimpse of several emerging lines of action that will give direction to our journey in the coming six-year period:

- *to grow in faith* as an authentic experience of meeting Christ and interacting with him, seeking to penetrate more profoundly the biblical, theological and spiritual wealth of Baptism;
- *to allow the Word to dwell in us* so that its transforming energy can "explode" in our lives, leading us to proclaim it passionately and creatively;

- *to rediscover the mystical dimension of the apostolate*, as lived by Paul and interpreted by our Founder and Maestra Thecla, the unifying power of our spirituality and the prophetic dimension of our mission;
- *to renew our style of life* in harmony with the “four wheels,” animated by communion in diversity;
- *to revive the teaching nature of our Institute*, a characteristic element of the Pauline identity, by steadfastly pursuing our commitment to study/studiosità, the rediscovery of the importance of the creative/writing stage of the apostolate, and the pastoral solicitude that impels us to relaunch our book centers as “places of preaching and centers of light” and to seek new ways and means of reaching those on the fringes of the Church and society;
- *to intensify our efforts to “inhabit the Internet”* in response to the needs of the new evangelization and in fidelity to our teaching ministry.

“Women on the Move”

Women on the move toward a new humanity.... The theme song that marked our beautiful evening dedicated to music could be the motto, the “key word,” for this particular stage of the Congregation’s journey as we prepare to transmit the Chapter to our communities and circumscriptions in such a way as to revitalize them.

Women on the move—this is how Primo Maestro prophetically defined us more than fifty years ago:

Onward! in keeping with the motto of our Father St. Paul:
 “I strain forward.”
 Ever onward! You have reached all the continents:
 as you go from one nation to another,
 or fly over mountains in a plane, or cross oceans,
 do not speak about what has already been done.
 Move toward eternity.
 Ever onward, Daughters of St. Paul!
 Bring the truth in charity.
 I think of you as being hundreds of thousands strong....
 Move toward holiness.
 You live in the world but you are not of the world.
 You work in the world, but you wait until heaven for your reward.
 Bearers of Christ...
 living and active members of the Church....
 Onward! Bring the truth in charity!

Let us move forward all together, guided, supported and accompanied by our Mother, Maestra Thecla. Let us feel her very close to us, in our midst, urging us to “hold fast to the Lord,” to “lose ourselves in him,” to “focus on essentials,” to take “the warmth of the Gospel” to the countless people thirsty for the truth, to nourish “the firm resolve to become saints,” to be *women of faith....* Maestra Thecla is our true Superior General, tracing out for us “a broad, spacious, luminous path that leads to the heights of holiness....”

So let us set out to take the Gospel to everyone! Let us set out, remembering above all the desires, hopes and thirst for authenticity of our younger sisters. Let us set out to transmit almost by contagion our revitalizing experience.

And since this Assembly, through the qualified majority of votes required by the Constitutions, has requested that this congregational event be concluded, I have the joy of declaring **the official closure of our 10th General Chapter**, which was celebrated according to the norms established by our Constitutions and Directory (articles 165-175).

The Chapter has now finished the services proper to it and the new General Government will begin its service to implement the Chapter directives.

We leave this Cenacle in faith and love to communicate to our sisters the fruits of our work.

Like the Samaritan woman, enlightened by Christ and eager to be on her way, we have allowed ourselves to be conquered by the penetrating gaze of the same Jesus she met. We have discarded our “jugs,” riddled with the cracks and chips of our certitudes, so as to go forth and proclaim a living Person; so as to reach out to the women and men of today, healing divisions and walking alongside everyone in order to touch them and allows ourselves to be touched by them in a profound spirit of mutual exchange.

We believe and so we speak. We believe and so we are able to joyfully proclaim the good news of salvation to everyone.