

Final Message **From the International Seminar of the SJBP**

*“Our inspiration for this mission
comes from the apostles Peter and Paul:
from the shepherd of the universal Church
we learn to serve God’s flock...
From the apostle of the Gentiles
the courage that is needed to seek out
evermore suitable forms of pastoral ministry.”*
RoL 9

Dearest Sisters,

At the end of the International Seminar on “Pastoral Care” we desire to reach out to you to express our gratitude to the Lord for this event of grace that was given us. We experienced the nearness of each of you in the communion of prayer and in the messages received.

Through the experience of fraternity and sharing we were able to ascertain and taste the freshness of our Congregation here represented by the 47 sisters coming from the five continents. New faces, known faces, who, around the tables of sharing, overcoming the difficulty of the language, have experienced the gift of communion and co-responsibility.

Sr. Marta Finotelli, superior general, in her introductory speech at the Seminar, reminded the motivations and the finality of this event, for which we were convoked “We are summoned today, “not in the quality as studios and experts, but as consecrated persons to God and His Gospel in the search of His will in accord to the pastoral ministry which the Church acknowledged and entrusted to our Congregation.” Its preparation and organization responds, in fact, to a 7CG mandate that had manifested the exigency of understanding again and to re-express our pastoral ministry in the logic of the “care of souls.”

At the end of the talk, we were given a question to treasure in the heart each day: *What have you wanted to tell me, Lord, through all that I have heard?*

Fr. Giancarlo Rocca, pauline priest who has shared with us the preparation and celebration of the Seminar, presided at the opening Eucharistic Celebration using an image that describes the sense of our being here, “as coming home, where we find beautiful things and things to rearranged”.

Our hearts burned as we perceive in the Word of God, in the teaching of the Fathers and in the experience of the Church that God is a Father who takes care of his people and continues to do it through the pastoral action of the Church, where we are also called to express our particular mission today.

After having welcomed the great wealth at the biblical, theological, anthropological, ecclesial, pastoral and charismatic levels offered by the speakers, the understanding of the Pastoral Plans and experiences and testimonies of the Pastorelle who operate in the different nations, we set ourselves in listening to the Spirit in a climate of prayer and discernment.

So as to arrive at a sapiential re-elaboration of the contents and in designing new pastoral perspective, we allowed ourselves to be guided by the teaching of the Founder, asking ourselves the question: *What does the Lord want to tell us for the future, in view of the mission?*

Fr. Germano Marani sj, who is accompanying us in the journey toward our 8GC, facilitated the discernment to single out some priorities emerged from the personal and group work.

Through dialogue and communal discernment it was agreed to highlight some indispensable aspects for our mission:

- conversion to Christ Shepherd in communion
- creative pastoral conversion in the mission
- a journey of holiness and compassion

We desire to underline that one cannot verify a true renewal in expressing the ministry of pastoral care if not in a change of mentality that brings us to root our life in Christ Shepherd.

It will be our commitment to transmit the wealth of this event with the celebration of the Seminars in each Circumscription, through the modalities that will be indicated.

To Mary, Mother of the Good Shepherd and to the Apostles Peter and Paul we ask the grace to be able to testify “gratuitously and joyfully, in the fidelity to Christ and His Church”, the ministry of pastoral care that has been entrusted to us by the Good Shepherd.

A fraternal greeting to all of you.

The participants

Rome, 20 June 2010
12th Sunday in Ordinary Time