

*June 18, 2015*



**LETTER** - 15 June 1915-2015: “This is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad!” It is a day of gratitude and praise for the salvation story the Lord has shaped with us. And it is also a day for asking his forgiveness: “the story of divine mercy” interwove with our story—“a humiliating story of lack of correspondence to the superabundance of divine love” (AD 1). This story, which we contemplate with renewed awe, enables us to perceive the Lord’s powerful and benevolent hand, which has always rested upon us.

On our Congregation’s 50th anniversary of foundation, Fr. Alberione wrote:

*To present the story of the 50 years of the Daughters of St. Paul means to recount a magnificent work of God.... At this point, you have reached all the continents.... Your words resound everywhere. Continue to raise your voices always more. Teach!*

We look back on the past to contemplate with gratitude the salvation we received. We look to the future to renew our covenant and welcome afresh the pedagogy of the Father—a pedagogy that races ahead along the secure tracks of humility and faith traveled by Maestra Thecla and our first sisters.

The pages of our history exude the fragrance and flavor of real life experiences lived in simplicity and joy to the point of heroism. How true it is that the Lord chooses the small and the poor to be his instruments of salvation. What was realized then and what will be realized in the future is the fruit of God’s mercy. Our very lives are the fruit of that mercy.

One of our sisters of the “first hour,” Sr. Giovannina Boffa, who wrote her memoirs (as-yet unpublished) of the diffusion apostolate, concludes her narrative with these words:

*In the twists and turns of our story—a story that was not lacking in defects, shortcomings and errors, but that was nonetheless admirable—we saw the hand of divine Providence at work. We experienced God’s love, fidelity and the splendor of his mercy. And we came to see that his preferential choice is for those who are small, poor and filled with limitations, but who despite this have complete trust in his power and generosity.... The trust of the Daughters of St. Paul of all times is founded on this certainty.*

### **“His mercy endures forever”**

“His mercy endures forever,” says Pope Francis in his Bull of Indiction of the Jubilee of Mercy, another great gift that we will be living during this Centenary Year. “Mercy renders God’s history with Israel a history of salvation” (Bull, 7) and it does the same for the history of our Congregation.

The river of divine mercy restores us to health and renews us: it restores and renews our faith, which is still flawed and superficial; it restores and renews our communities, which are often tired and overworked; it restores and renews our mission, through which we are called today to ardently and enthusiastically proclaim “a year of the Lord’s mercy” and “liberty to those bound by new forms of slavery in modern society” (Bull, 16). The question raised by our Founder is still very pertinent:

*How often have you asked yourselves the great question: Where, how and toward what goal is humanity moving, this humanity that is continually renewing itself on the face of the earth? Humanity is like a mighty river flowing into eternity. Will it be saved? [...] What a great responsibility we have if we do not use these instruments to make people children of God! (FSP-SdC 261).*

We are sent to this humanity no matter what our personal situation: whether we are healthy or sick, young or old, full of vitality or drained of energy. Our vocation calls us to go forth, to be apostles of the Word, echoes of the Gospel, by means of a life transformed into communication, love and mercy toward everyone.

A mercy that is translated above all into offering everyone the charity of the truth so as to reawaken dormant consciences and dispel the ignorance in which millions of people live; so as to witness to the beauty and fascination of being a Christian; so as to recount the joy of a meeting that transformed our existence. In keeping with the invitation of Pope Francis, we should speak “words that set hearts on fire” (EG 142) so as to “light a fire in the heart of the world” (EG 271).

### ***Paulines...who belong to Paul!***

Our physiognomy in the Church is encapsulated in the insistent invitation of Blessed James Alberione: “*Be Daughters of St. Paul! Be worthy Daughters of St. Paul!*” (cf. FSP34, p. 87) Let us be Daughters of St. Paul: that is, let us anchor ourselves always more profoundly in the Pauline identity. Let us “*impaolarci*”—a term coined by our Founder, by which he meant “to take on the soul, heart and mind of the Apostle” to the point of identifying with him completely. Like him, let us have one sole treasure—Christ—and bring him to everyone!

During the month of June, dedicated to St. Paul, let us reflect on all the details of our personal vocation story: how the Lord prepared us for his call, the difficulties we might have had to overcome, all the graces we received.... This will help us appreciate and relish the infinite goodness of God and realize that our life has been filled to overflowing with graces. Like the Apostle Paul, we can say with complete truth that we were “seized” and “conquered” by Love. We have been “sealed, even branded, by this mission of bringing light, blessing, enlivening, raising up, healing and freeing” (EG 273).

Let us allow the Spirit to act in us so that we can begin a new season of faith and carry out the work of evangelization with joy, generosity, courage, boundless love and attraction (cf. EG 261). We entrust to the protection of the Apostle Paul the 29 Juniors who are making their perpetual professions in Alba, Korea and other circumscriptions, together with the sisters who are offering themselves to the Lord for the first time.

May their journey in the consecrated life overflow with light, grace and a profound experience of God’s mercy.

My warmest greetings to everyone. With deep affection,

Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan, Superior General, fsp

**[“Our Story: A Magnificent Work of God!”, Letter of Anna Maria Parenzan, Superior General fsp](#)**

“Live, Paul! And multiply the apostles who do good by making Jesus known through word and pen.

May all peoples praise and honor Jesus as Way, Truth and Life.”

(Blessed James Alberione, 1934)