

*Information n. 3*

Dearest Sisters,

Today is the last day of our enlarged council meeting. We already have in our hands a copy of the Project we drew up for redesigning our presences and we are satisfied with the finished product. The past days were marked by intensive work and discernment as we all made the effort to move in the same direction, striving to seek in faith and understand in truth where the Lord is leading us. In communion with one another, we shared our hope and yearning that our Congregation will correspond more and more to God's "dream" for it, namely, that we might be an always more meaningful presence in the Church and a sign of the Gospel in today's world.

Our Project was illuminated from start to finish by the presence of St. Paul and the mystery of grace and love that permeated his life from the moment of his conversion up until his martyrdom. Now it is up to us to organize ourselves well so as to continue to proclaim Christ with the same passion as our Father to all the nations, today and tomorrow.

The words of Jesus to Paul: "Get up and stand on your feet!" (Acts 26:16), are the key to reading our Project. They are also an invitation to us to undergo a conversion similar to his so as to continue to expand our hearts to meet the needs of humanity, without being conditioned by the past, by outdated ways of thinking and by activities that are already consolidated. We came to a common vision and resolve concerning the journey we want to make together. Our itinerary will require hard work and fatigue, but we will nevertheless pursue it because it is the path the Lord has pointed out to us and we all want our Pauline "cart" to move in the same direction. The "supporting columns" of this journey of redesigning our presences are holiness of life, a style of living and working based on communion, and a mission shared among ourselves and with the laity in the Church.

In her inspiring closing speech, the Superior General invited us to enter into the redesigning process with the same sentiments as Christ, that is, a spirit of love. In extolling this virtue, Paul urges us to live in mutual charity and to abolish every sin against it in mind, heart and actions. Everything opposed to charity harms the Body of Christ and its unity. If we truly love one another, then our Congregation will be "reborn," because the Lord will be in our midst. So let us strain ahead, bound by no debt other than that of love, rejecting from this day forward every sin against charity!

Sr. Antonietta then went on to say that perhaps when the Final Document of our 9<sup>th</sup> General Chapter proposed the redesigning of our presences, we had no idea how much work this would involve.... But now we are beginning to see the marvelous fruits that are emerging. And the first of these is the fact that this very meeting has been an extremely formative experience for all those participating in it.

In conclusion, Sr. M. Antonietta once again proposed that we "take a minimum of luggage on our journey and walk with a light step, looking into the distance." She recommended that we carry with us the Word of God, which offers us "light and strength for discernment, as well as inspiration and wisdom.... It inspires us to speak

words that are true, edifying and a ‘blessing’ to others.” She counseled us to listen to the voice of the Spirit in a spirit of complete availability to him, and to also listen to the cry of humanity, wounded by so many sufferings.

Her last appeal: None of us should think about defending “our own” territory. Instead, we should all concentrate on preserving our unique heritage, namely: our charism, the Congregation, and the ‘abundant riches’ of the Pauline vocation and mission. Let us set out on our journey “disarmed,” with free hearts, allowing ourselves to be led by the Lord as he wills.

This evening, together with the Holy Father and a very fervent crowd of worshipers, we celebrated Evening Prayer II for the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul in the splendid Basilica dedicated to the Apostle here in Rome. Afterward, we stopped at the Queen of Apostles Sanctuary to pay our respects to our beloved Founders.

All of you, dear sisters, were with us in our thoughts and prayers.

Affectionately,

Sr. Iris Pontin and Sr. M. Letizia Panzetti