

**Conclusive speech of the Superior general
International Seminar
10-20 June 2010**

*“Bless the Lord, everything that is in us, bless his Name!
we do not forget all the gifts received these days.”*

(cf Psalm 103)

Yes, dearest sisters, we have put afire again these days the vital strength of the Pastoral Charism through the passion for the Lord and humanity and the effort of discernment, striving to leave behind our schemes to enter into the project of love of God, that gift of the Spirit which Blessed James Alberione has entrusted to our Congregation with great trust.

With joy we have listened at the words of the Founder, resounded these days, the beauty of our Pastoral Charism which is the very same vocation of Jesus Good Shepherd, His same mission: to bring people to salvation, to lead them to the Father as mothers in the Spirit who take care and make grow the life in Christ. That same Life which asks us for a continuous, daily conversion of the heart, indispensable foundation of every pastoral conversion. It is this art of living under the guidance of the Spirit that makes our life deeply mystical and prophetic.

Therefore we thank above all the Lord who has expressed to us, once more, his loving and patient care through the serene and cordial fraternity lived among us these days. We can actualize what He has aroused in us if we will be humble and open, if we will continue trusting the Spirit and remain rooted in Christ Shepherd. And so we will develop the capacity to continue seeing new horizons and will help each other to remain in them in a creative manner.

We have come at the end of our Seminar of study, but we are only at the beginning of our reflection which we will continue in the Circumscriptions through personal and community commitment, in view of the 8th General Chapter which we will celebrate next year.

Returning home, the sisters will ask us what we have done in this seminar; they will perhaps expect for refined theological reflections on the theme. Let us not be in a hurry to answer, but we invite them to see our life now and we ask them to see it again after some time: if something has changed and has improved in us, then they will have the answer of what happened here!

The many provocations received have touched us deeply and gave us the opportunity to share the beauty of our vocation and the life that springs from it, together with the joy of fraternity in the search and exchange of what is dear in the heart in regards the pastoral mission. I am certain that the experience these days will remain like living water that gushes in us; as flame which transmits the light received and cannot contain it for itself. A light that will enlighten our entire successive journey in whatever situation we will be called to operate.

From the experience lived these days of grace I would like to underline what seems we cannot lose: to be personally and as Congregation a *vessel* always more welcoming of the Life that springs from the Trinitarian Spring so as to pour it on others: community, God's people, humanity, those who are entrusted in our ministry of care, the whole creation.

In love of the Lord, in an impassioned search of truth and transparency, let us help each other to become as Congregation a warm and rich embrace of sympathy, a presence full of God's tenderness for our contemporaries, in communion and holiness of life.

For this it seems possible to re-express our pastoral ministry as *care of the life in Christ*, ours and that of the others, in every moment and every situation, in every relationship and in every form of service which we are called to accomplish. To have care of the life in Christ as constant attention and as basic orientation of our being and doing in situation.

We accompany persons in the encounter with Him, the Living one, so that they become more and more his disciples in ecclesial communion and his missionaries in their environments of life. As a consequence, we ourselves and those we accompany can reach the distant ones, the astray and give evangelical witnessing in the service to the most poor.

From here the necessity of a continuous personal and pastoral conversion through spiritual discernment as style of life and mission. To dedicate ourselves to the care of faith and Christian identity in dialogue with cultures and other faiths, with initiatives of *instruction*, to treasure the life in Christ in the baptized through a solid *formation* that makes them responsible and participants in the building up of the Christian community and at the service of charity. To lead persons in the celebration of the mystery which they live in personal and liturgical prayer, as journey of *sanctification*, so as to grow each day toward Christ, until his full stature.

A care that reaches the healing of the heart which makes one feel the comforting closeness of God through our being companions of the journey who know how to make visible “how to live as redeemed persons” because the redeemed person is more beautiful than the created person since he is generated by the Passover of Christ.

If our Charism is participation in the same vocation of Jesus Good Shepherd, then Charism and Cross are companions since there is always a death to live so as to give life; there is a weakness to welcome so that the care of the Father shines toward all.

We live this pastoral care in the heart of the Church while we taste the fecundity of being the Body of Christ in collaboration with the pastors and laity, spiritual building of living stones destined to welcome all the dispersed children of God.

With Mary, Mother of the Good Shepherd, we leave space to the exultation of the Spirit who places wings to our taking care and like Peter and Paul make ourselves humble collaborators of the joy of others.

I also thank each of you for the contribution offered and for the responsibility with which each of you participated in the proposed itinerary. A special thanks to the sisters who accompanied us with prayer, to the sisters of the General government and the Preparatory Commission, to the speakers and the coordinators Fr. Giancarlo Rocca and Fr. Germano Marani.

We wish that the name with which we are affectionately called by the people: “Pastorelle”, a small, discreet and humble name, may become a style of ecclesial life which we can witness in the Pauline Family and in the company of men and women as prophetic way to live the pastoral mission.

Sr Marta Finotelli

Rome, 20 June 2010
12th Sunday in Ordinary Time