

up their family and always continue to worry about it humanly; those who live in narrow selfishness of caring for their bodies and their possessions and their games and their books and have in everything to save their self-respect and their comfort, etc.; they cannot look after the interests of God, nor souls: *Christus non sibi placuit* (For Christ did not please himself) (Rom. XV, 3).

Everyone must bear fruit, not eat fruit; everyone must shepherd, give...

It is not enough to live on the tree, it is necessary to be the tree; it is not enough to live in the Congregation, it is required to be the Congregation, that is, its rule, its spirit, its activity, its reward» (*Bollettino S. Paolo, Alba, 15 febbraio 1936*).

5. From the Word to Life

'I am a mission,' goes a slogan. Each one of us has a mission. This consciousness has led many saints to mark epochal passages of humanity with their lives and works. Each of us is called to be a craftsman, not a spectator of history, an actor in history, in humanity, with the Church, in the Congregation. This way of standing with one's existence in history traces our models of reference: St Paul and Blessed James Alberione. But the root of all this we find in our choice of life as persons consecrated for a mission, who place themselves in the following of Jesus Master the Way, the Truth and the Life.

- What do I seek? What lives in me? What is your strongest desire? What do you desire most from life?
- What do I need? What do I lack?
- Are you following the best path the Lord has designed for you?

6. Prayer: From Psalm 27

One thing I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after:

to live in the house of the LORD all the days of my life,

to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple.

"Come," my heart says, "seek his face!"

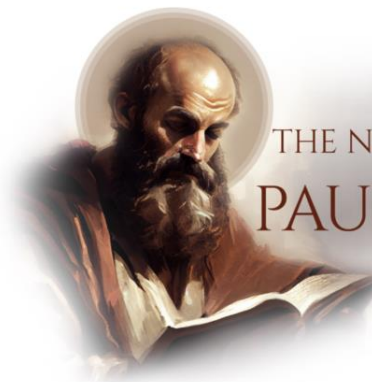
Your face, LORD, do I seek. Do not hide your face from me.

Do not turn your servant away in anger, you who have been my help.

Do not cast me off, do not forsake me, o God of my salvation!

Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage;

wait for the LORD!



THE NECESSARY METAMORPHOSIS TO LIVE AS PAULINE "EDITORS"

August 2024

BLESSED ALBERIONE, WITNESS OF EPOCHAL TRANSITIONS

Many illustrious names are known of early 20th-century personalities who contributed to the development of humanity in various fields. The particularity of Alberione's action, in this epochal passage, was that he knew how to go to the heart of the problems present at a social and ecclesial level, to have been able to interpret them and to have implemented and realised the Pauline Family to give a new voice to the Church and to meet the needs of the people of our time.

1. From the Superior General's Letter

«...This famous turn of the century is anticipated by the Encyclical of Leo XIII *Tametsi futura* (1 November 1900) as testimony to what the Pope carried in his heart: "The outlook on the future is by no means free from anxiety; on the contrary, there are many serious reasons for alarm, on account of numerous and long-standing causes of evil, of both a public and a private nature." Leo XIII's proposal translates into three "necessary conditions" for a new and renewed century: the centrality of Jesus, Way, Truth and Life. These pages stirred the heart of the young Alberione and the answer to this change of epoch was precisely the Pauline Family and the charismatic gift that still fills our hearts with passion today. All this is documented by Primo Maestro in *Abundantes divitiae* and it is precisely in this autobiography of his that we find how the Spirit led Fr Alberione to experience new social and ecclesial challenges according to the heart of the Apostle Paul...

A second key passage in the life of Blessed Alberione which makes him witness to an epochal change is the advent and his participation in the Second Vatican Council. ... Fr Alberione was present at the Council as Founder and Superior General, he was active even if he never spoke. ... Primo Maestro presents twenty-four proposals to the pre-conciliar Commission. Among these

we highlight some: the universal mediation of Mary, the catechism, the Bible with the catechetical notes, the apostolate of the laity, the secular institutes, the televised Mass, the Mass of the Divine Master and in particular the need for a new Dicastery that deals with social communication. To these proposals must be added five personal interventions or observations made in writing during the Council» (Annual Letter 2023-2024, 3.3 *Blessed Alberione, witness of epochal Transitions*).

2. The encounter with the Word of God

Paul's insistent invitation to Timothy is the same anxiety that guided Alberione in his work and mission. The compassion that Jesus had for the scattered and shepherdless crowds was also the drive that consumed the life and the existence of our Founder.

«In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you: proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favorable or unfavorable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching. For the time is coming when people will not put up with sound doctrine, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander away to myths. As for you, always be sober, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully.

As for me, I am already being poured out as a libation, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing» (2 Tim 4:1-8).

3. The Magisterium of the Church

It is not important what we say about Jesus, but how Jesus is witnessed in our lives. Today especially, there is the risk of drowning in so many words with no flavour of lived life.

«Prior to this question, Jesus asked the disciples another one: “Who do people say that I am?” (Gv 16:13). It was a survey to find out opinions about him and the fame he enjoyed, but notoriety does not interest Jesus; it was not that kind of survey. So, why did he ask the question? To underline a difference,

which is the fundamental difference of Christian life. There are those who stop at the first question, opinions, and talk about Jesus; and there are those who, instead, talk to Jesus, bringing their life to Him, entering into a relationship with him, making the decisive step. This is what interests the Lord: to be at the centre of our thoughts, to become the reference point of our affections; to be, in short, the love of our lives. Not the opinions we have of him; they do not interest him. He is interested in our love, whether he is in our heart.

The Saints we celebrate today took that step and became witnesses. The step from opinion to having Jesus in their heart: witnesses. They were not admirers, but imitators of Jesus. They were not spectators, but rather protagonists of the Gospel. They believed not in words, but in deeds. Peter did not speak about mission, he lived the mission, he was a fisher of men; Paul did not write learned books, but letters of what he lived as he travelled and bore witness. Both spent their lives for the Lord and for their brothers and sisters. And they provoke us, because we run the risk of stalling at the first question: of giving views and opinions, of having grand ideas and saying beautiful words, but never putting ourselves on the line. And Jesus wants us to put ourselves on the line. How often, for example, we say that we would like a Church that is more faithful to the Gospel, closer to the people, more prophetic and missionary, but then, in practice, we do nothing! It is sad to see that many speak, comment and debate, but few bear witness. Witnesses do not lose themselves in words, but rather they bear fruit. Witnesses do not complain about others and the world, but they start with themselves. They remind us that God is not to be demonstrated, but shown, by one's own witness; not announced with proclamations but witnessed by example. This is called “putting your life on the line”» (Pope Francis, Angelus of 29 June 2021).

4. Thought of the Founder

Fr Alberione wanted Paulines who, like Paul, would commit all their energies, their whole person, and put to good use the talents the Lord has given for the propagation of the Kingdom of God. Not to be self-centred, but to look at the needs of humanity.

«The Congregation must be a gathering of active people, of initiatives and, in their activity, practically conclusive. One cannot aim at it as a place to live peacefully but as a place to serve the Lord, the Church, and souls.

This service must show itself in the fighting spirit: those who do not work to win, have no fighting spirit of self-sacrifice; those who do not dare to give