

Sisters of Jesus Good Shepherd - Pastorelle



RE-CONQUERED
BY CHRIST SHEPHERD
WE NARRATE
HIS SALVIFIC LOVE

*"Tell me, you whom my heart loves,
where you pasture your flock"*
(Songs 1,7a)

ACTS 6th INTERCHAPTER
1st Pamphlet

S. Miguel — Buenos Aires 15-28 June 2009

The cover: Jesus Good Shepherd, Stained glass of Cornelia Rota

Presentation

We present to you with joy the Acts of the 6th Interchapter, event of grace that we have celebrated in S. Miguel, in Argentina, last June 15-28, 2009.

With heart full of gratitude to the Lord and to each sister who accompanied us with prayer and offering of some sacrifices, we narrate what the Spirit has done for us along the days of the Interchapter.

The working calendar that you already know, allows us to order the material produced according to the method *Truth, Way and Life* which we have also expressed in the modality *To Know - To Discern - To Live*.

The Eucharistic Celebration and the Introduction of the Superior general solemnly opened our 6th Interchapter, to which followed the day of spirituality animated by Sr. Julieta Stoffel (FSP) with the theme: *“The conformation to Christ”* followed by the sharing of the experience on the evangelical service of the authority.

The phase **to know** was started with the Report of the Superior general and her Council on the State of the Congregation from the 7th General Chapter until the intercapitular event and was continued with the Report of the Superiors of Circumscriptions who described the local reality.

The phase **to discern** has been enlightened by two speakers: the first one presented by Fr. Valdir De Castro, Superior provincial of the SSP in Argentina, on the theme: *“Communication in the pastoral care in the light of the Apostle Paul”*; the second by Fr. Julio Raul Méndez, a priest of the Archdiocese of Salta on the theme: *“The challenges in the pastoral ministry today”*. This phase was concluded with the pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Lujan, to whom we entrusted the journey of our Congregation and each sister.

The third phase, that of **to live**, allowed us to contemplate Jesus Good Shepherd “Life”, who feeds our lived experience and with his Spirit pushes us onward adhering to the will of love of the Father. Through some Worksheets presented by the General government, matters of common interest and different information regarding the congregational reality were considered.

Subsequently the assembly, in a climate of discernment and sharing, elaborated the priority choice and the common orientations for the next two years.

Modalities on how the accomplished journey be made known boosting a greater participation of the sisters of the different Circumscriptions were suggested.

The Assembly, with the final message, addressed a wish to all the sisters so that the love of Christ Shepherd that bound us to Himself, may grant us to renew our yes in whatever age and condition.

The conclusion of the Superior general appreciated the contribution of each one and opened concrete perspectives to our life of consecration and the ministry of pastoral care.

Beginning from the priority choice: *“We allow ourselves to be re-conquered by Christ-Shepherd and we narrate with joy to the young generations His salvific Love”* we were encouraged to make even more solid our spiritual life, aiming on the capability to *“accompany life”* and to qualify ourselves in the ministry of pastoral care making listening to God and others a priority and discernment a style of life.

The accent set on the necessity to return to the First Love, revisiting also the formula of religious profession, suggested us the metaphor of the conjugal love that runs in the entire Sacred Scriptures and the most poetic expression is found in the Song of Songs.

The Shepherd who has conquered us wants to re-conquer us to lead us there where He wants to pasture his flock. To be with Him means to express that spiritual maternity toward humanity of our time, with particular care toward the young generations waiting for the manifestation of His salvific Love.

*Sr Marta Finotelli
and sisters of the general government*

Rome, 3 September 2009

Feast of Mary Mother of the Good Shepherd

Participants

Sr Marta Finotelli	superior general
Sr Albina Bosio	vicar general
Sr Arsenia Estrada	councillor general
Sr Luz Mary Oliveros	councillor general
Sr Cesarina Pisanelli	councillor general
Sr Puri Tañedo	secretary general
Sr Aminta Sarmiento	economa general

Sr Soeli Branco	provincial superior BR-CdS-Uruguay
Sr Inácia Dos Santos	provincial superior BR-SP-Gabon
Sr Angiolina Rossini	provincial superior ICN-Mozambique
Sr Maria Rita Siochi	provincial superior PI-AU-SA
Sr Lucia Varo	provincial superior ICS-Albania

Sr Ana Acero	delegate superior CO-VE-ME
Sr Maria Lim	delegate superior K
Sr Marisa Loser	delegate superior ARG-BO
Sr Chiara Raccuglia	delegate superior CI-PE

Introduction

In the pages that follow, we would like to narrate to you - in the form of a diary - the journey of each day, hoping that our narration gives birth in each sister and community the desire to undergo the same itinerary, in times, places and different manner, but within the same horizon.

We desire to narrate the intercapitular event evoking one of the most recurrent metaphors in the Bible, and that is **conjugal love: between God and his people, between Christ and his Church**. The conjugal analogy sets in prominence the initiative of God, who firstly gives himself and seeks his people, and who also understands the response of the community-bride and of the singular person.

Our vocation is collocated in the womb of the Trinitarian love¹, in a dynamics of response that knows both the thrust of the heart and the tepidity and unfaithfulness toward He who has loved us and gave his life for us (cf. Gal 2:20).

Gathered in the Spirit, who has awaken in us the same Charism, through Blessed James Alberione, we came from different Countries, with the same desire in the heart: **to renew** the will to follow Jesus Good Shepherd - making memory of that love that has attracted us to Himself in our youth - and **to seek** together a way to communicate the salvific power to humanity of this epoch of ours, in the daily places of living.

¹ RoL 3, 36, 85

Monday 15 June

The afternoon of June 15, the start of the Interchapter, we immediately set ourselves in the heart of the Church celebrating the Eucharist presided by the Bishop of S. Miguel, Mons. Sergio Alfred Fenoy, who reminded us of the centrality of the Word and two important aspects of the Christian experience: the sharing among the communities as sign of unity (cf. 2Cor 6:1-10) and evangelical perfection (cf. Mt 5:38-42) in the integrity of the heart that seeks God with rectitude.

The Superior general, Sr. Marta Finotelli, in her introduction at the Eucharistic Celebration, called to mind that *"The Church, in the liturgy of the Word invites us today to consider the paradox of the apostolic and spiritual life: the Lord leaves us poor, he leaves us in difficulties and precisely in these is manifested his grace and his love radiates. "Poor yet enriching many; as having nothing and yet possessing all things", (2Cor 6:10) says the Apostle Paul. This happens, however, if we allow God to act in our poverty. And we desire that the Holy Spirit act in us during these days of the Interchapter. Remaining poor, poor in all senses, we welcome truly in us God's wealth so as to transmit it through our life. Let us draw, then, from our poverty, lived by the wealth of Jesus Good Shepherd and by His grace we dedicate ourselves without reserve in the ministry of "care of souls" which He continues to entrust to our Religious Family." (cf **Attachment 1**).*

The Eucharistic Celebration was followed by the official opening of the Interchapter with these words of Sr. Marta:

*"...we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain.
For he says: "In an acceptable time I heard you,
and on the day of salvation I helped you."
Behold, now is a very; behold, now is the day of salvation!"
(2Cor 6,1b-2)*

“Dearest Albina, Arsenia, Cesarina, Luz Mary, Aminta, Puri, Angiolina, Ana, Chiara, Inácia, Lucia, Maria, Marisa, Marita, Soeli, welcome to our 6th Interchapter which we open officially today.

We are also summoned by the Holy Spirit to live these days, from June 15 to 28 as an “acceptable time” to revitalize our personal and congregational life. It is a privileged time in which the Good Shepherd reaches us with his grace to live of his Presence that transfigures our existence in joy; to allow Him to permeate our days in the humble and confident research of what is dear to the Father for our Congregation, in these years ever more demanding for our Christian faith and for the religious life expressed in our pastoral mission.

Let us help each other “not to receive the grace of God in vain”, believing that precisely now is the “favorable moment” in which God grants us, assists us and accompanies us. We savor the certainty of His presence along these days during our work, reflections, prayer, fraternal sharing; let us maintain an intense gaze toward the Lord repeating to ourselves: this is the favorable moment!

Lord, grant to each of us to live constantly in this joyful confidence that You are with us, live in our Religious family always. Make us consider that favorable and unfavorable time do not exist, but the whole time that You grant us may be absorbed and transfigured by your will of love for us and for the entire humanity.

Together we ask the Lord to discover how He desires us to be in his Church and in today's world and may he give us the strength and the prophetic courage to devote ourselves entirely to what He will make us understand these days.

Jesus Good Shepherd awaits us here in this moment, in this place and from here He desires to spur us to begin anew hoping that He, also through our Congregation, will find the way of drawing to Himself every creature.

Immersed in this hope and in communion with all the Pastorelle of the world who will accompany us through their prayer, we begin our 6th Interchapter setting the Word of God at the center, as the Bishop of San Miguel invited us today.”

Subsequently the working groups were constituted named: Peter, Paul and Mary Mother of the Good Shepherd. A piece of an icon was distributed to each participant which will be composed anew together at the conclusion of the Interchapter.

Tuesday, June 16

The day was devoted to listening of the Word and prayer to harmonize our hearts to the intentions of the Father. The reflection was guided sapientially by Sr. Julieta Stoffel, Provincial superior of the FSP of Argentina.

True love knows intimacy, the desire “to be” with the Beloved in solitude, silence, listening and confidence to receive tenderness and strength, but also to allow oneself to tell the truth of her life, to gaze without fear in the fond embrace of the Bridegroom, one’s own unfaithfulness and to recognize them so as to return to Him, to one’s brothers and sisters with a new heart. In the measure of our surrender and conformation to Christ Good Shepherd, we can become bread broken for the brethren participating at his same mission².

“Conformation to Christ is to orient decidedly the heart to God, seeking always and in everything his glory (cf Mt 6:33). it is the constant confirmation of our fundamental option, that is, although it has a concrete point of departure: the moment in which we decide for God, directing in conscience and responsibility everything of our being to Him, making true and deep concrete choices every moment. If I, in the small decisions of my day: to go there, to come here, to say this or to keep silent, to avoid or to profit in this encounter, etc., without reference to God, but I look for my personal affirmation, the approval of others, etc., then I am denying, contradicting my fundamental option. The instrument to remain in continuous orientation toward God is the examination of conscience, which Fr Alberione calls “secret to walk justly”

(Attachment 2)

The communication of life among the participants regarding the personal experience in the evangelical service of authority ended the day. The gathered experience was successively presented in a moment of prayer.

²cf. RdV 27.

At the end of the day, the first Bulletin (***Attachment 3***) was sent to all the sisters of the Congregation and to the government of the Pauline Family.

First stage To know the reality³

Wednesday June 17

The first phase of the Interchapter engaged the Assembly to set its gaze on the “lived experience” of the Congregation from the 7GC. In knowledge, what characterizes us is the gaze of love because love pushes those who love to gaze and interpret the common journey as part of the same family: with joy and hope for the preciousness of the gift received but also with lucid suffering of one who sees her own insufficiencies and incorrespondence to Grace. Then follows a sentiment of a common loving belongingness.

The report of the General government on the State of the Congregation is chorally presented: Sr. Marta begun and concluded it; while the councillors presented the reality inherent to one’s own area. Sr Luz Mary for the *style of life*; Sr. Cesarina for the *mission*; Sr. Arsenia for *formation* and Sr. Albina for *government*:

“We are therefore called to see with the spirit of faith and hope this reality because in it the Lord continues to speak and to take care of his people. Our life and the life of our sisters, our communities and Circumscriptions is therefore questioned directly to rediscover and cultivate the gift of faith which always allows the primacy of the initiative of God, the only One who makes us read human history and our personal history with the eyes of the Risen One, eyes that are not confined in worldly logic, but aware that only God probe in profundity the reality and the interior of each human being” (...).

³ Questa fase che ci ha impegnate per due giorni, il 17 e 19 giugno, è stata intercalata, il 18 giugno dall’intervento di p. Valdir, che non ha potuto essere presente nel giorno richiesto.

“Aware that the new life received in Baptism is a dynamic paschal journey that involves persons and communities, we were guided by the desire to favor within our religious family, a greater synergy, that would reinforce the sense of belonging, co-responsibility, communion and the sharing of gifts that God makes of our Congregation for a pastoral mission truly prophetic” (...).

“Moreover, the re-discovery of the contemplative dimension of our charism can sustain in the Christian communities a more incisive pastoral, capable of facilitating the work of God, and not only to promote activities. Our style of presence has to help greatly the pastoral workers to privilege that which forms Christian adults in the faith, mature in charity and solid in hope. On this proposal, some of our religious communities could become places where it offers greatly spaces of prayer, silence, reflection, listening to the Word and pastoral discernment” (...).

“In line with the formative commitment of our Congregation we also feel the urgency to train ourselves to accompany in the faith the journey of so many Christians who are in difficulty and risk of abandoning the Church. It is necessary, in this intention, to prepare the new generations of Pastorelle so that they may know how to give valid responses to the new challenges of evangelization. And at the same time, to continue to offer a more intense accompaniment to the sisters dedicated in the initial and permanent formation” (...).

“We have chosen, since the beginning of our mandate, the Pauline text Eph 3:12-17, in which we have drawn the style to live the relationships within our community and the service entrusted to us. Above all, around the Word and the Eucharist, we wanted to create unity and communion among us and with all the sisters of the Congregation. The method used has been to experiment in our small group what we would have then proposed in the fraternal visits, drawing from the wisdom of the Fathers who said: *“I have never taught what I myself have not practice.”*(...).

“It gives hope to ascertain, in the heart of so many Pastorelle, the desire for a style of religious life truly evangelical, more sober, more rooted in Christ and in his Word. This is leading some sisters to strengthen their relationship with the Lord, to live fraternal relationships authentically and to give themselves to the people of God making the life of the Risen Christ visible. They are sisters who could open the journey for the future for our Congregation and for the religious apostolic life, in the measure in which they will allow themselves to be transformed more

and more by the Word listened and welcomed. It is the task of the responsible of Circumscription to accompany with dialogue these sisters so as to bear fruits for the benefit of our Religious Family and in the pastoral service” (...).

“Our choice of life is certainly more important than the singular ministries in which we are engaged, for this the effort to persevere in the care of our religious life is fundamental. We ask ourselves: Which new horizon and precise direction does God want to give us in our life as Pastorelle? Which attentions and strategies would give quality and unity to our life? Which wisdom is asked of us so as to live the pastoral mission today, in this history, to be able to give to our contemporaries reasons of full life and care of the same life? (...). **(Attachment 4)**

After listening to the Report of the General government, the presentation of the report regarding the reality of the single Circumscription followed. The journey of the entire Congregation, emerged also through the lived experience of the different Circumscriptions, underlined ever more a strong convergence on aspects which every one considered fundamental: the care of the spiritual life and fraternal life; the commitment in the vocational pastoral and the initial and permanent formation; the search of a more creative and incisive ministry of pastoral care; service of authority lived with a more evident evangelical connotation and welcomed more and more with great faith.

Then the groups worked on elaborating a common patrimony on what was listened at and discerned where the Spirit is leading the Congregation.

Second stage **To discern the journey**

Thursday June 18

With the talk of Fr. Valdir De Castro, we started the illuminative phase. His reflection on “*Communication on the «pastoral care», in the light of the Apostle Paul*” and on “*The pastoral challenges in the ecclesial context of our time*” presented successively by Fr. Méndez, allowed us to profit some themes useful to our ministry of care.

As for Paul, the experience of being seized by the love of Christ has transformed him and made him evangelist, so it is for every consecrated person who allows himself to be conquered by Christ and therefore, even so for each of us: “*Only Christ lives, thinks, works, loves, wills, prays, suffers, dies and rises up in us*”⁴..

It is only in passing through this experience can we become witnesses of the love of God in that first and essential “communication” written in the words and gestures of “pastoral care”. Simple words and gestures, but lived in the language of love and in interpersonal relationship: listening, respect, acceptance, humility, dedication so that communication may be generator of communion.

“The theme of communication related with “pastoral care”, finds in the Apostle Paul an important reference, because “communication” was part of his style of life. He did not spare his time in the interaction with the diverse communities. He used the means of communication available during his time, without disregarding the direct contact with persons. The development of his communication has as motivation his experience of Jesus Christ, the passion for the Gospel and the love for the people whom he felt he was called to proclaim. With his witnessing he manifested that communication is a fundamental human and Christian experience. In fact, his anthropology is not a form of individualism. Persons are sociable beings, defined persons for their capacity to relate. (...)

“Paul experienced a “great desire” to remain in direct contact with persons. The letters did not substitute the personal encounters. Whether through letters or directly, the Apostle knew that without openness of the heart there is no communication, much more evangelization. The word “heart” (*kardia*) appeared 52 times in the writings of Paul⁵. The heart

⁴ DF 64.

⁵ DUNN, James D. G., *A teologia do apóstolo Paulo*, São Paulo: Paulus, 2003, p. 107.

indicates the most intimate part of the person, the seat of emotions and even of the thought and of the will. From here the depth of the expression as: “We have spoken frankly to you, Corinthians; our heart is open wide as a fair exchange, open your hearts in the same way!”. **(Attachment 5).**

Friday June 19

“Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him” (cf. Mt 25:6). We begin this day sharing in the wedding banquet and allowing ourselves to be re-conquered by His love! In the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, we participated in the opening of the Year for Priests.

The Eucharistic celebration, the Liturgy of the Hours and the silent adoration pace the intercapitular work of each day nourishing ourselves at the table of the Word and of the Bread.

We recall to mind the words of our Founder: *“The center of the pastoral life is the Eucharist as sacrifice, as sacrament, as real presence. It is of great importance that you acquire a pastoral spirit. Pastoral heart, pastoral intentions, pastoral mind”*.⁶

During the day, listening to the Reports presented by the Superiors of Circumscriptions continued.

Saturday June 20

Continuing with the illuminative phase, Fr. Méndez illustrated *“The pastoral challenges in the ecclesial context of our time.”*

The panorama of the contemporary reality gives a glimpse on the horizon a scenario that strongly interrogates our faith and our capacity to express the compassion of Christ Good Shepherd for the crowd (cf. Mc 6:34). Jesus lived an effective unstoppable love until giving up His life and the Father gave him merit with His resurrection.

⁶ So, 1948, 72.

The Passover, the great mystery of the Christian faith which is also expressed in our pastoral mission, is constituted by the intertwining of death and resurrection. It is the dynamics of love: only in giving oneself and dying to oneself can one reach to fullness.

To live our participation in the work of Jesus which includes cross and resurrection, it is necessary to cultivate contemplative prayer: contemplating His face leads us to gaze at reality with his same eyes.

We are called to do good and to do it well: the acceptance of lesser evil does not belong to us, but the search of the possible greater good as *shepherds, sowers, fishermen, fathers and mothers, living stones, builders and cultivators* (agriculturists) in a mission that has fascinated us and we cannot desert it without neglecting our ourselves (1Cor 9:16). In the spirit of being simply servants, we are called to intimacy of the friendship with Jesus so as to mature love that “becomes care of the other and for the other⁷.”

“To put love and a welcoming sympathy in order to offer in diverse ways an access to the Word of Life and Truth belongs to us:

- in personal dialogue; sharing prayer and starting with it;
- in catechesis; in reflection with groups;
- in the *Lectio divina*; in the spiritual exercises;
- in the means of communication and internet;
- in the teaching of religion in the school;
- offering liturgy with unction, preparing with piety and beauty (Mass, Liturgy of the hours).
- underlining Sunday as the day of the Lord.

Opening to every person the door to the experience of God in the faith is his rootedness at the maximum level, is the greatest human elevation. It is at the same time his rootedness in joy..

We are sowers of serene joy, that which the angels and the shepherds sang: *peace on earth to all men loved by the Lord (...)*”.

⁷ cf. Benedetto XVI, Enciclica *Deus caritas est*, 18.

What are the special challenges that we have today in the climate of secularism, of relativism, of the refusal of paternity, the bonds of the service of authority? We look at some structure and criteria which would respond to the actual challenges:

- To cultivate bonds from person to person. Help to mature the life of faith with patience. Help to discover the presence of God and start a life of prayer and liturgy
- To develop sympathy with the youth, seek to understand their field and their language. With great authenticity, and not camouflaging with them. Listen to their restlessness, recall expectations and projects to discern what God is asking as a new way of relating to Him.
- To discover the new poor (the elderly, single persons, migrants, etc)
- To dedicate special attention to vocational discernment. Strengthen the time of novitiate and develop a formation at the level of the contemporaneous culture.
- To take into consideration the diversity of man and woman. Incorporate both of them in the structure with their own profile and promoting an equal protagonism.
- In relating with men and women, bring with spontaneity the charism of the consecrated chastity, as a sign of total belonging to the Lord and as a ministry of witnessing of the assumed sexuality.
- To cultivate appreciation for families, to draw closer to them in order to offer them contact enriched with the consecrated life.
- To bring into the Parish a criteria of unity and diversity. Offer in the parish community the presence of the charism of the consecrated life.
- To integrate oneself in the schools, lyceums and universities. Distinguish oneself for the specific preparation, the spirit of service and communion.
- To integrate oneself in the Basic Ecclesial Communities bringing in criteria of ecclesiology of communion, in unity in diversity. Make present the charism of consecrated life.
- To participate in the means of communication and internet with suitability and identity.
- To be attentive to the new journeys that circumstances present to us. Remember that man is the way of the Church: there are always new human journeys which we make ourselves present, like what Jesus did in the journey to Emmaus.

- To make present in the activities the criteria of peace, ecology, of social inclusion and transcendence.
- That one's religious community be a fraternal house, united in the Love of God and in the mission. May there be a climate of family so the members could transmit it outside the community.
- To integrate oneself in the common action such as ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue.
- To place in relationship faith with the life of the faithful, but being aware that not all can be resolved at this level. We make history but with the transcendental and ecclesiological sense.
- To gain the local modality and culture, but retaining the ecclesial sense and the identity of the charism. When the charism of the Congregation has been assimilated from the source of the Founder, it can be adapted to the diversity without betraying it.
- To cultivate a gaze at the future with hope. Do not stop with what has been reached. People changes, the circumstances are modified. They are the renewal of challenges. **(Attachment 6)**.

At the conclusion of this stage the second Bulletin (**Attachment 7**) was published in our Website.

Sunday June 21

The morning of this day was devoted to the pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Luján, national Marian Shrine of Argentina, invoking the intercession of the Mother of God on our Congregation and on the Intercapitular work.

"We turn to Mary with trust in the spiritual journey and in the apostolic mission asking her to teach us the spirit of listening and contemplation to be able to adhere fully to the person and the work of the Divine Shepherd."⁸

In the afternoon was lived a very intense moment of sharing of prayer and personal reflection on the sense of belonging with the following questions:

- How do I live the sense of belonging to the Congregation?

⁸ (RoL 34)

- What favors the sense of belonging?
- What difficulties did I encounter?

The responses have underlined the importance of an ample gaze on the whole Congregation on the sense of family, on the love for all sisters and to the common pastoral vocation. The Congregation as a precious gift of God that renders full of joy and gratitude. The sense of belonging overcomes partial visions, personal or circumscriptional particularities that risk to be absolutized.

The necessity to know and participate in the life of the entire Congregation with prayer, information, sharing of goods, the joys and pains of all. The mutual help, communication, cordial acceptance of the diversities in communion of the single charism.

Third stage **To live and accompany life**

Monday-Thursday 22-25 June

The third stage started with the consideration of the matters or themes of common interest.

“Let me see you, let me hear your voice, for your voice is sweet, and you are lovely” (Song of Songs 2:14).

In the perspective of the love story of God with his people in which the vocational story of each of us is written, is also set the search of those signs that signify belonging, freedom of the heart, love of truth, ardour of pastoral charity. A love that is to be renewed each day because as the Founder reminded us *“our life is a fabric of so many “yes” to God. It is not enough to offer only our heart to God, but the mind, strength, our entire selves”⁹.*

⁹ (Alberione, PrP V 1950, 30).

Some of these signs perhaps have faded in time and demand new meaning, others are imposed anew to our attention.

In a wholistic vision and in a climate of discernment, therefore, we considered those themes which have been suggested by the different Circumscriptions, in preparation to the Interchapter:

- the sense of belonging in our Religious Family today;
- the life of poverty of the Pastorella in the actual socio-economic and ecclesial context;
- our collaboration with the laity and the vocation of the Pauline cooperators of the Pastorelle;
- the pastoral care: collaboration and new expressions.

A well-prepared Worksheet-synthesis for each theme, prepared earlier by the sisters of the General government “enlightened” the reflection, dialogue and the search for common and shared orientations.

Worksheet II	Transmission and care of the sense of belonging in formation
Worksheet III	Orientations for the request of permission of absence from the religious community
Worksheet IV	Pastoral vivacity in the experience of illness and ageing
Worksheet V	The means of information and the correct use of the instruments of communication
Worksheet VI	Our poverty: “hope and wealth for the world”
Worksheet VIII	The Pauline cooperators of the SJBP
Worksheet IX	Migration
Worksheet X	Ecumenism and inter-religious dialogue
Worksheet XI	Reflection on the missionary openings done by

	the Circumscriptions
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The third Bulletin (***Attachment 8***) was sent to the communities at the conclusion of the reflection on the themes of common interest.

Friday June 26

The General government presents the necessary information on some initiatives whether of the Pauline Family or of our Congregation:

- Document: FORMATION IN THE PAULINE FAMILY – Formation guidelines according to the Thought of Blessed James Alberione
- International Course in preparation to perpetual profession
- Journey of the Seminar on the care of souls
- The evaluation of the first year in the journey of Unification PI-AU-SA
- Juridical notes of secretariat
- International Seminar on St. Paul of the SSP

➤ Economy:

- Evaluation of the General Economic Project (GEP) – synthesis of the material sent by the Circumscriptions
- Sources of sustenance and ministry of pastoral care – for a reflection within the Circumscriptions
- Update on the quota for the Economato General
- Project of the new Generalate

Saturday June 27

While we move to the conclusion of the Interchapter, we share the modality of the post-intercapitular animation in the Circumscriptions which we have synthesized this way:

- each Superior of Circumscription sees how to communicate the contents and the spiritual experience of the 6th Interchapter to the sisters of the Council, to the animators of the communities and to all the sisters in the encounters by zone
- each Circumscription will take care of the translation of the Acts
- The General government will elaborate the Acts of the 6th Interchapter and will prepare the respective supplement
- The synthesis of the intercapitular work on June 27, 2009 will be presented to all the sisters, offering some contents.

With an intense discernment work and synthesis, the Assembly elaborated the *priority choice* and the *common orientations*, living a very beautiful experience of communion *and active participation*. The Holy Spirit has guided the hearts toward a unanimous convergence which we present to you consequently:

Journey for the next two years 2009-2011

Premise

In continuity with the journey started in the 7th General Chapter and in synchronization with the Church which celebrates the Year for Priests, we want to grow greatly in the Pauline dynamic of “conformation to Christ” and to assume with new spirit the demands of our participation in the mission of Jesus Good Shepherd, expressed in the ministry of pastoral care

PRIORITY CHOICE

*We allow ourselves to be re-conquered
by Christ-Shepherd
and we narrate with joy
to the young generations
His salvific Love.*

Attitudes to be privileged:

- **Listening**
- **Humility**

We assume in a vital manner:

- the content of the religious profession revisiting and deepening the Rule of Life and particularly the **formula of profession**;
- the pastoral discernment so as to express with renewed “zeal” the pastoral care in its “triple work” re-read today (**Seminar on pastoral care**);
- the style of the accompaniment expressing spiritual maternity, according to the teaching of the Founder so as to be close to our

contemporaries and to journey with them toward the “springs of life” (**accompaniment and vocational animation**);

- “communication” generator of communion in its dimensions: relationship and mediatics (**community and Pauline Family**);
- our belonging to the Congregation, with personal and community choices of life that oppose secularism, relativism and individualism and favor co-responsibility, solidarity with the poor and the care of Creation (**RoL e GEP¹⁰**).

Common Orientation

Youth and vocational pastoral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Live with authenticity our pastoral vocation for a credible proclamation of the Gospel to the young ❖ Prepare sisters who accompany the young to the discovery of the sense of life and to an adequate vocational discernment ❖ Give priority to the care of the new generations with proposals that help to bring them to Christ ❖ Each circumscription continue giving attention to youth and vocational ministry with a joyful testimony
Transmission and care of the sense of belonging in formation (Worksheet II)	<p>Deepen, meditate, pray, live the formula of the religious profession commented with other articles of the RoL and with incisive thoughts of the Founder, of the Pastoral Rule of St. Gregory the Great and other Fathers of the Church as Alberione himself indicated to us ¹¹</p>
Orientations for the requests of permission of absence from the religious community (Worksheet III)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ In the service of authority, help sisters who ask permission of absence from the community to assist parents, to reflect on the real necessities of the family and in respect of the commitment

¹⁰ General Economic Project

¹¹ PrP IV, 1949 p. 8.

	<p>with the Congregation. In attitude of discernment and through dialogue, clarify the criteria with sensibility and charity so that anomalous situations will not remain in ambiguity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Educate ourselves and sensitize our families about the commitment assumed with our choice of life which doesn't allow us to participate in all family celebrations
<p>Pastoral vivacity in the experience of illness and ageing (Worksheet IV)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Make concrete the proposals already emerged in various documents of the Congregation, especially on p. 84 of the Acts 5GC 1993: <i>Old and sick sisters</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to see that the sisters remain for longer period as possible in the apostolic communities - prepare some persons who know how to accompany elderly sisters - provide some small structures with particular furnishing, inserted in a parish, for a small number of elderly sisters - sensitize the communities to the welcoming of the elderly sisters who need not only to be understood and helped but needing of much love. ❖ When it is necessary, provide professional help for the elderly and sick sisters
<p>The means of information and the correct use of the instruments of communication (Worksheet V)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Modern technologies are in themselves precious instruments, but their use demand suitable preparation and equilibrium particularly in the initial level of formation. In the on-going formation, educate ourselves and constantly watch over on the correct and balanced use of the instruments of communication, remembering that they are means for the proclamation of the Gospel from which we should not create dependency ❖ When personal encounter is possible, modern instruments do not substitute it
<p>Our poverty: "hope and wealth for the world"</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Live poverty as a relationship with Jesus Good Shepherd poor and educate ourselves to strongly desire God [= attachment to God (cf Alberione)]

(Worksheet VI)

so as not to remain trapped in induced desires by the tendency to possess and to manage goods, not as masters but as administrators, asking due permissions (cf RoL 44)

- ❖ Motivations and attitudes to live pastoral poverty: *Poverty expresses our creature reality and our total adhesion to Christ who hands himself over to the Father in confident abandonment. Poverty makes us free interiorly, reciprocally dependent, disposed to an austere and sober style of life, united with the poor even in the fatigue of work and in valuing time and all the goods of Providence* (cf GPF 29)
- Re-assume the evangelical, theological and charismatic meaning of poverty in the conversion of the mind and heart (= for the cause of Christ)
- To acquire the use of natural and material goods co-responsible of the good of humanity, entrusting ourselves to Providence (= in obedience to the project of the Creator)
- To draw in prayer the capacity of conversion to assume a style of life in unity with the poor: sober, simple, essential, welcoming ... not because we are forced by circumstances, but as personal and community choice, distinguishing the essential from the superfluous (= as a witness of love and interior freedom)
- Consider the RoL and continue to practice the orientations of the GEP for a shared personal and communitarian asceticism (rigorous self-denial):
 - detachment from goods ⇒ sharing of goods
 - simplicity of life ⇒ hospitality
 - transparency of one's style of life ⇒ transparency in fraternal and pastoral relationships
 - love of work ⇒ responsible participation to the work of creation
 - care of material goods and of time ⇒ (cf. GPF 29 and Alberione) personal, communitarian and apostolic care on material goods
 - personal responsibility ⇒ co-responsibility in

the community

- humility expressed in not having any other aid than the Lord, in entrusting oneself in Providence ⇒ to surrender oneself to the sisters and the people entrusted to our care in the apostolate

The Pauline Cooperators of the SJBP (Worksheet VIII)

- ❖ There are three categories of lay present in the Pauline Family:
 - The Aggregated Institutes, the Association of Pauline Cooperators bound to a Statute willed by the Founder and approved by the Holy See and the Collaborators organized by the single Congregations

- ❖ In expectation of the new Statute of the Pauline Cooperators, we have defined the name of our collaborators:

Pauline Collaborators: Friends of Jesus Good Shepherd

Friends: “No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not know what his master is doing. I have called you friends, because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father.” (Jn 15:13-15)

of: relationship and belonging

Jesus Good Shepherd: “I am the good shepherd, and I know mine and mine know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I will lay down my life for the sheep.” (Jn 10:14-15)

- ❖ When the Statute will be approved, the General government will constitute the Commission for the elaboration of the Congregational Directory, from which each Circumscription will elaborate

	<p>the Circumscriptural Directory. In the meantime, the Circumscriptions, basing from their experience, can send to the General secretariat suggestions/indications for the elaboration of the Congregational Directory</p>
<p>Migration (Worksheet IX)</p>	<p>As Pastorelle we are called to give attention to this worldwide phenomenon, according to the necessities and the indications of the Local Churches, in collaboration with the pastors, pastoral workers, the Caritas and other charitable associations</p>
<p>Ecumenism and inter-religious dialogue (Worksheet X)</p>	<p>To be open and sustain initiatives to favor ecumenism and also inter-religious dialogue. To single out, in each continent, at least one sister who can prepare herself and be inserted in these field</p>
<p>Reflection on the missionary openings done by the Circumscriptions (Worksheet XI)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ After the enthusiasm of the first moment, difficulty of various kind is observed in giving continuity and in maintaining the mission alive ❖ It is necessary to strengthen the communities already opened ❖ For the possible new openings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Ecuador</i>: the General government will maintain contact with the Bishop of Riobamba to verify the opportunity of a probable new opening with an international community which will be entrusted to a Circumscription. - <i>Vietnam</i>: the General government entrusts to the PI-AU-SA Province the evaluation of a possible opening. - <i>China</i>: the General government asks the circumscriptions PI-AU-SA and K to single out a sister for each circumscription to start to learn the language. The General government, in dialogue with the General governments of the Pauline Family will establish the steps to be undertaken to facilitate the learning of the Chinese language.

At the end of the day, the 4th Bulletin (***Attachment 9***) was published in our Website.

Sunday June 28

The moment of prayer which has characterized the conclusion of our Interchapter was particularly significant. After having invoked the Holy Spirit, each of the participants was invited by the Superior general to unite, with those of the others, the piece of the jigsaw puzzle received at the beginning of the intercapitular event so as to compose anew the Word of God that was shared Rm. 12:1-21. At the end, on the other side of the Word can be contemplated the face of Christ Pantocrator, a copy of a Serbian icon of the XIV Century: Jesus Master Shepherd.

In the last day, the final evaluation was done and the message of the Assembly to all the sisters was elaborated, which we reproduce:

If we could understand the great graces which the Lord has given to our soul, we would love Him more and then we would sing the Magnificat to thank the Lord, the merciful Father, the Good Shepherd Son the Holy Spirit Love; we will thank and praise the Holy Trinity

G. Alberione, AAP 1959,96

Dearest sisters,

In praise and blessing to the Lord who has granted us to live this Intercapitular event, we express our gratitude to all of you who have accompanied us in the communion of prayer.

Since the first day, the Word of God offered to us in the Liturgy was an invitation for us to grow in conformation to Christ so as to learn from his same heart the grammar of pastoral care and to open ourselves in confidence that even in our weakness is manifested the strength of the Lord for the benefit of His people.

The Eucharistic celebration, the individual and common prayer, the reflection on the present reality of the Church and of the world, the report of the general government and the different circumscriptions and the sharing became the womb of a question from which we were challenged day after day: what do you want to tell us Lord, today?

We can affirm that the Lord has been our Shepherd from the time we existed and continue to be so: we are certain of His fidelity. The love with which He has bound us to Him on the day we responded “yes” to His call, pushes in us the desire to search Him without ceasing in whatever age and condition we are in so as to discover and find in Him the “sense” of our existence.

The coincidence of our encounter with the beginning of the Year of priesthood proclaimed by Pope Benedict XVI and the closing of the Pauline Year has placed us in a favourable condition to consider also for ourselves the exhortation to allow ourselves to be re-conquered by Christ Shepherd and to re-discover the joy to narrate to the young generations the salvific love of God. This is a call to come out of ourselves to serve our brothers and sisters in the witnessing of a chaste, poor and obedient life lived in simplicity and dedication.

May Mary Mother of the Good Shepherd educate us to listening and humility so as to be mothers and sisters in the faith and may the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, of whose Solemnity we will celebrate tomorrow, intercede for us the fidelity and the courage of a pastoral care that accompanies to the *springs of life*.

*Fraternal greeting from all of us
Sisters participants of the 6th Interchapter of the SJBP*

Finally, the Superior general, Sr. Marta Finotelli, concludes the 6th Interchapter with a very accurate and complete synthesis of the intercapitular event that opens, with trust and hope, the horizons of the journey of the Congregation and suggests concrete steps of application of the choices operated during the work.

“The presence of the Lord experienced in our assembly is a motive of praise, gratitude and blessing. Yes, we can affirm with joy that the Good Shepherd took care of us and our Congregation with indescribable delicateness and compassion, not for our merit but for his gratuitous

initiative of love and for the prayers elevated to Him from the different parts of the world so that the help of His Spirit, for the good outcome of the Intercapitular event, may not be wanting. May the Holy Spirit reward with abundant blessing those who have accompanied us. Our Founder would say: *“If we could understand the great graces which the Lord has given to our soul, we would love Him more and then we would sing the Magnificat to thank the Lord, the merciful Father, the Good Shepherd Son, the Holy Spirit Love; we will thank and praise the Holy Trinity”*¹².

The global scenario that we have delineated in these days of work asked us above all to contain the loss of meaning in our choice of life. For many years now, we strove to counteract this phenomenon within us, but we will not attain acceptable results if we won't keep watch on the continuous temptation to “dilute” the appeals of the Gospel, to reduce the demands of our belonging to Christ, to weaken our communion and our being Church, the Body of the living Christ. We retain that in order to affront this risk, it is necessary to aim at a solid formation founded on faith like the house built on the rock, on deep and well cared spiritual life and also of intellectual, theological, pastoral preparation, of good quality, as we have already reminded at the conclusion of our 7th General Chapter. We highlight even in this occasion the necessity to go back to the contents of the religious profession, revisiting and deepening our Rule of Life, living in each choice the discernment in the Spirit so as to express with renewed zeal the pastoral care in the “triple work” re-read today in history.

To allow himself to be conquered fully by Christ! was the scope of St Paul's entire life and also the objective of all the ministry of the Curé of Ars and recently the Pope recommended it on the occasion of the opening of the Year for Priests. Pope Benedict XVI hopes that this may also be the principal objective for each of us. Being at the service of the Gospel, we retain it valid also for us Pastorelle for which we also own what the Pope reminded to the priests: *“... Study with an accurate and continuous pastoral formation is certainly useful, but still more necessary the “science of love” which is learned only in ‘heart to heart’ with Christ. ”*.

With this attitude we are called to prepare the future of the Congregation aiming decisively on the quality of the new generations of Pastorelle, consecrated women who witness the strength of the Gospel in simplicity and in joy of their life lived in community and in the company of humanity of our time through a “care” that expresses the same care of Jesus Good Shepherd. For this, desiring to be “Pastorelle according to the heart of God” we need to ask ourselves ever anew the same questions the

¹² Cf. AAP 1959, 96.

Holy Father addressed to priests: *“Are we truly pervaded by the word of God? Is that Word truly the nourishment we live by, even more than bread and the things of this world? Do we really know that Word? Do we love it? Are we deeply engaged with this Word to the point that it really leaves a mark on our lives and shapes our thinking?”*¹³. On our part, it is necessary to exert all our effort to witness that we can't live the same pastoral passion of Christ without interiorizing the Word of God and incarnating it in the daily combat against individualism, relativism and secularism without the effort to translate it together in a language that is understandable for our contemporaries.

The picture of the world's reality today which has been delineated these days could be re-assumed thus: the new generations are without roots, without fathers and mothers not only in the family but also in the Church and in the journey of life. Therefore, there is a question, perhaps unexpressed, of a renewed paternity and maternity also spiritual that interrogates our pastoral vocation: to be mothers and sisters according to the teachings of the Founder, available to accompany the new generations until vocational maturation.

In our synthesis, we formulated a priority choice for the journey in the next two years 2009-2011: ***Let us allow ourselves to be re-conquered by Christ Shepherd and we narrate with joy to the young generations His salvific love***, an explicit encouragement to prepare ourselves adequately to accomplish a ministry of care always more urgent and essential. This attention has as a consequence, the commitment to render more solid our spiritual life, to aim on the capacity to ***“accompany life”*** and to qualify ourselves in this ministry, above all making as priority listening to God and others and discernment as a style of life. The humility to allow ourselves to be accompanied, at times, permit us to acquire experience and knowledge in this field so as to be persons who know the human heart in its more difficult and deep folds. In our apostolate, we can give prevalence to the young families and to the new generations, consolidating the Christian life, asking parish priests and pastoral workers to insert in the pastoral projects some qualified choices like: spiritual accompaniment, interpersonal colloquy, retreats and spiritual exercises, Christian instruction and formation to nourish the mentality of faith, assiduous listening to the Word of God, sensibilization to the Sacrament of reconciliation in an integral vision of the human person and of the Gospel proclamation.

¹³ Benedetto XVI, Omelia nella Messa del S. Crisma, 9.4.2009 e Lettera per l'indizione dell'Anno Sacerdotale in occasione del 150° anniversario del “Dies Natalis” di Giovanni Maria Vianney, 16.6.2009.

We retain useful to care “communication” so that it may generate communion in its dimensions: in interpersonal relationship whether in our communities or in the apostolate and in media, valuing the belonging to the Pauline Family.

Our task in relation to the laity can also be to care for their Christian vocation in the Church, as what is already being done. The Seminar of “care of souls” which we are preparing to celebrate can be a favourable moment to deepen and to re launch this priority.

The experience lived these days has made us understand, with greater incisiveness that the sense of belonging and communion in the Congregation demands personal, communitarian and circumscriptive choices that counteract individualism both personal and as a group and to favour co-responsibility and solidarity. In particular, it is the competence of the superior of circumscription to guarantee that at the foundation of the Programmatic Circumscriptions, there may always be the common orientations of the entire Congregation from which the specific journeys are drawn.

Now, we continue our congregational journey with joyful gratitude and with renewed confidence, we sustain each other in the service of our sisters and to the Church taking as companions in the journey Mary Mother of the Good Shepherd and the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul. With their protection, we make as gift to all the love and the care of the Father which we have experienced these days, we witness the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the strength of His resurrection, we remain in attentive listening to the Spirit. In the name of the Holy Trinity, I declare closed the 6th Interchapter and we remember anew all the Pastorelle through the moment of prayer which we are about to live.

In the afternoon is celebrated the Holy Eucharist of thanksgiving to the Lord, on the vigil of the Solemnity of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, as introduced by Sr. Marta:

We are gathered to say thanks once more to the Holy Trinity for everything He has worked for us Pastorelle these days of the Interchapter. A gratitude that is born from the depth of the heart for having been able to contemplate the work of God in us and around us.

The light of the Spirit has guided us in these days of prayer and common work and has reminded us the beauty of our charism and our mission in the Church. We want, in this moment, to renew our fidelity to

the vocation which has been given to us, through our Founder, Blessed James Alberione, accompanying Romina Jalil in her first profession which will be celebrated during this Eucharist. Even we Pastorelle, let us say reciprocally: “Let us allow ourselves to be *re-conquered* by Christ”. We belong to Christ Good Shepherd and we, through our vocation, have the grace to share his pastoral mission taking care of his people, in communion with the Shepherds of the Church.

In this difficult time for the Christian faith, we are asked to take greater and more punctual care of the life of faith of the baptized, of the life of the young generations, accompanying them in the spiritual journey, beginning from our remaining “heart to heart with Christ” and from our clear adhesion to his Church.

We understand with ever more clarity that we are entrusted with a ministry of communion and the weaving of ecclesial relationships, cooperating with those who are called to the *ministry of pastoral care* so that the Church may be a prophetic sign of salvation for all, a house open to ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue, a fertile seed of the Gospel for the society and for cultures. In this world of global communication, what characterizes us strongly more and more is the care of the interpersonal relationship, the nearness and the pastoral passion so that all may have life in abundance, creation may respond to the design of God and people may reconcile in truth and in peace.

Our life has been entrusted by Blessed Alberione to the intercession of Mary, Mother of the Good Shepherd and to the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul. From the example of Mary, we live our being mothers and sisters in the Spirit accompanying the growth and the maturation of the life in Christ. From the greatest Shepherds, we learn love to Christ and his Church and the urgency and the universality of evangelization.

In this celebration we ask you to unite to our prayer so that we may be granted to live up to the total gift the grace of vocation we have received.

Our special thanksgiving goes to the Apostolic Nunzio Mons. Adriano Bernardini, who presides this celebration, to the concelebrants, to the members of the Pauline Family, to those who collaborate with us in the pastoral, to the sisters who have welcomed us these days, to the family of Romina and to all who have accompanied us with their prayer for the good outcome of the intercapitular event.

To Romina, a special wish for a joyful journey of fidelity to Jesus Good Shepherd. (Un augurio muy especial por un gozoso camino de fidelidad a Jesùs Buen Pastor).

Buona celebrazione a tutti! Buena celebraciòn para todos!

During the celebration, an Argentinean novice, Sr. Romina Paola Jalil made her First profession. A visible sign of the marriage covenant of Christ Good Shepherd with our Congregation. A love story continues!

San Miguel – Argentina 15-28 June 2009



Generalate
Rome, September 2009