

JAMES ALBERIONE

OPERA OMNIA

«DONEC FORMETUR CHRISTUS IN VOBIS»



JAMES ALBERIONE

# DONEC FORMETUR CHRISTUS IN VOBIS

*Meditations  
of the Primo Maestro*



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*Abbreviation:* DFst

Translation: *Andres R. Arboleda, Jr., ssp*

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## FOREWORD

1. The text used in this edition is that one printed in 1932, authorized by Fr. Alberione. We consider it as the *standard edition* of *Donec formetur Christus in vobis* (DFst).
2. All references to the text of *Donec formetur*—in the Introduction, Presentation, notes, indices—refer to the *pages* of the same printed booklet (e.g.: “DFst 15” = *Donec formetur*, page 15).
3. In view of uniformity of quotation of the Founder’s writings, for whatever edition and in whatever language, it is indispensable that we adopt, as a uniform criterion, the page numbers of the original Italian edition. Such numbering is indicated by the marginal numbers, in bold, located at the start of the respective page: the change of page, when it falls in the middle of a line, is marked with the a bar “|”.  
Hence, also in this edition, the quotations of the text of DFst shall refer to the marginal numbers and not on the current number of pages of this book.
4. The chapters contained in the *manuscript* of the Founder have already been removed in the printed booklet; they are reprinted at the *Appendix* at the end of the book (pp. 261-271).
5. For purposes of better knowing the concise and schematic style of the Founder’s text, some pages of the manuscript of the *Donec Formetur* are reprinted as *Attachments* at the end of the book (pp. 274-280).
6. Some adjustments have been made on the Italian original. For example, abbreviations were made explicit and accents modified. The changes are upheld in this translation.

## ABBREVIATIONS

- ADds = *Abundantes divitiæ gratiæ suæ*, typewritten text  
(Existing English translation by Fr. Mike Byrnes,  
ssp, used here)
- ADms = *Abundantes divitiæ gratiæ suæ*, manuscript.
- B.S. = Buona Stampa (Good Press)
- CSP = Centro di Spiritualità Paolina
- CVV = Considerate la vostra vocazione (a collection of  
Fr. Alberione's writings edited by the FSP).
- DFcr = *Donec formetur Christus in vobis*, critical edition  
(1985)
- DFin = *Donec formetur Christus in vobis*, introduction to  
the present edition.
- DFms = *Donec formetur Christus in vobis*, manuscript note-  
book
- DFst = *Donec formetur Christus in vobis*, printed edition  
(1932) reprinted here
- ES = *Esercizi Spirituali*
- FSP = Figlie di San Paolo (Daughters of St. Paul)
- G.P. = Good Press
- LV00 = *Lavori Vari (various works)* (followed by number  
in two digits)
- P.M. = Primo Maestro (Don Alberione)
- Q000 = *Quaderno* (followed by number in three digits)
- SC = *Sono creato per amare Dio*
- SP = *San Paolo* (house bulletin of the Society of St. Paul)
- SSP = Società San Paolo (Society of St. Paul)
- UCAS = *Unione Cooperatori Apostolato Stampa* (from Fe-  
bruary 1928)
- UCBS = *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa* (until January  
1928)

# INTRODUCTION

**1** The *Donec formetur Christus in vobis*<sup>1</sup> (= DF), is a booklet, measuring 16 x 10 cm., with 110 pages, made up of short chapters divided generally into three numbered points which, in turn, are often subdivided in lists marked by letters a, b, c. The vocabulary used is the one common to the theology or spirituality of the times and the phrases are brief, many of which are in Latin, taken from the New Testament.

Published by Fr. Giacomo Alberione in 1932, the DF did not enjoy much luck. It is only since twenty or so years ago that it has become an object of study and a point of reference for Spiritual Exercises, formation programs and meetings on spirituality.

**2** DF's language suffers its seven decades of history and, at first glance, remains, on the level of expressions, detached from a specific context.

If, at present, the approach to DF is not easy for persons of the Italian language and who have always lived in Italy, the experience of approaching the text presents greater difficulties in other contexts and mentality.

Venturing into this work, one finds himself before a real challenge arising from questions like these: In reality, what relationship has DF with the Founder's life and with the lived experience of the Pauline Family being born? Can one find reliable keys for a contextualized reading and a renewed interpretation of the short chapters of this work by now held to be of great charismatic relevance?

**3** In order to respond to these and other questions, the present work intends, already from the start, to study the bases of this presupposition: the book *Donec formetur Christus in*

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<sup>1</sup> G. D. P. H., *Donec formetur Christus in vobis*, Meditazioni del Primo Maestro, Pia Società San Paolo, Alba-Roma, 1932. – In many publications of the first years of foundation, the initials G. D. P. H. (which means: Gloria Deo, Pax Hominibus) was used to take the place of the author's name. See frontispiece (DFst 3) reproduced on page 175 of this edition.

*vobis* constitutes a proposal for a way of life for the Pauline Family, a proposal that finds its full significance when one recalls the journey taken by Fr. Alberione and by the first generation of Paulines.

4 In fact, it is not a book written for a discursive reading wherein a systematic exposition of the themes is developed. One has not to take it even as a collection of outlines or disconnected summary notes put together for occasional purposes. Instead, *Donec Formetur* is a document, well structured as a whole and in their individual parts, prepared in a modest format, but with well-aimed and lasting intentions.

*Donec formetur Christus in vobis* traces the frame of reference of the Pauline life by presenting, by way of maxims, the features of the Pauline spirit that must be read under the light of the charismatic history, so that it may then be received in reflection and in prayer, and embraced in a style of life that is at the same time a fertile ground and an active witnessing of a special mission.

5 We intend to present here the *Donec formetur Christus in vobis* second edition printed in 1932 (=DFst). The notebook containing the manuscript version also exists (=DFms), most useful for the understanding of the book, as it will be indicated, and which could be separately published, preferably with the use of multimedia resources.

The critical edition that united the printed document and the original manuscript was recently published. It was marked by numbers at the margins already quoted in studies and in documents.<sup>2</sup> The current edition considers as standard the one printed in 1932 and hence, it intends to create a new set of numbers at the margins based on the number of the pages.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> G. ALBERIONE, *Donec formetur Christus in vobis*, Critical edition by A. Damino, Edizioni Paoline, 1985.

<sup>3</sup> It seems suitable that we introduce the usage of using DFcr to refer to this edition. We shall present a concordance table among the numbers of pages of DFcr, of DFms and of DFst at pages 281-284 of the current edition.

The principal intention is that of helping especially the new generation of Paulines to read and understand this work of the Founder by concentrating on our stock of information either in this *Introduction* or in the comments or notes at the foot of the pages of this book.

This choice has required of us a long journey, useful if not necessary, in the gathering of facts and in order to explain their relationships. It also has directed us towards the choice of presenting numerous and broad quotations for the sake of those persons who do not have an easy access to the original documentation examined.

Probably the choice of numbering the paragraphs or group of paragraphs of this *Introduction*<sup>4</sup> may become a very useful tool for creating a connection with the pages of the text and vice versa thus benefiting also the work of locating the text in its context.

6 The approach to DF requires the same attention needed for every reading of a classical work—in a broad sense or which enjoys a special importance, but is not of recent publication—the deeper knowledge of the personality and of the thought of the author is indispensable in order to understand the meaning of the text.

Fr. Alberione and the first generation of Paulines lived a radicalism inspired after the Evangelical, New Testamentary and biblical message and they were moved by the awareness of the needs of the “new times”. Towards the end of his life, reflecting on the journey taken, Fr. Alberione stated: “The hand of God is upon me – how He has led us”.

Hence, drawing inspiration from the biblical categories and from the words of Fr. Alberione, we shall arrange this introduction into two parts:

1. The time of the Alliance: “The hand of God is upon me...”;
2. The book of Holiness: “...How He has led us”.

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<sup>4</sup> Quotations of passages of this *Introduction* shall have the abbreviation of “DFin” followed by the respective marginal number.

## 1. THE TIME OF THE ALLIANCE

*“The hand of God is upon me...”*

7 In order to notice not only the enthusiasm of the first generations but also its exponential growth, it is enough to consider, with a bit of attention, the beginnings of the Pauline Family. It also is noticeable that everything takes place as if it follows a veiled project and, at the same time, an intended gradualness.

8 Another aspect, easily noticeable, lies in the fact that the foundation period involves numerous persons, but in everything, Fr. Alberione's figure exercises with sobriety, although energetically, its role of being “the only channel of God's inspiration.”<sup>5</sup> “His entire manner of doing and speaking shows the man of God, the man detached from the world and entirely focused on God: from this center, he thinks of everything, moves and judges.”<sup>6</sup>

9 It seems important, therefore, that we describe the Founder's personal journey and the journey of the Foundation. These two themes can be expressed with the biblical expression of election and of personal and collective mission in these terms: “This day I set you over nations...to build and to plant” (Jer 1:10) and “You shall be to me a kingdom of priests, a holy nation” (Ex 19:6).

### 1.1 “THIS DAY I SET YOU OVER NATIONS... TO BUILD AND TO PLANT” (JER 1:10)

10 Many times, especially in *Abundantes divitiæ gratiæ suæ* (= AD),<sup>7</sup> Fr. Alberione communicated his vocation and spiritual experiences by recurring to passages of the Sacred Scriptures. One could notice, too, that his affirmations on the

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<sup>5</sup> G. T. GIACCARDO, *Diario, 1913-1925 1942-1946, pagine scelte*, Edizioni Centro di Spiritualità Paolina, Roma, 1996, 19 November 1917, p. 92.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 3 January 1919, p. 249.

<sup>7</sup> Two versions of this document are extant: the manuscript text (= ADms) and the typewritten one (= ADds). The 1985 edition, by E. Passotti and L. Giovannini attempts at a synthesis of the two versions. The 1998 edition by A. Colacrai and E. Sgarbossa, starts from the typewritten version.

past generally find confirmation when subjected to verification with other documents and bits of information.

As a whole Fr. Alberione's testimony is taken here as a true expression of his effective experience and not only as a rereading, having more of editorial than historical character.

Furthermore, considering the vigilant care he took over every step of the work during the time of foundation, we shall utilize here the documents drawn from the periodical *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa* (= UCBS)<sup>8</sup> as the expression of the community's life also when it is not possible to ascertain that they are attributed directly to the Founder. What guides us, in fact, is the intention of being attuned to and to communicate the charismatic inspiration that moved the Founder and his first men and women disciples.

To reach such an objective, let us now consider the very life of Giacomo Alberione, from his birth to the start of his foundations.

### 1.1.1 "When a child... I loved him" (Hos 11:1)

**11** Giacomo Alberione was born on 4 April 1884 in San Lorenzo di Fossano and grew in the rural environment of the small city of Cherasco.

The privileged relationships of his infancy were with his mother, Teresa Allocco, with his elementary school teacher, Rosa Cardona, and with the environment of the Parish of San Martino (*AD* 10-12).

Starting his elementary schooling, Giacomo Alberione, comparable to a little boy in what we now call the third world, walked along the path that led up towards Cherasco. Before going to school, he used to stop with other children at the Madonnina Sanctuary. The Rector, Fr. Francesco Maria Faber helped them and entertained them with explanations and comments that soon bore fruit.

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<sup>8</sup> We preferred to quote directly from the UCBS, although many passages are found in *La primavera paolina* (= PP), edited by Rosario F. Esposito, Roma, 1983. The texts quoted in this *Introduction* shall be found in PP through a related analytical index (pp. 1257ff) and in the Index of names (pp. 1279ff).

**12** During his first and second elementary grades, his teacher, Rosa Cardona, helped him to acquire the taste for the school world and contributed to his becoming aware of a greater orientation of his life: the priestly vocation (*AD* 9).<sup>10</sup>

DFst<sup>9</sup>  
84-85

**13** In his third grade, Giacomo Alberione enjoyed the special care of his teacher Tommaso Rabbia. At the end of the year, Giacomo was first in his class. Also during his fourth grade, under his teacher Giuseppe Riaudo, Giacomo got the highest of grades along with four other students.

**14** During his first year high school, he used to take lunch at the convent with the pastor, Fr. Giovanni Battista Montersino, who often invited for after-meal coffee some persons who loved culture. Among these also were teachers of the young Giacomo Alberione.

During those meetings, the young Alberione learned to love books and became fascinated by the world of music, of literature, of history and philosophy.<sup>11</sup> Even more: he felt

DFst  
68-70

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<sup>9</sup> The printed *Donec formetur* (1932) is quoted with the abbreviation of DFst followed by the number of page. Cf. DF in 5.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. G. BARBERO, *Il sacerdote Giacomo Alberione, un uomo - un'idea*, Vita e opere del Fondatore della Famiglia Paolina (1884-1971), Edizioni dell'Archivio Storico Generale della Famiglia Paolina, Roma 1991, pp. 73ff.

<sup>11</sup> Regarding this period, Sr. Mercedes Mastrostefano, fsp, affirms: "The three prominent persons of Cherasco were Prof. Giovanni Ferrua, the musician, father of Fr. Ernesto Ferrua who was Alberione's companion in the seminary; Prof. Bartolomeo Rinaldi, poet and mathematician; Prof. Giovan Battista Adriani, historian. All these three persons taught at the high school and were friends of Fr. Montersino, parish priest of San Martino. During the year that Alberione went to high school, only a year as he later entered the Seminary of Bra, he no longer had the possibility of having meals as he had during the elementary grades so Fr. Montersino invited him for lunch at his convent. With the parish priest, there was the vice parish priest, Fr. Giuseppe Colombara, his aunt Angela and his niece Vittoria. Fr. Montersino most often, almost every day, invited those prominent persons to take coffee in the convent. Alberione narrated: 'I have never forgotten those persons who impressed on me the love for books. Their conversation fascinated me: music, literature, history, philosophy... I believe that I learned from them the value and the joy of books and of reading.' Thus did Bonfante [later the directress of teaching in Cherasco] told me and wrote. She added that little Alberione was very happy although he was quite intimidated."



immersed in the reality of the Church and the Church became for him his natural environment and the indispensable frame of reference and exhilarating source of numerous and great ideals for the future. It is from this small circle of persons that the spiritual and cultural itinerary of the future apostle began.

DFst  
17ff These persons contributed to the development, in the young Alberione, of the taste for learning, studiousness, more than studies itself as a course; the taste for purification understood as growth, more than as asceticism focused on negative self-evaluation.

DFst  
43ff **15** This parish frame of reference, open, represented for Alberione a first awareness of the delicateness of his own sentiments, sharpness of intelligence and liveliness in imagination.

In reality, it had had an unexpected side effect since it created the premises for the blow suffered in the anonymity of the closed group as the Seminary of Bra, where he was not understood. However, it also became a solid ground that did not allow him to give up and for opening up to him the doors of a house, the Seminary of Alba, that he intensely loved and which restored in him the boost of the life spent in the environment of San Martino.

DFst  
13-16 **16** After the “pruning” suffered in Bra, Giacomo Alberione comes to Alba, moved by a renewed interior boost and gifted with uncommon aptitudes: “...gifted with refined, profound, also sophisticated intelligence and rich in originality, of imagination and of intuition. He loves to think and reflect. He wants to dig deep into himself...”<sup>12</sup>

Almost ten years had passed since the young Alberione started to cultivate his vocation for the priesthood. The initial light was like a fertile seed that had put on deep roots, had become a small well-cared-for plant and now, after the pruning, was already ready to show all its vitality.

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<sup>12</sup> F. TORBIDONI, *Un ritratto grafologico del giovane Giacomo Alberione come risulta dai manoscritti (1900-1907)*, in AA.VV., *Conoscere Don Alberione (1884-1907), Strumenti per una biografia*, Edizioni del Centro di Spiritualità Paolina, Roma, 1994, p. 315.

**17** The Lord did not take long to intervene. On the night of passage between the two centuries, God's glory enveloped him with light (cf. Lk 2:9), invited him and drew him into his intimacy by manifesting his love through his Son present in the Eucharist: "The Son of God... has loved me and given himself up for me" (Gal 2:20).

DFst  
57ff

**18** In the intimacy of that "Come to me, all you" (Mt 11:28), Alberione felt his whole person was involved and thus he understood the many church and social realities, especially the needs of his time and of the "Priest's true mission" (*ADds* 15). In that moment of intimacy, the Master opened his mind and heart by associating them with himself in view of a special mission: "What Toniolo said about the duty of being Apostles today and of using the means exploited by the opposition made sense to him. He felt deeply obliged to prepare himself to do something for the Lord and for the women and men of the new century with whom he would spend his life" (*ADds* 15).

DFst  
83-85  
93-95

**19** After years of commitment and the sufferings just overcome, this experience of light became the source of a joyful and irresistible new boost: "His mind and heart became so fixed on the Eucharist, the Gospel, the Pope, the new century, the new means, on the need for a new band of apostles, that from then on these things always dominated his thoughts, his prayer, his spiritual work, his yearnings. He felt an obligation to serve the church, the women and men of the new age, and to work with others in an organized way" (*ADds* 20).<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Fr. Alberione's affirmations find confirmation in the recent approaches on his youthful writings: "In Transactional Analysis, it is affirmed that at the start of life (existential script) a person establishes his life plan that could be defined only by a single word; hence he does it still at the start of his adult life, for every important change in it he redefines the plan by altering or confirming it, or, still confirming it in part (existential rough draft). The existential script of Giacomo is definable with a DOPO (AFTER) (true happiness and love comes only *after* death, now, for the little life that is left me I shall be strong and gentle and good in order to be great). Also at the end of adolescence, the script choice can be summarized in an "After", which, however, projects as reward a hard and long work..." (M. T. ROMANINI, *Lettura ermeneutica analitico-transazionale*

DFst 17ff 27-28      **20** Seeing himself cast against God's point of view, Giacomo Alberione found the true basis of his whole life: awareness brought to recognize his own limitations and the joyous attachment to the faithfulness of the Master and Lord who did not abandon him. Thus he strongly states: "He had a clear grasp of his own nothingness, while concurrently he experienced in the Eucharist, '*vobiscum sum usque ad consummationem sæculi*'." (ADds 16).

DFst 14-16 84      **21** In his journey of formation towards priesthood, the conviction of being loved by the Lord brought Alberione to correspond by wholly giving himself, or by neglecting nothing that would be useful to the development of his entire personality in view of the mission for which he was called: "His overriding thought was that in view of one's own salvation and in view of a more fruitful apostolate one needs to develop the whole human personality: mind, will and heart; this was the meaning of the inscription that he placed on the tomb of his friend Borello (1904)" (ADds 22).

DFst 17      **22** It fits to anticipate here that these youthful experiences of Fr. Alberione would be mirrored in DFst, especially in the part concerning the Way of Purification, understood as a profound and joyous search for being attuned with God's plan.

DFst 55-56 63-64 88 95-96      **23** In the Seminary of Alba, formators frequently spoke of the passage of the century, also in terms used by the encyclical *Tametsi Futura*,<sup>14</sup> about *Il Redentore*, that described the ills of society by drawing inspiration from the first chapter of the *Letter to the Romans*. When they spoke of the forces alive in the Church, they were certainly using a tone similar, for example, to that adopted by the *La Civiltà Cattolica* in present-

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*degli scritti giovanili di Don Alberione*, in AA.VV., *Conoscere Don Alberione (1884-1907), Strumenti per una biografia*, a publication by the Centro di Spiritualità Paolina, Rome, 1994, p. 246). Also based on a comparative study of his handwriting, it shows that the young Alberione "must have minced his sentiments and his vocation; he must have gone deeply into the consequences and implications of the choices made and those to be made" (F. TORBIDONI, *Un ritratto grafologico...*, op. cit., p. 315).

<sup>14</sup> Cf. R. F. ESPOSITO, *L'enciclica "Tametsi Futura" e la notte eucaristica del secolo*, Società San Paolo, Casa Generalizia, Roma 2000, pp. 320.

ing the flourishing, in number of members and activities, of the old religious Orders, the rise of new Institutions, the multiplication of Institutes for women, the novelty and the vastness of the apostolate of lay women and men.<sup>15</sup>

**24** Prepared by these teachings, Alberione felt that the “particular enlightenment” that “came from the Host” not only did a great change in him, or a change of course similar to the conversion of St. Paul, but it would also raise the same change in numerous persons: “Projecting himself mentally into the future he felt that in the new century generous people would experience what he was feeling; and that teamed up into an organization they could bring about what Toniolo kept on repeating, ‘Unite, if the enemy finds us alone he will defeat us one by one’.” (*ADds* 17).

DFst  
40  
74-78

**25** Many are the testimonies on the constant dedication of Alberione to his studies and to his continuous reflection.<sup>16</sup> As an example to confirm the young Alberione’s dedication in his response to God’s call, one could take into consideration what remains of his readings of the *Storia universale*, by Cesare Cantù, or the *Quaderno 36*,<sup>17</sup> which witnesses to his intellectual thirst, his universalistic openness, and his commitment for suitable documentation to the point of affirming “He learned a great deal from everything” (*ADds* 90).

DFst  
51

**26** From among his writings as a young man, published in “*Sono creato per amare Dio*”<sup>18</sup> (= SC), we find a nine-page manuscript on the Bible (cf. SC 155-180). They are very significant pages because they show how Alberione wanted to

DFst  
52-54

<sup>15</sup> Cf. R. BALLERINI, *Il cattolicesimo cadente il secolo XIX*, in *La Civiltà Cattolica*, series XVII, vol. V, quad. 1166, 21 January 1899, pp. 170-175.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. G. BARBERO, *Il sacerdote Giacomo Alberione...*, op. cit., pp. 114ff.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Manoscritti di Don Alberione, *Quaderno 36*, edited by Centro di Spiritualità Paolina, 1993. Useful aids for knowing this Quaderno: Guido GANDOLFO, *Per un primo approccio alla lingua di Alberione nei manoscritti*, in AA.VV., *Conoscere Don Alberione (1884-1907), Strumenti per una biografia*, Edizioni Centro Spiritualità Paolina, Roma, 1994, pp. 145ff; Angelo COLACRAI, “Dio” e “Storia”. *Un profilo dello studente Alberione (1901-1907)*, in *Ibid.*, pp. 165ff.

<sup>18</sup> G. ALBERIONE, “*Sono creato per amare Dio*” (*I was created in order to love God*), edited by G. Barbero, Edizioni Paoline, 1980.

assume many of the notes of the *Quaderno 36* in order to compose a small monograph on the Bible, “the book of humanity... divine book,” that by now occupied the center of his attention. One could see how that “He learned a great deal from everything” had two unifying references: prayer and listening to God’s Word. The solemn enunciation at the start goes in this direction: “The true support of the affections of the heart, mover in the invisible kingdom of thought, in the intellectual and moral, individual and social union, that runs through the centuries, that expands in all nations is the power of the word. Man speaks and God speaks; the former with limited means manifests his mental words, the latter with infinite means, just as Infinite is He Himself. He speaks by *printing* his Word in nature; thus man, studying nature, studies God’s Word, as it was said of Socrates who knew Christ because he studied nature. Man, however, is not equipped to adequately and directly understand the divine truths in nature; thus God, according to Tertullian’s idea held by St. Thomas, adjusted himself to man’s capacity, by gathering his words in a simple, sublime book, the Bible” (SC 155).

DFst  
51-52  
80

**27** In a page, probably written in 1954, Alberione points out different persons who had helped him in the journey of those years: “In the journey of my life since 1902, there were holy persons who decisively gave me orientations, Can. Danusso towards the devotion to Jesus Master Way, Truth and Life; Can. Chiesa, in my spiritual and intellectual formation; Msgr. Re the ever secure guide during the general crisis of modernism; Can. Priero in his example of love for catechism, the Eucharist, the Thomist Philosophy, the Sacred Scriptures; then, many other persons confirmed, made to grow, ran, walked with all sorts of help. The three devotions were lighted up, religious life seemed ever the secure path, the Lord did everything”.<sup>19</sup>

DFst  
96-97

**28** In “*Sono creato per amare Dio*” (*I was created in order to love God*) Alberione points out how in the providential design of his vocation the protection of Mary came (cf. SC 129). He soon took the path of witnessing to this

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<sup>19</sup> G. ALBERIONE, *Taccuini (Notebooks)*, no. 2.

grace in a manner better suited with the fire he was nourishing within himself: to be counted among the apostles of today by becoming an apostle-writer. After a first attempt to publish,<sup>20</sup> he then engaged himself in preparing his first book on the Blessed Virgin of Graces,<sup>21</sup> the first draft of which dates back to 1906.<sup>22</sup>

### 1.1.2 “I hereby give him... the pledge of everlasting priesthood, because he was zealous on behalf of his God” (cf. Nm 25:11-12)

29 Knowledge of the Lord brings about a more sensitive awareness of the risks and evils that afflict his people. Ancient and new idols are always reborn, sowing that enmity that deforms humanity’s face. Thus, day by day, the young Alberione deepened his sense of prayer made that night at the beginning of the twentieth century: “his prayer... was for the century to be born in Christ, in the Eucharist; for new apostles to reform the law, education, literature, the press, morals; for the Church to give fresh impetus to mission; for good use to be made of the new means of apostolate; for society to welcome the great teachings of Leo XIII’s encyclicals—explained to the clerics by Canon Chiesa—especially with regard to social questions and Church freedom” (*ADds* 19).

DFst  
21-27

<sup>20</sup> Cf. G. BARBERO, *Introduzione*, in G. ALBERIONE, *Mazzo di fiori a Maria Santissima*, Edizioni Archivio Storico Generale Famiglia Paolina, no. 4, Roma, 1981. In *Mazzo di fiori a Maria Santissima*, the young Alberione limited himself to copying “the book of Contessa Rosa di San Marco; he thought of drawing out of it the outline, the thought and also the verbal expression, although he allowed himself the liberty of abbreviating, modifying as how his intimate feelings made him” (*Ibid.*, p. 5). “The choice may have been determined precisely by the title of the book, *Un Mazzo di fiori*, that brought to mind the Madonna dei Fiori di Bra (Cuneo), a most venerated sanctuary of the same name... His mother brought Giacomino, still a child, before the altar of the Madonna dei Fiori, and she consecrated him to her many times” (*Ibid.*, p. 6).

<sup>21</sup> G. ALBERIONE, *La B. Vergine delle Grazie in Cherasco* (La Madonna). Memorie - Ossequi, Alba, Tip. Albese di N. Durando, 1912, 136 pp., 8 ill., 15.5 cm.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. *Lavori vari*, no. 4. Unpublished notebook, restored and kept at the Centro di Spiritualità Paolina.

DFst  
21-22

**30** Giacomo Alberione could have moved to the Seminary of Turin; instead, he chose to remain in the Seminary of Alba because of its family spirit that encouraged participation, the set of studies attuned with the progress of sciences and the needs of the times, and the spirituality incarnated in a strong pastoral, social and liturgical spirit.

DFst  
17.28  
37.67

**31** At the same time that Alberione was taking the Theology Courses there, the new chapel of the Seminary was built. Its decoration comprises a perfect synthesis of Alberione's formation. Everything begins from the Trinity who reveals his plan of salvation in the coming of the Son and the gift of the Spirit; from it follow: Mary's role in the Incarnation; the Eucharist as center of Christian life; the Gospel presented according to the configuration of the four evangelists in such a way that from it comes the name of the city of A-L-B-A; the beatitudes and the *via crucis* expressions of Christian life; liturgy as *sacrificium laudis*; the Bishop's ministry at the service of God's Kingdom; the figures of Mary and of the Church; the saints on whose footprints God's people walks, especially the seminarians; and the niche, behind the moveable altar piece, for the cultivation of special devotions.

DFst  
13-14  
41-42  
49

**32** The saints depicted represent the basic values of the future priests' formation. In the first place, the patron saints of the Seminary: Mary, as Mother of Good Counsel, for the full adherence to God's will; Charles Borromeo for pastoral zeal; Francis of Sales, for meekness and spiritual direction; Philip Neri, for joy and humor. Then, two doctors of the Church: Alphonsus de' Liguori, for moral theology; Thomas Aquinas for dogmatic theology; and two witnesses; Lawrence, martyr and diocesan patron saint, and Aloysius Gonzaga, for purity and heroic service. Finally, inside the medallions, two examples of youth: Stanislaus Kostka and John Berchmans.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> In 1933, Fr. Alberione proposes a list of saints to imitate during formation: "Let us look up on Priest Saints: 1. St. Gregory the Great - Pastoral. 2. St. Bernard - —. 3. St. Francis of Sales - Ascetics. 4. St. Alphonsus de' Lig. - Morals. 5. St. Bonaventure - Mysticism. 6. St. Thomas Aq. - Philosophy. 7. St. Augustine - Theology" (*LV01*, p. 163).

**33** Approaching the ordination to the priesthood, Giacomo Alberione knew himself as rooted in the Church's Tradition, while acquiring a deep knowledge of spiritual life,<sup>24</sup> aware of having intensely attended to his own intel-

DFst  
51-54

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<sup>24</sup> The pontificate of Pius X and his program outlined in the encyclical *E Supremi Apostolatus* had an important influence on the priestly formation of the young Alberione: "Nonetheless, inasmuch as it pleased the divine will to raise Our lowliness to such sublimity of power, We take courage in Him who comforts Us; and setting Ourselves to work, supported by the power of God, We proclaim not having, in our Supreme Pontificate, no other program if not precisely this: 'to sum up all things in Christ' (Eph 1:10) in such a manner that 'Christ is all and in all' (Col 3:11). [...]"

"God's interests shall be Ours; for these We are resolute to expend all Our energies and life itself. Because of this, if anyone asks of Us a rallying word, that may be an expression of our Will, We shall always give this and none other: "Restore all things in Christ." [...]"

"Nonetheless, Venerable Brethren, this pleading of men on the majesty and kingdom of God, no matter how We work on it, shall never be obtained if not through Jesus Christ. 'For no one,' so the Apostle tells us, 'can lay a foundation other than the one that is there, namely, Jesus Christ' (1Cor 3:11). It is Christ alone, 'whom the Father has consecrated and sent into the world' (Jn 10:36), refulgence of his glory, the very imprint of his being (Heb 1:3), true God and true man; without whom no one can truly know God, as it befits our salvation, so that 'no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son wishes to reveal Him' (Mt 11:27). From this follows that to restore all things in Christ and lead men back to subjection to God is one and the same purpose. Hereby We are urged to turn Our concerns to lead mankind under Christ's rule; only through this would We have led it also to God.

"It is your task, Venerable Brethren, to support Our efforts through holiness, through knowledge, through your experience, and above all through your zeal for divine glory; do not have any other goal but that Christ be formed in each one.

"What means or task should be used to achieve such a great purpose, it seems superfluous for Us to point out; they are obvious by themselves. Your primary concern should be to form Christ in those who, by duty or vocation, are destined to form him in others. We refer to priests, O Venerable Brethren. This being so, inasmuch as it has been conferred to priests that they should know, amidst the people with whom they live, that they have that same mission that Paul attested to have received through these tender words, 'My children, for whom I am again in labor until Christ be formed in You!' (Gal 2:20). 'For me life is Christ' (Phil 1:21). Because of this, although the exhortation to aim at the perfect man, by the measure of Christ's full maturation to the extent of the full stature of Christ (Eph 4:13) is addressed to all, nonetheless, it is addressed to those who exercise the priestly ministry; as they are therefore called other Christ, not only through the communication of power, but above all through the imitation



lectual formation, to have tried to understand the present-day needs of the Church and of humanity.

DFst  
84

**34** Considering the journey taken, Alberione noticed two providential presences on whose footsteps he could integrate his own ministry: Fr. Giovanni Battista Montersino and Canon Francesco Chiesa.

To Fr. Montersino he wrote: “While I approach the sacred orders, I remember the start of my vocation that comes from your instructions, from the catechism classes, from your example of zeal for souls. If therefore I shall have the fortune of binding forever my life to God’s service and to consecrate my strength to his glory and the sanctification of souls, I owe it all to you. Hence, while I am aware of my unworthiness and my heart is filled with joy mitigated only by the confusion of my nothingness, I bless the Lord for having given you, a good shepherd, to enlighten the first steps of my life.”<sup>25</sup>

For his future, Giacomo Alberione sees his priesthood bound with the extraordinary personality of Francesco Chiesa. He, in fact, did not disappoint Fr. Alberione as he himself witnessed towards the end of his life: “From him I received teachings, spirit and guidance; the daily help of many years under many forms. His life was exceptional and heroic

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of the deeds through which they must bear in themselves the same image of Christ. [...]

“Inasmuch as it is not true that progress in the sciences extinguishes faith, but rather ignorance, thus it happens where ignorance dominates, there unbelief does greater damage. And this is the reason why Christ commanded the apostles, ‘Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations’ (Mt 28:19).

“However, in order that from this apostolate and zeal for teaching, the hoped for fruit be had and in all Christ is formed, let everyone bear in mind, O Venerable Brethren, that nothing is more effective than charity. This is so because the Lord is not found in commotion (1Kgs 19:11). In vain can one hope to attract souls to God with a bitter zeal: so that instead of harshly confronting errors, and bitterly repress vices; often this does more harm than good. The Apostle indeed exhorted Timothy: ‘convince, reprimand, encourage’ but he also added ‘through all patience’ (2Tm 4:2). Surely, Jesus left us with such examples: ‘Come to me,’ so we find him to have said—‘all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest’ (Mt 11:28)” (cf. *La Civiltà Cattolica*, series XVIII, vol. XII, quad. 1280, 7 October 1903, pp. 129-149). (Translation ours).

<sup>25</sup> Letter dated 16 April 1906. Cf. G. BARBERO, *Il sacerdote Giacomo Alberione...*, op. cit., pp. 135-136.

in every virtue; his zeal addressed to every person and to every initiative; teacher who, with knowledge, communicated the spirit; model parish priest”.<sup>26</sup>

**35** At the moment of the ordination, Giacomo kept within him a grandiose image of the priesthood<sup>27</sup> and, few years later, he would communicate it in one of his programmatic works *Appunti di Teologia Pastorale*:<sup>28</sup> “The priest therefore cannot be one who only lives *for himself*: He cannot have as a motto the words: *I – God*. It is absolutely necessary that he works for the salvation of others, that he writes on his banner: *I – God – People*” (p. 1). “The priest therefore is not simply *learned*: not even simply *a saint*; but he is *learned-saint*, one who avails with both science and holiness to become an *apostle*, that is, in order to save souls” (p. 2). “Also those books that write about the quality and the duties of ecclesiastics very often are suffused in dealing at length with study or piety, but very little about zeal. And yet zeal is the most essential part of the priesthood; it is the purpose for which science and piety must be useful; it is as if the distinguishing mark of the apostle. Zeal must be developed. It is born of a great spirit of piety that makes one long intensely for God’s honor and the salvation of souls: it makes use, for an indispensable means, of priestly knowledge; while in its exercise it presupposes that the priest should

DFst  
84-85  
100

<sup>26</sup> G. ALBERIONE, *Istruzione I*, in *Ut perfectus sit homo Dei*, Mese di Esercizi Spirituali, aprile 1960, Vol. IV, Quarta Settimana, E. P., Ostia (Roma), 1962, p. 7. Cf. *Ibid.*, in the single volume: G. ALBERIONE, *Ut perfectus sit homo Dei*, Month of Spiritual Exercises, April 1960, St Pauls, 1998.

<sup>27</sup> It is significant that in the sermon held the day of his first Mass (30 June 1907) in the parish church of San Martino in Cherasco, the young priest wanted to quote Jesus’ invitation “*Venite ad me omnes*” something that deeply struck him on the night of the century’s passage: “Spiritual graces – Jesus cured so many sick persons, consoled so many afflicted ones, enlightened so many persons in doubt, strengthened many who were weak. Widows, orphans, the poor, the old folks, the young, the rich and the poor: he has graces for everyone because he is infinite in power and in mercy: listen to his words: *Venite ad me omnes qui onerati et laborati estis et ego reficiam vos*: come to me all of you who are burdened either by sins or by defects, or by the loss of loved ones, or by material calamities: come all of you: I will refresh and console you” (Q007).

<sup>28</sup> Cf. G. ALBERIONE, *Appunti di Teologia Pastorale* (Pratica del Ministero Sacerdotale per il giovane Clero), Cav. Pietro Marietti Editore, Torino, 1915<sup>2</sup>.

have the material means necessary for his existence so he could dedicate all or almost all his time for souls” (pp. 5-6).

DFst  
21-22  
84-85

**36** Fueled by this spirit, after his priestly ordination on 29 June 1907, the young priest Giacomo Alberione manifests his dynamism especially when, upon returning as assistant pastor of San Bernardo Abate in Narzole, he assumes the office of Spiritual Director of the Seminary of Alba.

Working as Librarian, he tries to keep the Library updated; he engages himself in the teaching of Liturgy and declares, “Then when he became master of ceremonies and sacristan in the seminary, and the Bishop’s master of ceremonies with the task of preparing the ceremonial book, he enjoyed even better the prayer of the Church and [praying] with the Church” (*ADds* 72).

He dedicated himself with special efforts to all the initiatives marked with a social spirit: “Providence arranged a lengthy preparation for this. [There was] the work undertaken for the Catholic University of Milan (1905-1906) to collect contributions for the promotion Committee to found it. Courses of social conferences and social studies during his Theology years and, later on, conferences of a social nature that he took part in at the request of his superiors, his cooperation in social organizations and works, and contacts with Catholic Action people such as Cardinal Maffi, Professor Toniolo, Count Paganuzzi and the accountant Rezzara” (*ADds* 58-59).

DFst  
85.88

**37** In every instance, however, Alberione had a focal point that he did not abandon since the night of the start of the century, that is, his special vocation. It was not that of becoming a curate or a parish priest, as he confided to a friend: “The idea of gathering around me young people seems a pleasant thought... so many young people like Don Bosco, in order to launch them in the apostolate.”<sup>29</sup>

DFst  
76-77

**38** Fr. Alberione saw and lived everything under the point of view of this mission, examining everything with the four ends of Eymard: “From Canon Chiesa he had learned to transform everything into a theme of meditation and prayer

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<sup>29</sup> Cf. G. BARBERO, *Il sacerdote Giacomo Alberione...*, op. cit., p. 154.

fore the Divine Master—a prayer of adoration, thanksgiving, atonement and supplication” (*ADds* 68).

It was not just a matter of clarifying one’s inner thoughts, an end in itself, but Alberione felt the need of evaluating everything in view of a total self-giving and to make proper choices “so he might be prepared for new duties” (*ADds* 55). And this was in a climate of serious disturbances and disorientation, grave ills and social, economic and political needs.

**39** Considering the different church initiatives and taking part personally in them, he declared that at a certain moment he experienced a new light that brought him to take the “idea of an organization of Catholics to that of an organization of religious” (*ADds* 7): “Toward 1910 he took a definitive step. It became much clearer that the writers, technical personnel and promoters [would have to be] *religious men and women*” (*ADds* 24).

DFst  
90-91

Hence, he saw the need to launch a new reality, yes, but fully participant in the ecclesial fabric, assuming the evangelical radicality, thanks to the religious consecration.

**40** Perhaps the Pauline Family has not yet adequately grasped the capacity for reflection and dedication to discernment of Fr. Alberione along the line of the charism of his foundations. It is therefore proper that we consider briefly two features of his itinerary: his ministry as Spiritual Director of the Seminary and the spiritual exercises.

DFst  
80

**41** We have available four very precious tools for better knowing Fr. Alberione and his capacity for reflection, study and documentation: three *Notebooks*<sup>30</sup> and the *Quaderno di Indice*.<sup>31</sup>

DFst  
11-12

The confrontation between these *Notebooks* and the *Quaderno di Indice* allows the tracing of the development of

<sup>30</sup> Cf. A. DAMINO, *Quaderni autografi di Don Alberione (anteriori al 1914)*, in *Conoscere Don Alberione nostro Primo Maestro*, Informazioni dell’Archivio Storico Generale della Famiglia Paolina, n. 3 - novembre 1981, pp. 9-18. These three notebooks are classified as *Lavori vari*: 1) Outlines of meditations (Notes), 1912-1954 (*LV01*), 187 p.; 2) Outlines and indices of meditations, 1908-1912 (*LV02*); 3) Outlines for spiritual exercises, 1909 [?]-1913 (*LV03*).

<sup>31</sup> Fr. Alberione had made a *Quaderno di Indice* (Index Notebook) of his sermons, which, in turn, are contained in about ten manuscript Notebooks.

the meditations proposed by Fr. Alberione in the Seminary of Alba, especially from 1908 to 1914, and to notice how they were accurately planned and prepared in writing. Not only that, but, from time to time, Fr. Alberione evaluated not only his own performance but also the results obtained from the seminarians. He seriously evaluated with great frankness every formation proposal both those of his own<sup>32</sup> and those of other confreres.<sup>33</sup>

DFst 80 **42** There is one that summarizes in one expression what was held by the Fathers of the Church as the fundamental condition for being a “spiritual father”: “The essential and indispensable condition for one to become a spiritual father is above all that of becoming spiritual himself”.<sup>34</sup> On his part, the Bishop, Msgr. Re, recognized in Fr. Giacomo Alberione, a year after the latter’s priestly ordination, the charisma of spiritual fatherhood.

DFst 20-27 **43** The outlines of the first two meditations given to the Clerics by him as Spiritual Director reveal that Fr. Alberione was fully prepared for the new ministry.

In the meditation of 27 October 1908, a week after his return to the Seminary from Narzole, he proposes two

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<sup>32</sup> In the *Quaderni*, Fr. Alberione used to add notes, after the meditation text, like this that is found after the second meditation on “*I believe*”: “*Place* - the whole seminary. *Date* - 29 October 1911. *Weather* - Beautiful. *Preparation* - Scarce. *Duration* - 30 min. *Delivery* - Poor. *Effect* - Satisfactory” (G. Alberione, *Quaderno 50*, p. 23). In *Appunti di Teologia Pastorale*, Fr. Alberione writes: “Taking notes of these things, the preacher shall have a norm to follow inasmuch as he is bound to repeat that sermon: he shall remedy the defects committed and shall keep what was good” (*op. cit.*, p. 258).

<sup>33</sup> For example: “Spiritual Exercises to the Ven. Clerics - October 1991 - Preacher - Fr. Giusta S. J. - quite impractical in application. Generally not liked - Scarce fruits - did not let people reflect seriously. Did not enter the true spirit of the Spiritual Exercises” (*LV03*, p. 30); “Spiritual Exercises to the Ven. Clerics. June 1912 - preachers: Fr. Latini and Fr. Mario (Missionaries). Very practical in application - very much liked - Abundant fruits, inasmuch as it made people reflect much” (*Ibid.*, p. 30); “Spiritual Exercises to the Clerics - October 1913. Preacher: Fr. Cerutti: practical and intimate” (*Ibid.*, p. 25b).

<sup>34</sup> Cf. IRÉNÉE HAUSHERR, *Direction spirituelle chez les spirituels orientaux*, in AA.VV., *Direction spirituelle*, in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*, fasc. XX-XXI, 1956, col. 1015.

teachings on the need and on the manner of making meditations, the basis for growth in the relationship with God (faith-hope-charity) and for the development of one's personality (reason - will - heart). In but two lines he traces a plan—with an opening at 180 degrees—of extreme importance: take away evil by seeking to be attuned with God's plan ("Synchronize a clock") in order to give one's self in the apostolate or "do good to others."<sup>35</sup>

In the three points on the "manner of making the meditation"<sup>36</sup> one can already clearly read the indications on the nature of meditation, on the dialogical character of Fr. Alberione's orientation and on the project that he has in mind to do.

These three points, considered in relation with those already said in the second meditation on the next day, allow one to notice how Fr. Alberione already had a profound knowledge of the affective and effective spirituality of St. Francis of Sales,<sup>37</sup> of the dynamics of the *Exercises* of St. Ignatius and of the works of spirituality as that of Chaignon<sup>38</sup> and of Faber.<sup>39</sup> A look on these *Notebooks* is enough for one to see how many authors he also explicitly quoted: St. Alphonsus, Scaramelli, Scupoli, Grignon de Montfort, etc.

<sup>35</sup> "On Meditation - 27 October 1908.

Need -

- a) for not leaving stagnant God's grace (faith - hope - charity)
- b) for not leaving stagnant natural gifts (reason - will - heart)
- c) for taking away bad sayings (Synchronize a clock)
- d) for doing good to others"

<sup>36</sup> "Ways of doing it:

Take note:

1<sup>st</sup> do not want to judge the book or the preacher

2<sup>nd</sup> speak up as well if there shall be useful things for meditation

3<sup>rd</sup> we shall make great exercises – *via purgativa* (way of purification) – hate sin – *via illuminativa* (way of illumination), virtues of J. [Jesus] C. [Christ] – *via unitiva* (way of union), the rewards" (LV02, p. 1). Points "a" and "b" of the same outline on the Need for meditation correspond respectively to "1<sup>st</sup>" and "2<sup>nd</sup>", of the Manner of doing it; and points "c" and "d" correspond to "3<sup>rd</sup>". These seven points are broadly developed in DFst.

<sup>37</sup> At the end of LV03 Fr. Alberione composes an index of 56 topics for meditation and discernment inspired after the "Spirit of St. Franc. of Sales."

<sup>38</sup> P. CHAIGNON, *Il prete santificato dalla pratica dell'orazione* ossia *Corso di meditazioni per sacerdoti*, voll. I-III, Venice, 1907<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>39</sup> F. G. FABER, *Progressi dell'anima nella vita spirituale*, Cav. Pietro Marietti, Torino, 1872.

DFst 80 **44** We are still far from drawing an exhaustive picture of Fr. Alberione's activities as Spiritual Director of the Alba Seminary. It is enough for now that we have an authoritative testimony, still unpublished, coming from none other than the "Sacred Consistorial Congregation."

With a letter dated 29 August 1911, Protocol no. 704, the Sacred Congregation sent to Msgr. Re "the summary made by the Consulter on the observations of the Apostolic Visitation of the Seminary." The summary presents a part regarding the "praiseworthy" aspects and a second regarding the elements on which "attention has to be paid."

On the third point of the "praiseworthy" aspects there is this affirmation: "for having a very good Spiritual Father who accomplishes well his ministry and neglects nothing for the cultivation of the spirit of piety of his clerics."

Among the things for which "attention has to be paid" under letter D, there is this negative admonition which, however, further boosts the positive evaluation of Fr. Alberione. "D: *Spiritual direction*: 1) In spite of the fact that the Spiritual Father does everything to accomplish his mission, undoubtedly, the spiritual direction would have an advantage if the spiritual Father were exonerated from the 9 hours of classes that he currently holds."

DFst 44-48 **45** The intense ministry performed by Fr. Alberione does not impede him from doing a still more radical search of God's will regarding his personal mission: "During the summer vacations (from 1909 to 1918), he used to make his annual retreat at one religious Institute or another. In his free time he sought to approach Superiors to learn the ways they took in the recruitment and formation of people" (*ADds* 36).

In *LV03* we find various notes of sermons taken down by Fr. Alberione in different courses of Spiritual Exercises he participated in at the Santuario di S. Ignazio (Lanzo Torinese) or with the Priests of Alba, as well as notes taken of sermons heard during the Clerics' Exercises in the Seminary.

Although the outlines of meditations and instructions are numbered, it is not possible to identify immediately to what courses they belong inasmuch as the notes were taken without following a strict order of the *Notebooks*.

The meditation and instruction outlines of *LV03* nonetheless prove not just the efforts Fr. Alberione—wholly dedicated to his own Spiritual Exercises—to discern God’s will but they also constitute an important background for locating many points of *Donec formetur*.<sup>40</sup>

**46** In particular, take note that on page 15 of *LV03*, notes on the “Exercises in S. Ignazio di Lanzo – 9-11(?) July 1911”.<sup>41</sup> In meditation I, on the “Goal of the Priest,”<sup>42</sup> one of the points is: “*4<sup>th</sup> We are other J. C.: now J. is*”. Likewise on page 28b, Meditation VIII bears this title “*J.C. is*.”<sup>43</sup> This meditation outline, probably dated 1911, assumes a special importance inasmuch as it perhaps constitutes the oldest outline of meditation on Christ Way, Truth and Life among the writings of Fr. Alberione.

DFst  
17-18  
37-43

**47** We must consider that between October 1911 and the end of 1912, Fr. Alberione proposes to the seminarians

DFst  
17.28  
37.52  
55.67  
68.76

<sup>40</sup> For example, “Inst. X To Imitate J. C.” (pp. 31a-31b) has as subtitle “Sancti estote, estote perfecti: but with J. C.’s sanctity” and ends thus: “...copy him, taking each morning some example of J. C., *meditating on it* and seeking during the day to translate it in us as a painter does when recopying a great model. Donec formetur Christus in vobis, exemplum dedi vobis... Vita Christi manifestetur in corporibus vestris (S. Paul)”. - DFst 44ff.

<sup>41</sup> It is possible that this course may have lasted more than three days as the notes, that are interrupted at page 17b with Instruction III, seems to be taken up on page 27 with Instruction VII. The theme, in fact, is inter-related. For example, the theme of mercy announced at the second point of the Introduction is taken up only in Meditation VII, on God’s Goodness (p. 27). Fr. Alberione made in this house also the exercises of July 1909 and 1910. Cf. G. BARBERO, *Il sacerdote Giacomo Alberione...*, op. cit., no. 14, p. 175. By itself, Meditation VIII could be connected to the “*Spiritual Exercises to Priests 1912 – Alba Seminary*”. In any case, though, this outline of meditation seems prior to 1913.

<sup>42</sup> This Meditation contains themes taken up also in DF: “Nosce te ipsum = and made better by: noverim me, noverim te (cf. DFst 17). ...From where do we come?... [...] Who are we?... [...] For what are we? In order to save others and with them, ourselves”.

<sup>43</sup> “*J. C is:*

*Way* = inasmuch as through his humanity we go to the divinity -

(by Him we were redeemed – humanity makes us know the attributes of the divinity [])

– we must have as well devotion to his humanity.

*Truth* = inasmuch as he communicated it to us.

*Life* = He who lives like Him can say: vivo ego jam non ego - vivit autem in me Christus.”



of Alba a cycle of meditations on the Apostles' Creed. These meditations are contained in *Quaderno 50*.

Let it be noted in the first place that, probably, the meditation entitled "And in JC his Only Son, our Lord" (pp. 75-83) made on 14/01/1912 to the entire Seminary of Alba, constitutes the development of the outline "J. C. is", just noted. Furthermore, let it be noted that the meditations of this cycle constitute an important frame of reference for the Theology of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit of *Donec formetur Christus in vobis*. The meditations of the four ends of the sacrifice of the Mass, contained in *Quaderno 52*, but above all the part of *Quaderno 53* regarding the Holy Spirit and the Church, have to be connected with *Quaderno 50*.<sup>44</sup>

DFst  
13-14

**48** The meditation outline on Christ, Way, Truth and Life allows us to consider another dimension of Fr. Alberione's commitment and of his process of discernment: the search for new answers to the new needs of the times not only through the Spiritual Exercises but also through team work. Fr. Alberione in fact seeks the help of many persons, especially of confreres in the priesthood, a help that involves a fruitful reflection in view of the teachings and the preparation of two programmatic works, *Appunti di Teologia Pas-*

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<sup>44</sup> In order to understand *Donec Formetur* it seems important to cite here the start of the first meditation of *Quaderno 53*, held on 31 March 1912, on the Holy Spirit as the Author of the Bible: "'I believe in the Holy Sprit.' The Bible. 1. The H. Spirit is he who in baptism gives us the virtue of faith, of hope, of charity: from Him come the gifts of wisdom and intelligence, of counsel and of fortitude, of knowledge, of piety, of fear. From him the eight evangelical beatitudes proclaimed by the Lord in the sermon of the mount: from him the twelve so-called fruits of the Holy Spirit described by St. Paul: from him the inspirations, from him the entire sanctification of the soul, by him the Church is made infallible and indefectible. In order to speak to you less inconveniently of the Holy Spirit I ought then to explain to you all these things: but time does not allow it. I cannot, however, set aside to give instructions on one of the works of the Holy Spirit. – It is of extraordinary importance: it forms today the objective of the most profound and most varied studies: I am referring to the Bible. I would be quite fortunate and grateful to the Holy Spirit if I could induce you a bit to read it also when alone: my efforts to do this sermon would have been repaid. I say then: 1. Let there be the Bible, 2. Something of its beauty - 3. What duties we have towards it" (p. 3).

*torale* and *La donna associata allo zelo sacerdotale*.<sup>45</sup> “Over a two-year period, in weekly conferences with a dozen priests, he studied methods for the good and up-to-date care of souls” (*ADds* 83).

**49** Providentially, at that time, the book *La cura d'anime nelle grandi città* (*The care of souls in big cities*),<sup>46</sup> by Enrico Swoboda, was translated in Italy, a book that represents an innovative application of social sciences for a pastoral that corresponds to the needs of the times. Also the work of Cornelius Krieg, *Scienza Pastorale*<sup>47</sup> is translated. It is an encyclopedia of pastoral unified in Christ Truth, Way and Life. These are works that allowed Fr. Alberione to crown his research: “For the pastoral characteristic in the Pauline apostolate, he took a great deal from two great teachers: Swoboda, *Cura d'anime nelle grandi città* and Krieg's four volume, *Teologia Pastorale*, which he read over and over for two years”<sup>48</sup> (*ADds* 84).

DFst  
37-40

**50** Another priceless contribution to Fr. Alberione's research was furnished by Cornelius Krieg with the publication of the translation of the work *Enciclopedia scientifica e metodologia de le scienze teologiche*.<sup>49</sup> Krieg's teaching on unified knowledge in the encyclopedia,<sup>50</sup> the formation cy-

DFst  
37-38  
49-50  
51-52  
74-78

<sup>45</sup> G. ALBERIONE, *La donna associata allo zelo sacerdotale* (Per il clero e per la donna), Alba, Scuola Tipografica “Piccolo Operaio”, 1915, pp. 342.

<sup>46</sup> E. SWOBODA, *La cura d'anime nelle grandi città*, Studio di Teologia Pastorale, Italian version edited by B. Cattaneo on the second German edition, F. Pustet, Rome 1912, pp. 392.

<sup>47</sup> C. KRIEG, *Scienza Pastorale*, Pastoral Theology in four books. Authorized version on the first German edition by Archpriest Antonio Boni.

<sup>48</sup> As regards Krieg, Fr. Alberione here refers especially to C. KRIEG, Libro I. *Cura d'anime speciale*, Cav. Pietro Marietti Editore, Torino, 1913, pp. 652. Cf. A. F. DA SILVA, *Cristo Via, Verità e Vita centro della vita, dell'opera e del pensiero di don G. Alberione*, in AA.VV., *L'eredità cristocentrica di don Alberione*, Edizioni Paoline, Cinisello Balsamo (Milano), 1989, pp. 241ff.

<sup>49</sup> C. KRIEG, *Enciclopedia scientifica e metodologia de le scienze teologiche*, (*Scientific encyclopedia and methodology of the theological sciences*), Libreria eccl. Editrice Cav. Ernesto Coletti, Roma, 1913, pp. 392.

<sup>50</sup> “The innate desire of knowing has given origin to two forms of Encyclopedia: to the compilation of summaries materially arranged; and to the formal or scientific Encyclopedia, presented systematically. Each of the two forms has its long history, both have an adequately harmonic progress, both respond to psychological laws. Formal encyclopedias on that

cle<sup>51</sup> and the method<sup>52</sup> has profoundly marked the personality and the entire work of Alberione.

subject matter came about slowly due to the ever growing amount of scientific knowledge, that has led to a more exact arrangement and to the systematic organization of them. In a special manner, after the half of XVIII century, alongside the material “lexicons,” there appear a growing number of encyclopedias, works that only include all branches of sciences and arts, and where the tendency for clarification and synthesis became even more accentuated but where there is still an attempt to reproduce the mutual connection among sciences, with particular sciences, or the unified body of all human knowledge in a systematic synthesis” (*Ibid.*, p. 10).

<sup>51</sup> “During the classic age, however, the learned Greek, in order to be considered “learned,” had to have an encyclopedic culture or a specified conventional scholastic education. Whoever took the κύκλος was considered ἐγκύκλιος, “learned”, παιδευτός, but not a specialist, a scientist; who did not was ἀκύκλιος or ἀπαιδευτός [ἀπαιδευτος?], that is, unlearned; he did not possess the παιδεία ἐν κύκλῳ. With κύκλος meant in Greek so much the circle as the circular movement as well as the *field of knowledge* considering that knowledge arranged according to determined laws forms a circle, the middle of which is the fundamental idea. In contrast with παιδεία ἐλευθέρα, there were, in a lower level, τέχναι (βάνανσοι), the purely mechanical arts that were not useful for the perfection of the free man as the Greeks thought it, and in a superior level there were the superior sciences. Only the first represented the learned for the Greeks and hence, the true man. Over and above, special culture was cultivated through philosophy” (*Ibid.*, p. 13).

<sup>52</sup> As guide, the encyclopedia “has two tasks: it must be introductory and directive... Each science, like theology or jurisprudence, forms a closed circle of knowledge, or of cognitions, with the fecund idea at the middle and the various parts or members, which, like branches, originate as if like rays from the fundamental idea (principium, ἀρχή), and go back to the center. The particular branches all together form the whole (*totum*); or the totality of a science, intimately bound by a single principle (or idea); they have in it the only center. Thus, for Theology, the idea of God and, for jurisprudence, the concept of law, constitutes the fundamental concept (fundamental or general idea). Now the encyclopedia has precisely to bring out clearly the fundamental idea of a science, and to indicate how from it the other parts originate, without however having to deal or perform these material parts” (*Ibid.*, pp. 4-5). “The encyclopedia, however, also has a *practical purpose* because it aims at being a *directive and guide* as to how a specified science is studied... Thus another task falls on the encyclopedia, that of being a Methodology, or in order to indicate to the student the right path and the most conducive means for the purpose, how he ought to enter the spirit of a science, and if he assimilates its content. This is the practical side, or the *teaching-introductory* element of the encyclopedia. Thus, the encyclopedia does not only want and ought not to teach theoretically, but at the one time it must guide and practically train towards study, if not to a profession, to life. Making the nature of science and its connections with the branches known

Especially as regards DF, it is important to take into consideration Krieg's teachings on the three methods of moral theology<sup>53</sup> and, in particular, of his considerations on the mystical method.<sup>54</sup>

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and showing us in this orientation how we have to assimilate the spiritual content of a science and translate it one day into concrete life, the encyclopedia becomes contents and methods oriented. As methodology, the encyclopedia must indicate how one has to prepare, regulate and pursue the study of the science, how the scholar may elevate, through researches, thoughts and original observations, and furthermore what qualities of heart and will he has to possess so that his study becomes fruitful" (*Ibid.*, pp. 6-7).

<sup>53</sup> "Moral theology must accomplish a threefold task whose composition requires a special treatment of the moral law. In conformity with it, three methods related to the conception and exposition of Moral theology have also been historically developed: the *speculative* (scholastic), the *mystical* and the *practical-casuistic*. These three directions in the treatment of morals correspond to the three paths that were opened to us in order to achieve the goal of acting morally. The law of the N. T. makes eternal life depend first on the *knowledge of truth* (*conoscenza della verità*) (Jn 17:3) [one, probably by mistake, reads "*conseguenza*" *della verità*], then follows the *fulfillment of the precepts* (Mt 19:17) and finally comes *union with Christ* (Jn 6:57). According to how it is directed by one or the other, the exposition of moral theology assumes a different character. Scientific treatment therefore must tend to unite the three ways without exclusively professing one or the other method, because they in fact converge among themselves, integrate each other and support one another. Precisely in the field of morals, there ought to be a wise and discrete timing of the aforementioned methods of research and of exposition; every unilateral treatment leads to a certain deviation because, in the speculative method, life and practice are not adequately considered, and in the casuistic method, the fundamental laws of morality easily disappear and are weakened and forgotten" (C. KRIEG, *Enciclopedia scientifica e metodologia de le scienze teologiche*, Libreria eccl. Editrice Cav. Ernesto Coletti, Roma, 1913, pp. 310-311).

<sup>54</sup> "The *mystical* method considers the principles and the precepts of moral life under the aspect of their *supreme purpose*, or under the aspect of the *union of the soul with God*, through an impulsive or higher knowledge and intimate love of God (*unio mistica*). Taken from this point of view, moral doctrine is shown as *the doctrine of virtue*, and, practically seen as *ascetics*, or as the science of the means for achieving virtues, or of those moral exercises, through which the intimate life of grace is received, promoted and brought to fulfillment and to perfection. Here Moral Theology presents principally a virtuous Christian life in its perfection, and the fulfillment of all moral precepts as the means for achieving it. This treatment above all underlines the means proper to the promotion of interior life of the soul, or man's life hidden in God (Col 3:3: *Mortui enim estis et vita vestra est abscondita cum Christo in Deo*). It gives us principally the guide for achieving the three stages of Christian perfection: on the *way of purification* (purifica-

DFst 14-16 40-41      **51** If the experience of the night of passage to the 20<sup>th</sup> century constitutes the principal wellspring for the spiritual life and the mission of Fr. Alberione, it is doubtless that the works of Swoboda and even more that of Krieg mark a decisive point of his maturation and orientation.<sup>55</sup>

DFst 21-23      **52** Hence, one can notice, in the first years of Fr. Alberione's priesthood, how he tried to respond, full of zeal, to the call, and God guided him step by step towards his project: "Action and prayer pointed the way toward Christian social

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tion with works of penance), on *the way of illumination* (superior spiritual-moral knowledge) on the *way of union* (degree of man's union with God through contemplation and similar means)" (C. KRIEG, *Enciclopedia scientifica...*, op. cit., p. 311).

<sup>55</sup> "Christ's pastoral office and its division.

1. Pastoral theology is the science of the redemptive work of Christ or, according to the metaphysical denomination § 109, that is to be explained, of the pastoral functions of Christ that the Church accomplishes through its parts. Those manifestations of the Church's life comprise the object of Pastoral. The Lord had to accomplish a great life work (*opus Dei*, Jn 4:37; 17:4)—this was his "mission," that is, the work of Redemption (σωτηρία), to which belongs a complex of roles that can be divided into three groups: they are the so called duties (*officia, munera*) of Christ, that together comprise the *opus* or *officium*. The Lord presents himself to the world in threefold qualities: he calls ἀλήθεια, ζωή and ὁδός (Jn 14:6). The apostolic writings call him λόγος, ἀρχιερεὺς, λειτουργός and ἀρχηγός, and ἀρχιποιμήν (1Pt 5:4), a word that embraces all his attributes. In order to save humanity, the Savior (σωτήρ) [*The Greek contemporary theologians divide it thus*: 1) κήρυξ καὶ διδάσκαλος; 2) ἀρχιερεὺς; 3) βασιλεὺς] ought:

a) to reveal the eternal *truth*, with which men could reacquire the possession of the pure knowledge of God. Above all, Christ unveiled the supernatural revelation of God to humanity, in its supreme and absolute form. Through it reason was freed from the bonds of error;

b) to expiate the *sin* of humanity and pay with the malediction (Eph 2:14) the punishment, that due to sin weighed on it, in order to reconcile it with God and place it in a new vital relationship with him, (the principal thought that dominates the splendid letter to the Ephesians). This took place due to the corresponding satisfaction by Christ;

c) to bring to humanity a *new law* of life, in order to educate and raise weak will.

With this threefold redemption function, the Lord came to meet a threefold spiritual need that he himself affirms by calling himself Way, Truth and Life. Hence, with the threefold office we come to indicate the organic complex of those actions that, in the mind of God, the Man-God had to accomplish, and which the Church pursues until now through its servants. These are object of Pastoral" (*Ibid.*, pp. 326-327).

work geared to revitalize government, education, laws, the family, and class and international relations. All for Christ, Way, Truth and Life to reign in the world!" (ADds 63).

**53** In the reading of the DF, it is important to bear in mind this itinerary of Fr. Alberione, especially as regards the interpretation of the Way of Illumination. DFst  
37

## **1.2 "YOU SHALL BE TO ME A KINGDOM OF PRIESTS, A HOLY NATION" (Ex 19:6)**

**54** As a seminarian and as a young priest, Fr. Alberione carried out different tasks, thus accumulating numerous experiences through events and persons, but the decisive point for him had been that of allowing himself to be taught by God: "The actions of a human being are so imperfect, unsound, inadequate and dubious that one is duty bound to put everything back into the hands of God's Mercy and to allow oneself to be guided. He never forced the hand of Providence but always awaited God's sign" (ADds 45). DFst  
18-19

**55** The ministry of Spiritual Director in a special manner brought Fr. Alberione to recognize the style of God's action and also the manner of responding to such action. What he would eventually state towards the end of his life, like a remembrance of the journey taken, was already wisdom of faith at the very start: "Providence worked in accordance with God's ordinary method: *fortiter et suaviter*. [This method] is to prepare the ways and bring them together according to His purpose, to provide the light and help needed, to make one wait in peace until His time comes, to begin always from the bare necessities, to act in such a natural way as to be unable to easily disguise grace from nature, but, certainly, [employing] both. Conversely, it is not the case to force God's hand. It suffices to be on the alert. To let oneself be guided, and to strive in one's various duties to employ mind, will, heart, and physical strength..." (ADds 43-44). DFst  
19-20

**56** For Fr. Alberione, "to let oneself be guided" was done in his paying attention to what was happening in the sphere of the Church and in society, mirrored in the publications of the time. DFst  
93-95

For example, we see it in *Notes LV01*, which contains a meditation outline made in May 1913 on the “Edict of Constantine”.<sup>56</sup> In *Quaderno 61* (= *Q061*) four instruction outlines are found: “Constantine Jubilee-Ancient persecutions” (*Q061*, p. 15); “Constantine Jubilee-Modern persecutions”<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> In order to understand the mental horizon and the preoccupation of Fr. Alberione as regards to what awaited him, it seems useful to analyze the following outlines for meditation:

“The Edict of Constantine -

1<sup>st</sup> The whole world celebrates. It should be celebrating even much more.

2<sup>nd</sup> The pagan world - worshipped false gods.

It was immoral.

It was persecuting the Christians - persecutions. – Prohibition to preach

Constantine’s work - Apparition of the *cross*.

*Edict - The Cross - Temples - The right to inherit*

*Processions - freedom of speech - Freed slaves*

*Prohibited immorality - Woman - Emperor - Liberty - equality - fraternity*

Reflections - Thank - Power of J. C.

Take courage - Do not believe it is all over - martyrs -

Work - Become good in order to become holy ministers, to let known and loved J. C.

3<sup>rd</sup> May the freedom to be obtained through prayer, with sacrifice, with work come out in heaven” (*LV01*, p. 21).

<sup>57</sup> Since the graphic arrangement of the 29 lines of the handwritten outline isn’t possible, here the text is presented in a more fluid manner with the parenthesis of line 19, rather difficult to interpret, removed (“Era Italiano!! ??”):

“Constantine Jubilee - modern Persecutions -

1<sup>st</sup> The Constantine feasts are intended for thanksgiving - and also so that the modern times may learn. Persecutions have changed - Tortures have changed: but the substance remains the same - instead malice has become refined -

2<sup>nd</sup> Persecutions -:

*Governments against* catechism in schools - crucifix - religious marriage - Popes - bishops -

The *press* with calumnies - with falsification of dogmas - that they ignore - that they discredit the clergy - by publishing obscenity...

Freemasonry = against the Church - Socialism - that takes advantage of elections - through false entertainments, with discourses, seeking to win over also women -

Victories -

In England - 32 profess. - and better -

In the United States - 2,500 learned converts, converted each year

In China - the way is open for Christianity

In Japan - Catholic university -

In Germany - Catholics have doubled, having their own center -

In France - happy awakening in schools and universities - Lourdes -

(Q061, p. 16); “Jubilee indulgence” (Q061, p. 18); “Constantine Jubilee” (Q061, p. 31).<sup>58</sup>

57 These documents bring to mind Fr. Alberione’s declaration regarding the time when he felt that everything was ripe to begin his foundations: “In 1913 a further step was taken toward the fulfillment of his desires. The study of History in the Philosophy curriculum and, even more so, that of Church History in the Theology curriculum, gave him the opportunity to highlight the ills and needs of peoples, their fears and hopes, especially the need for undertakings and means in harmony with the present century. To this end he composed two prayers, one for Italy, another for the other nations; it was an appeal to the Lord to raise up an institution for this [purpose]. The prayer was recited by all the clerics, led by the cleric Giaccardo. That year being the celebration of the centenary of the Constantine peace granted to the Church, the clerics had an even better appreciation of what they were asking of the Lord” (*ADds* 101-102).

DFst  
85

58 From the start, Fr. Alberione kept in mind basic points: the light of God, subject to discernment and approval; to orient himself according to the principle of complete integration between nature and grace; to wait for God’s hour; to always begin from the Christmas crib; gradualness at the start and uncontainable thrust in development.

DFst  
44-48

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In Austria - Eucharistic Congress

In Italy - to Leo XIII -

Means -

a) Everyone’s zeal - also of the woman at home - to defend religion... religion is yours: just as health is yours, not the doctor’s; yours is life, your bag

b) Popular union -

c) Catechism in the school - Popular vote, France - (praise) send to catechism.

d) Against bad press - against fashion - (People - press- clergy)... And newspaper of priests!

Objection: Priests say it... Hence should we do what is against - they also say do not kill - or kill one’s self -

3<sup>rd</sup> Time for half solutions is over -”.

<sup>58</sup> We find in the Notes of Cleric Giaccardo (often he used to sign Giaccardi) summaries of the sermons along this theme. Cf. Ch. GIACCARDI GIUSEPPE, *Sunti di prediche, panegirici, istruzioni, meditazioni*, no. 19, summary CLXVIII and CLXX.



DFst  
88.93

**59** Fr. Alberione felt that the times were ripe for executing that design of God manifested to him and which had engaged him in a constant work of purification and search for enlightenment. By now he was already achieving it as pastor among pastors, as writer and preacher in the countryside and city.

He was completely taken by the new face of the priesthood amidst a journeying People of God, as Israel among the nations, as the Church during the Apostles' time: "The priest who writes and the Brother who does the technical work of reproducing it over and over and distributing it. This sounds right: 'But you are... a holy nation, a royal priesthood'." (*ADds* 41; cf. 1Pt 2:9).

### 1.2.1 "Quærite... primum regnum Dei" (Mt 6:33)

DFst  
85-92

**60** From 1908, "ever bearing in mind the future beginning of the Pauline Family," Fr. Alberione began looking for and training young boys and girls (*ADds* 103). Thus, Giuseppe Giaccardo was invited and constantly stimulated to clarify his own vocation.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> The meeting of the 11-year-old Giaccardo with Fr. Alberione and the former's vocation itinerary until ordination is related, although the names are not expressly mentioned, in *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VII, no. 5, 15 May 1924, pp. 3-4. – As a cleric, Giaccardo summarizes his itinerary: "1. I go to the seminary; some liking for the "Gazzetta", also for other things. I want to do good at home through good books, that, either due to laziness or human respect or prudence, they mostly block. 2. Last thing during high school and senior high school: desire to work in Catholic Action, of becoming free soon to work in the press and in the C. A. Then to become vice or Parish priest, but to work in this field. Truly, the area of a single Parish does not quite satisfy me... I feel the press is more of my area. Special love for the Church, the Pope; living faith in the true triumph of the Church. In Theol. the work of the press seems more important to me: then I am convinced of the necessity of the apostolate, then I feel it, then I am convinced and the more I feel it to be my apostolate. A very strong inclination. I do not know what could fill it. Salesian, Jesuit or Missionary. 3. Relationship with the Teologo. He tells me about Priests of the Press, and I do not understand God's will. He founds the printing press and immediately I have this intuition as to where he wants to go, and he does not talk to me about it. A desire to see him, straight. Let me not will it. He considers me as member = I do not want. He speaks about the need of such priests, = Obstacle. He speaks directly about me, I put up problems and I take time for his school. Meanwhile I feel I am a member there. I get convinced and I feel most inclined that it is my area. Days of conviction, of persuasion; of strong inclination, for the press, and the Congregation, for the Teologo, for his

Fr. Alberione's work for vocation was discrete but constant: "In his role as Spiritual Director and teacher of the student clerics, it was easy for him to talk about the Church's great needs in those early years of the century" (*ADds* 107).

What was happening, more in his behavior than in words, was nonetheless clear in the heart and mind of Fr. Alberione: "On the one hand, [this would] lead people to the loftiest perfection—the perfection of those who also practice the evangelical counsels—and to the rewards of the apostolic life. On the other hand, [it would] give more cohesion, stability and continuity, [not to mention] a more supernatural sense to the apostolate. [He was] to form an organization, an organization of religious. Here efforts would coalesce, dedication would be total and the doctrine purer. A society of people who would love God with all their mind, all their strength and all their heart; people who would offer to work for the Church, happy with the wages God pays: 'You will receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.' He rejoiced then at the thought that some of these people would belong to the militia of the Church on earth and some to the Church triumphant in heaven" (*ADds* 24).

**61** In a moment of crisis of the diocesan press, supported by a circle of qualified persons, Fr. Alberione makes a decisive step. With the consent of the Bishop, he takes over the directorship of *Gazzetta d'Alba*. Five months later he acquires ownership of the weekly newspaper.

DFst  
93-97

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feelings, because he does not talk to me = what he feels now. 4. To convince myself of the need of the Apostolate and of the Congregation! My area. Excitement. Motives = Excitement. Time? Pride and Mission?" (G. T. GIACCARDO, *Diario...*, op. cit., pp. 278-279). As regards his first year in Senior High School, Giaccardo writes in a summary the sermon made by Fr. Alberione: "I. *Modern society* is so down. 1<sup>st</sup> The socialists have in their hands workers and farmers, through their own Chamber of labor, and they infuse in them hatred towards God, the church, the priest, and they are de-Christianizing them. 2<sup>nd</sup> Not even noble, cultured, landed class is with us, they are given only to luxury, pleasures, pastimes. We are *agni inter lupos* (*sheep among wolves*). II. Nonetheless it is our task to reform society, and we shall reform it: 1<sup>st</sup> through intellectual means: by spreading and supporting the press; a) intellectually: sending short and fresh and important articles b) morally: α) praising our publications; β) informing the editorial when something is unpleasant; γ) congratulating it, when something is liked; c) financial support..." (G. GIACCARDO, *Libretto per i Santi Spirituali Esercizi*, June 1913, XIX, unpublished).

Having chosen the field, it was now necessary for him to let the project germinate, while setting up well the periodical's new orientation.

That the times were ripe was manifested by different publications. *La Civiltà Cattolica*, for example, had analyzed the great power of the press,<sup>60</sup> while pointing out the importance of the good press in the work of social restoration.<sup>61</sup> And, in Alba, on 24 January 1914, Can. Francesco Chiesa had approved a book by his vice parish priest, Giovanni Borgna, entitled *Il Re dei tempi, Mano alla Stampa*,<sup>62</sup> that expressed well some of the orientations of Fr. Alberione. In the first part, in fact, the figure of Luigi Veuillot, is seen as a "new Saul" because of his conversion and eventual involvement in Catholic journalism. A second part exalts the power of the press and presents the "ardent thirst" for reading among the people<sup>63</sup> and, among others, describes the press as a "roving university."<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> A. PAVISSICH, *La stampa grande potenza*, in *La Civiltà Cattolica*, year 64, vol. 1, quad. 1502, 18 January 1913, pp. 129-140; *Ibid.*, year 64, vol. 1, quad. 1504, 15 February 1913, pp. 398-408.

<sup>61</sup> "Meanwhile, the work of social restoration is not simply a work of destruction of what is evil, but is as well the building of what is good, that is, substituting the evil press with the good press. Against the destructive energies of imperious capitalism, in the field of the press, the healthy and vigorous energies of a regenerating culture, drawn from the pure well-springs of Christian civilization, are a force. This is so since Christian principles, on which contemporary society has had its origins and its development, with all the advantages that are therein, can stop and demean the damages of the modern apostasy that is threatening its very foundations" (A. PAVISSICH, *La stampa grande potenza*, op. cit., pp. 407-408).

<sup>62</sup> G. BORGNA, *Il Re dei tempi, Mano alla Stampa*, Premiata Scuola Tipografica Michelerio, Asti 1914, pp. 114.

<sup>63</sup> "Fifty years ago, one could ask: Who reads? Now one should say: Who does not read? Reading is a need of our times, our society would not know how to live without reading. Today everyone wants to know about what is going on in the world. Each one wakes up in the morning, impatiently waiting for the newspaper, eager to know about the new politics, the surprises of the stock exchange, the goings on in business, the gallant adventures, the strange things that happen under the moonlight from one continent to another, from one sea to the other" (*Ibid.*, p. 28).

<sup>64</sup> "The longing for novelty is what keeps fashion up and it is what feeds journalism, too. The bringer of novelties is precisely the newspaper that grows old in a day. Its coverage has no limits: it speaks of everything; it takes over the religious and political movement, refers and discusses matters regarding education, commerce, events; speaks of the theater, of accidents and crimes,

“an ongoing movie house,”<sup>65</sup> an “invasion,”<sup>66</sup> a “voice that shouts,”<sup>67</sup> “a public tribunal”<sup>68</sup> and “king of the times.”<sup>69</sup> The

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of domestic and agrarian economy, of gymnastics... in short, it revolves around everything that embraces nature, culture, the world” (*Ibid.*, p. 29).

<sup>65</sup> “Whoever is not informed about this modern invention and which shapes entertainment every day? Who has not seen the chaos of scenes that in few hours, few minutes pass through the screen? The newspaper is something like it since in it we see, we observe in detail, uninterrupted, the convulsive agitation of the universe, of the heavens and of the earth, of the sea and of the elements, of nations and of humanity” (*Ibid.*, p. 30).

<sup>66</sup> “[The newspaper] goes up buildings and goes down to the hovels, enters in shops and in neighborhoods, passes through academies, rests on the table of the learned, runs in public ministries, enters the schools, circulates through the streets and the squares, takes the railroads, branches through the streets of nations, lords it over all parts of the social body, imposes itself on the intelligence and shapes public opinion” (*Ibid.*, p. 31).

<sup>67</sup> This chapter is entirely published, without any reference to its source, in the bulletin *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year II (1919), no. 7, p. 7: “O press, so Krueger writes, you are the orator, the great preacher of our times. The words that you pronounce with so much passion echo in a few hours over the entire country. You preach in taverns and coffeehouses, in buses, in trains and in the privacy of homes and strongly in all the squares. Where a number of people meet, you are in their midst and you preach. But your word is not lost like in the pulpit as soon as it is spoken. What is not impressed on the memory of the desirous reader, remains impressed on paper, and, and to him who casts his glance on it, it preaches assiduously. Thus you shout day by day, without ceasing and without rest.’ The press, for the great multitudes of peoples, is the universal supplier of spiritual elements: it is the only daily bread of numberless souls; its judgments form the ‘Creed’ of millions.”

<sup>68</sup> “When the newspaper appears, millions of hands grasp it, millions of faces devour it, and imperceptibly it takes over their intelligence and their hearts. It sows ideas, makes them fertile, and obtains from them fruits of works according to its will” (*Ibid.*, p. 31).

<sup>69</sup> “In our times when many would like to see the word king erased, one is forced to bear the dominion of a new and untamable power: that of the press. It is the *king of the times*, because it exercises its magical and mysterious power on all men, with no class or condition excepted. The world does not go on its own; the newspaper takes it by the nose.

“It is the king of the times because it speaks of everything that takes place in time and in space.

“It is the king of the times because it makes its command, its laws heard every day, every hour and at the same time in ten, a hundred, a thousand places, everywhere.

“It is the king of the times because it takes in its hands the present, the past and the future.

“Finally, it is the king of the times because its power grows without limits with the passing of years, with progress in education and of civilization.

third part points out how the bad press is a “plague.”<sup>70</sup> The fourth part warmly calls the attention on the urgency of promoting the good press as a “new commandment,”<sup>71</sup> “an act of charity,”<sup>72</sup> “St. Paul back to life”<sup>73</sup> and expression of an “apostle’s heart.”<sup>74</sup>

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“The Hebrew-Mason Cremieux therefore was right when, in 1842, he shouted at the Masonic lodges of Paris, ‘Brothers, consider gold as nothing: the press is everything. Buy the press and you shall be lords of public opinion, that is, lords of the whole nation.’ Thus it happened: and Freemasonry became in reality the master of France and of many other nations.

“Let us understand it too: the press is everything: without it nothing shall be done; it is the king of the times” (*Ibid.*, pp. 40-41).

<sup>70</sup> “It is a much more formidable plague than war. It is a more formidable plague than hunger. What is then this ever formidable plague? It is the bad press” (*Ibid.*, p. 45).

<sup>71</sup> The author quotes the words of Luigi Windhorst at the Catholic Congress of Friburg: “Help the good press!... here is great apostolate, the modern apostolate, the modern and worthy apostolate, if the Supreme Authority considers it suitable, let it be established as a precept of the Church” (*Ibid.*, p. 78).

<sup>72</sup> “It is charity, charity par excellence. The Divine Master tells us so: ‘not every charitable deed is made of bread’... Blessed are they who understand that the most cruel of all hungers is the ‘hunger for truth’ according to the expression of Msgr. Delamaire. Clearing the minds from error through newspaper, we cooperate to the triumph of truth and social redemption. Woe to us if, instead of spending our money to found and support good newspapers, we spend it in worthless things or even in good works of which we could not make an entirely good use. Let it be known well and not be forgotten: *The most important work, more necessary for the modern times, is the press: to help and support it is the most fruitful act of charity*” (*Ibid.*, p. 83).

<sup>73</sup> “The following expression of Msgr. Ketteler, Archbishop of Munchen, has rang throughout the world: ‘If St. Paul returned to the world, he would be a journalist.’ And I firmly believe it” (*Ibid.*, p. 97). The whole chapter, without any reference to source, is published in *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year II, no. 5, May 1919, pp. 5-6: “*St. Paul back to life*. The following expression of Msgr. Ketteler, Archbishop of Munchen, has rang throughout the world: ‘If St. Paul returned to the world, he would be a journalist’, and I firmly believe it.

“Truly, what did St. Paul do? He sowed the word of God everywhere. For such purpose, he chose the places and the most reputable teaching chairs in order that he could be heard by the greatest number of people. He looked for it and asked for it in the synagogues, he sought it in the Areopagos of Athens, at the court of Agrippa, at the Theater of the great Diana of Ephesus, at the prisons of Rome.

“Let us suppose that one day they told St. Paul: Paul, there is a teaching place where you can be heard not only by a small synagogue but by the entire population, rather, by the whole world: from Syria, from Pales-

**62** Finding leverage on the designs of grace and setting into action all the resources of nature, in 1914, Fr. Alberione hastened to gradually and carefully start the foundation, while taking into consideration its characteristic of being new: DFst 93-97

1) it had to have the social strength of the press at the service of evangelization; hence it had not to begin from the traditional environments of the seminary or of the community, but concretely in the field of printing: “A priest of this diocese, Giacomo Alberione by name, doctor in theology, at the age of 38, he who was the spiritual director of the diocesan seminary for a decade, feeling the call to work in social projects, established here in the city, in 1914, a printing School to which I gave my broad oral approval,”<sup>75</sup>

2) it had to be like a Catholic university, though not aiming at information first of all but on practice; hence it modestly started with a printing school and a shop: “Imbue all thought and human knowledge with the Gospel. Don’t talk only about religion but talk about everything in a Christian way; in a way similar to a Catholic university which, if it is complete, has Theology, Philosophy, Arts, Medicine,

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tine, from the whole of Asia, from Egypt, from Greece and from Italy. More; from up this teaching place you could proclaim Christ, preach the Cross, raise the people to justice and truth.

“I am sure that St. Paul would have immediately asked: ‘Where is this teaching place? I want to be in it.’ And if it were pointed out to him, he would have gone up there in a wink of an eye and stayed there for the rest of his life, just like the stylites on their columns.

“This teaching place did not exist during St. Paul’s time, but it now exists: it is the good newspaper. This is humanity’s pulpit: the ‘perpetual mission’ as Leo XIII used to call it.”

<sup>74</sup> The author publishes a page containing ten “I wish” or wishes regarding the press apostolate. Let us quote the first: “*I wish*, these are the desires of a worthy Catholic, I wish as so many of my friends want, as so many fervent souls of brave Christians and most zealous Catholics wanted and want, they who with their examples make me fervent for the propagation of the good press, I wish as how one French newspaper – that in the same guise in times past soup was being served to the poor from convent doors, that today at the doors of the Church the Catholic newspaper were distributed” (*Ibid.*, pp. 106-107).

<sup>75</sup> G. F. RE, *Lettera ufficiale alla S. C. dei Religiosi chiedendo il nulla osta per l’erezione della SSP in congregazione religiosa diocesana*, 31/12/1921. Cf. G. ROCCA, *La formazione della Pia Società San Paolo (1914-1927)*, Appunti e documenti per una storia, Roma 1982, pp. 562-563.

Political Economics, Natural Sciences, and so on, but everything [is] given in a Christian way and in view of Catholicism" (*ADds* 87);

3) he aspired to train men and women apostles according to the needs of the new times; hence, one did not have to start immediately with the characteristics of educational institutions of religious men and women, but its layout was a training for work, for small workers, boys and girls: "Before the public, the Institute was held and is still held now with the name *Scuola tipografica* (*School of printing*), but within the house it is called *Pia Società S. Paolo* (*Pious Society of St. Paul*), a name given by Theol. Alberione, who, from the beginning entertained the idea of founding a religious congregation of priests and lay persons who would totally dedicate themselves to promote the work of the good press."<sup>76</sup>

**63** Others soon joined the first young boys gathered, along Piazza Cherasca, on 20 August 1914. These were entrusted to Fr. Alberione as regards formation and to Giovanni Battista Bernocco for the administration and professional training.

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<sup>76</sup> G. F. RE, *Lettera ufficiale alla S. C. dei Religiosi...*, of 31/12/1921, cf. *Ibid.*, p. 563. The name "Scuola Tipografica Piccolo Operaio" (Small Worker's Printing School) was certainly chosen for reasons of convenience, while waiting for the suitable hour to express the real intention of the institute. In this regard, the testimony of Fr. Alberione on the fortieth year of foundation is interesting: "When the first boys were gathered, in 1914, in a small house and a minute printing press, something curious happened, as if an alarm: 'Work and bread are taken away from the printers.' Appeals to the Authority were made. The Church authorities replied, 'Respect the freedom of everyone.' The civil authority replied: 'it is stillborn... we shall watch over it, at the first unlawful move, it shall be closed.' So, it had to be born even smaller, and not let anyone hear even a sigh... So, everything was covered by the name 'Small worker's printing school.' It was a Christmas crib. We ought always to consider ourselves, only as *small workers* of God; just as it is in fact with respect to the whole world and the colossal means that make use of false teachers, enemies of Jesus Christ and of the Church" (G. Alberione, *Nel quarantennio*, Welcome address to the visitors of the Pauline exhibit, Alba [20.08.1954]). The FSP, in *Fascicoli* 1954, make known the date of this talk: "Printed in SP, July-August 1954, pp. 1-3; in RA [*Regina Apostolorum*], August 1954, pp. 1-3. It was reproduced in CISP, pp. 145-148; in CVV 212. The text is taken from RA, August 1954. A voice recording is extant. In various printed publications, the date is missing. The recording carries this date: Alba: 20.08.1954."

Fr. Alberione was decided<sup>77</sup> to see the Scuola Tipografica develop fast so that he immediately set to publish: the *Piccolo Catechismo* by Pius X, *La donna associata allo zelo sacerdotale* (*Woman associated with priestly zeal*) and *La preghiera del Parrocchiano* (*The parishioner's prayer book*).<sup>78</sup>

**64** With the fast growth of the number of students, Fr. Alberione procured a more spacious place for the Printing Press, as well as to offer a place, in 15 June 1915, in Piazza Cherasca, for the start of the Laboratorio Femminile (Workshop for Women) which, few months later, moved to via Accademia 5.

**65** After the first steps with their corresponding difficulties, Fr. Alberione began to inculcate the true sense of the foundation that had to be divided into three branches: branch of men-religious, branch of female-religious and branch for the lay: men, women.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> We have the testimony of G. B. Bernocco: "The young priest gave me the best impression for his warm and concrete manners with which he exposed his program of action. From his looks and voice, the ardor of an industrious zeal, inspired by concreteness of intent for the realization of the Institute thought of at length, transpired" (cf. G. BARBERO, *Il sacerdote Giacomo Alberione...*, op. cit., pp. 229-230).

<sup>78</sup> Cf. G. BARBERO, *Il sacerdote Giacomo Alberione...*, op. cit., p. 233.

<sup>79</sup> Cf. Documento del giorno dell'Assunzione, 1916, in G. ROCCA, *La formazione...*, op. cit., pp. 551-552. What Cleric Giaccardo writes in his Diary on 19 October 1917 is very significant. For reason of space, we shall quote only a part: "Declarations of the Sig. Teologo to the students better able to understand him, so that they may decide with related knowledge for their future: 1<sup>st</sup> Where we are going: The Casa shall be a Religious Institute with a first, a second and a third order, of which the first two shall profess the vows. The first order is for men and it is composed of students and workers. The students shall graduate in social sciences and some will stop here; others, who aspire for the priesthood, shall be ordained; priests graduates and simple graduates; their task is the directorship, editorial, writing in newspapers, conducting and holding conferences. The artisans, having become capable printers, shall have the direction of the printing press, the compilation and the technology of the newspapers. The first order for men is already started; there are already students with vows, bound to the Casa: students and artisans. The second order for women is already started; its task: to print, write, catechize, cooperate entirely with the Christian-social action. The third order, which is hoped to be canonically established soon, embraces the cooperators of either or both sexes; this, with material and moral assistance, with advice and diffusion, well informed by the spirit of the Casa. This third order exists already in reality.



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85-88

**66** We can have the thermometer reading of the spiritual intensity reached in the description of Cleric Giaccardo of the ceremony of the profession of the private vows: "With a strong sentiment of faith, the 'Veni Creator' was sung to invoke for light and strength from the Holy Spirit. The Sig. Teologo sat; we, one by one, knelt before him and we consecrated ourselves to God with this formula. To each of us the Father responded. Indescribable admiration of our companions, more indescribable above all was our impression, our joy; everyone's face was recollected and looking down, hearts beating fast, parts of the body tremble, the solemnity of the step, the Father's word, the importance of the moment went through us. We were no longer ours; we felt to be God's, bound to Him, things freely His, ready to give everything for Him and for the good press. Our life was one and we felt one. We among us: we with the Father, united, bound together, not students of a school but members of one body, the first living stones built into a majestic building. Worship God who elevates his most abject things to become princes. The song, 'Sorgiam con impetuoso ardore' followed. We were truly filled. A prayer to St. Paul and to Most Holy Mary was said; and our Father then blessed all his sons; he blessed our resolutions, our desires, our good will that asserted itself to be found in everyone; he blessed us with the effusion of a tender and most loved father and his words and his face revealed the contentment of the man of God and a heart so touched."<sup>80</sup>

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"Setup: the Casa shall have a Director General who will give the directive norms, the points of struggle; to him everyone must obey. Every newspaper shall have its Director; alongside with the older ones, shall arise, too, a Novitiate of students. The Casa shall be spread in Italy, then in Europe and in the world.

"End: The good press: journalism; newspapers of all the world, ours; they shall help one another materially and morally with every means. Our struggle shall be for the triumph of the Church, of the Pope, of Christian civilization, against the powers of the devil and especially against Freemasonry" (cf. G. T. GIACCARDO, *Diario...*, op. cit., pp. 79-81).

<sup>80</sup> G. T. GIACCARDO, *Diario...*, 8 December 1917, op. cit., pp. 105-106. In parallel, also the branch for women followed its own path of consecration through the private vows. Cf. C. A. MARTINI, *Le Figlie di San Paolo*, Note per una storia, 1915-1984, Roma, 1994, p. 96.

**67** In this atmosphere, which recalls Chapter 17 of the Gospel of John, Fr. Alberione goes through the paschal journey of death and resurrection of the Casa: “Since the day of its foundation, our Casa went through numerous storms and its having remained well composed is, most certainly, a sign that God wants this our work; all and especially I were accused of being thieves, but you know that I am not a thief because I place whatever I have on you; we were accused before the Bishops and we ran the risk of closing the Casa, but God saved us. We were accused in Rome and who knows how we could have managed if not for our having a very energetic bishop; before the Mayor, and then before the Sub-prefect, and often before the Prefect. So many good persons do not understand us, too, and they talk with good intentions against the Casa because they are holy persons: I know that each of you, before joining the Casa, must have heard it criticized and many had to struggle against true and serious difficulties and others see their life stumble. Storms are necessary in order to make us fumble and to make us remember that God alone is the Lord and I pray the Lord to send us darker storms. And in spite of these, there are young men who feel called by God to this mission and their vocations prosper and they affirm themselves; this is the most powerful sign of God’s will. I do not doubt it and neither should you doubt it.”<sup>81</sup>

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54.67ff

**68** Fr. Alberione lived with his young people a paschal atmosphere of death and resurrection also because of the war.<sup>82</sup> Eventually, he would always remember well these hostilities: “There were numerous dangers of a variety of kinds: personal and financial, and written and verbal accusations; life was marked by danger for days on end; St. Paul was always

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<sup>81</sup> Alberione’s words noted by Giaccardo. Cf. G. T. GIACCARDO, *Diario...*, 8 December 1917, op. cit., pp. 104-105.

<sup>82</sup> Giaccardo, on 29 April 1918, reveals also the serious problem of hunger: “Rain goes on. It contributes to castigate us with hunger. War, hunger, pestilence are three sisters ever bound together. God now is set to punish us and beats us and he must go to the bottom of it; war also ends, but the scourges shall not end, till now the children of the people are the ones hit. He who has wanted the war has gone into hiding and eats white bread, but God is not going to let him off the hook easily” (G. T. GIACCARDO, *Diario...*, op. cit., p. 201).

[our] salvation” (*ADds* 164). He would further state: “On a number of occasions, early on, the Socialists in Alba threatened to set fire to the printing plant, the house and newspapers; [we] passed nights without sleep, keeping watch so that at least the boys would not run any danger or be too frightened” (*ADds* 172).<sup>83</sup>

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61-63

**69** After the footsteps of St. Francis of Sales, Fr. Alberione was moved by a spirituality with a human face and, perhaps because of this, it was full of impulse towards God and neighbor.<sup>84</sup> He had undertaken everything, after a prolonged discernment, and now, for a time already, he found himself in the midst of a great tempest: time had arrived so that he remained firm in the trust and abandonment to God.<sup>85</sup> Fr. Al-

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<sup>83</sup> We find an actual reference to these affirmations in the page of the *Diario* of Giaccardo, dated 29 November 1917: “At dinner this evening the Sig. Teologo told us that the times are most serious, so serious, that we do not understand it, that we will not be eating any more. He vehemently protests against the thoughtlessness of life in movies and in theaters. Most serious are the military situation, most serious is politics, most serious is the economy and social life, most serious is the religious situation. We are therefore at a stage that Italy has never gone through in a thousand years. This is also on the occasion that the Sub-prefect has censored the Gospel on the bulletins. The Functionaries see themselves in deep waters and they are keeping themselves up: more, they are the pressing weight of Freemasonry that wants the priests pay for it: the spirit against the Church is very strong. During St. Paul’s time, people spoke and then they died: now no one can even speak because of censorship. There is God behind men and blinds them and lets them get to the bottom: and it is from all this that the Church shall have a very great victory but first there would be very painful days: the Roman question is Italy’s thorn, but it is not only she who is a sinner: the whole of Europe. The Good Press is a mission of restoration and of strength” (G. T. GIACCARDI, *Diario...*, op. cit., p. 95).

<sup>84</sup> On 19 March 1918, Giaccardo writes in his *Diario*: “The characteristic of our Father is not the extraordinary but the ordinary: He recommends to us prayer and faith and with it concern, diligence, work, speed, life, cheerfulness, and not poetry, but he educates us to reality by subjecting us to the serious states of individual, political, national states; he wants to give us the spirit, but he insists on humility, naturalness, on simplicity” (G. T. GIACCARDI, *Diario...*, op. cit., p. 194).

<sup>85</sup> “Two things are my only irritations, our Venerable Father tells us during meditation: that I am not good enough and you are not saints enough. These two alone are my irritations, others I don’t have, all the rest is nothing and it just comes. Should an earthquake level our house, this shall rise back and shall extend throughout the world in the principal countries and shall last for many centuries, it is absolutely necessary. The need is impelling and

berione is now involved with his boys in an experience that is placed as source and guiding light of life and of the vitality of the Casa: the spirituality of the Alliance or of the Pact with God.<sup>86</sup>

**70** It is in the radical correspondence to God that Fr. Alberione, solemnly and emotionally, integrates the life and mission of the Casa: “I speak to you with surplice and stole on because I have something very, very important to tell you: and you know that when the mayor or the King performs official acts, he puts on the sash. It is precisely because of its great importance that I must say it well, and I express it with great simplicity. We often speak about the need of promoting the Good Press: now many are working for the press; they conse-

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63-65  
85.88

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God wants to do this, but we are setting up pitfalls to Providence. Who knows how many more bulletins there were, how much has the cause of our newspapers gained if in us there were greater spirit, if we were more saintly” (G. T. GIACCARDO, *Diario...*, 15 February 1918, op. cit., p. 191).

<sup>86</sup> In the *Diario*, Giaccardo notes down the short sermon Fr. Alberione had on 12 March 1918: “...Hence, we must have clear but very simple agreements with the Lord: Lord, I must know many things and I have little time for studies: I also have to typeset, to print, hence, I will typeset and print for as long as you want and what you will. Give me knowledge. Clear agreements and trust. The apostles were ignorant but after having received the Holy Spirit, they stupefied the world and confused the learned, and enlightened all men. The Holy Spirit shall not come down on us in the form of a ball of fire, but he shall come this way: he will make us learn faster what we read; store more of what we learned; and apply better our studies; in a way that what others learn for three hours and not easily remember or lived, we might learn it in one hour, remember it and use it. Let there be this faith and let it be real. The Father has had the experience regarding two young men who, with such faith, in a month did what they could in six. Let no one say, I haven’t studied, I haven’t learned. You have not studied, you have learned more, not grammar perhaps, but other things, and you shall see in thirty years if you are not as knowledgeable as others. This faith is essential in the spirit of the Casa, just as its spirit is new, in this manner, it possesses new means: one of the principal ones, an essential part of the spirit, is faith in learning without much study. He who does not have this faith is out of tune and makes others laugh at him. We have to keep it well in our heads: this faith is essential. St. Paul worked for God and was telling God that he had the right to earn his bread: *qui altari deservit, de altare vivere debet*. The same is for us; we must work for God and we need to learn many things. We work and the Lord shall think of giving us food, not only for the mouth but also for the mind and the heart. We must then not behave as others tell us so, but what the life of the Casa requires of us. To whomever that objects we study little, we answer: We are and God’s grace: one part us, two parts God’s grace” (G. T. GIACCARDO, *Diario...*, 13 March 1918, op. cit., pp. 195-196).

crate a part of their time and energies to it; there are those who do so for honor, those for gain and those for the taste of it. We want to work neither for liking it, nor for gain, nor do we want the press for itself, but we seek God with the means of the good press. And there are those among you young men who have decided, not for foolish feelings, but with full knowledge, to consecrate themselves entirely to God and for the good press, and to dedicate to it their time, their ingenuity, their strength, their health, and this evening, before all of you, they shall in my hands profess the vows that they asked me they would do and for which I admitted them: others who asked me were admitted to the private vows.”<sup>87</sup>

DFst 67      **71** Also here, it is fitting to open a parenthesis to point out that the features of the experience of Fr. Alberione and of the first Paulines, just now described, are the key for the consideration of the *Via unitiva* (Way of Union) in the *Donec formetur Christus in vobis*.

DFst 93-95      **72** Resuming our discussion, it seems suggested to us to consider—as the first fruit of the *Pact* with God—the approval, that took place on 29 September 1918, of the statutes of the Union of Cooperators of the Good Press, carefully prepared to express the Pauline mission,<sup>88</sup> constituted under

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<sup>87</sup> Fr. Alberione’s words quoted by Giaccardo. Cf. G. T. GIACCARDO, *Diario...*, 8 December 1917, op. cit., pp. 103-104.

<sup>88</sup> Referring to the day before, Giaccardo writes on 30 September 1918: “And the Sig. Teologo explained to us the three branches of the Casa; male, female, cooperators; and he continued, ‘This last had greater difficulties of all; it is not that the first ones have already been established, but some more freedom could be enjoyed. Now also the last has begun; the union of Cooperators of the Good Press. During the Exercises, I have written down the rules and regulations, then we recommended them to God; now I have presented and subjected them to the Msgr. Bishop, who not only approved them fully, but has wanted to be the first to enroll. Let us then thank God that it has begun and so well at that.’ He explained to us the contents of the Statute; those who could join are all those who are committed to perform for the good press either special prayers or offerings or to work, to write... ‘To begin is not everything, later shall follow difficulties, disapprovals, impediments, discouragements and it shall be like pushing a ship across the woods. We need to pray then; and you pray and let us pray: St. Paul would have no problems. He shall take and make this new Union fruitful, you shall be zealous as you can in its behalf before everyone. In thirty years time, you shall understand the importance of what

the protection of St. Paul,<sup>89</sup> to benefit the press through prayers, offerings and work (writing, diffusion of the good press, fighting evil).<sup>90</sup>

**73** Nonetheless, it seems important to note that the first issue of the *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa* came out under the sign of the paschal climate of the *Pact* (cf. *ADds* 162-163), either because of the context of the death of Maggiorino Vigolungo or of Clelia Calliano<sup>91</sup> or for the celebration wherein Fr. Alberione also remembered the formula of the *Promissory note* a topic we shall consider later.

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**74** The bulletin of this *Union* is, today, one of the most precious sources, also of pleasant reading, for knowing the beginnings of the Pauline Family. From the chosen frontis-

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I have said this evening: in thirty years'." (G. T. GIACCARDI, *Diario...*, 30 September 1918, op. cit., pp. 233-234).

<sup>89</sup> It is interesting to note that already in January 1918, Giaccardi, under the title, "Conversion of St. Paul," had outlined for himself a life program laid out in three points that are the same as those indicated by Fr. Alberione as the means of the *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*: prayer, offering, action (cf. G. T. GIACCARDI, *Diario...*, 1918, op. cit., pp. 124-125).

<sup>90</sup> G. ROCCA, *La formazione...*, op. cit., pp. 551-552.

<sup>91</sup> "25 October 1918. Yesterday the copies of the bulletin of the *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa* were laid out before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. The Sig. Teologo blessed them with the Pyx and the Most Blessed Sacrament. We were all kneeling around. The dear Father first spoke to us: 'For the first time, the bulletin goes out. It has to support our good press. It is good that it goes with the Lord's blessing. We did everything possible to let it go out beautiful and proper, but if God does not give his blessing, our efforts are worth nothing: with God's blessing, instead, it shall penetrate and obtain fruits. It brings us the example of the Blessing of... the dying, the last words of Clelia. What price is it for God to raise the Cooperators of the Good Press? With a fiat, he raised the heavens, let the fish that swim in the water appear, the birds that plow the sky and has created man 'king of all creation.' We need to be deeply convinced that raising the work of the good press is a great miracle, and we are content that God shall do it. On our part, however, we need: 1) *Quærite primum regnum Dei et iustitiam eius*, the rest shall be the butcher's free piece. Seek holiness and God's glory only; 2) trust in God alone and not in our own energies. We tell God: let me do it. God withdraws and we rock our heads. God, who fears nothing, is afraid of our self love. God does all things well and always 'bene omnia fecit'. Hence, when we see things go bad, it is a sign that something of ourselves has set it and let us ask ourselves immediately: what have I done? On God's part, we need his grace that we obtain through prayer: humility therefore and prayer" (G. T. GIACCARDI, *Diario...*, 25 October 1918, op. cit., pp. 237-238).

pieces the relationship with St. Paul already appears clearly,<sup>92</sup> in the enthusiasm for the Good Press as work of evangelization:<sup>93</sup> “Prædica verbum”,<sup>94</sup> “Opus fac evangelistæ”,<sup>95</sup> What the Pauline Family has received as “Pauline Spirit”<sup>96</sup> already appears fully expressed during these first moments of the foundation.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> “*The conversion of St. Paul.* On the 25<sup>th</sup> of this month the Catholic world celebrates the feast of the conversion of St. Paul. It is a date to remember in the Church. Saul was the most terrible enemy of Christianity being born: angry, he moved towards the city of Damascus with his soldiers to bind as prisoners the Christians he would have found. But the grace of God hits him at the city gates and he is changed into a completely different man. I chose him so he may proclaim my name to the Hebrews, the gentiles, the princes, and kings, the Lord says. And Saul, changed to Paul, becomes the first among the apostles, he who gathered in the bosom of the Church most souls over the other apostles. For him the Church had a new life; instead of a persecutor. This is how therefore this great feast in the Christian world has been established. There are some parishes where it shall be solemnized with a ‘day of the good press.’ In others, a special ceremony for the conversion of sinners, especially of those who, like Saul, make use of their ingenuity, their culture, their social position to fight the Church, the Vicar of Christ, religion. All those enrolled at the ‘Union of Cooperators of the good press’ are warmly invited to receive communion that day for such purpose. Let us ask that we be converted from a lukewarm life to an ardent one: let us ask for the energy and the right spirit for Catholic writers; let us ask for the conversion of impious journalists. Let his novena also be celebrated, especially with the recitation of the prayer printed on the holy cards of St. Paul” (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year II, no. 1, January 1919, p. 2).

<sup>93</sup> “The Apostle Paul has traveled the world known at the time, proclaiming the good news and gathering under the banner of the cross an endless number of Christians. He is therefore a man of zeal: it is almost as if zeal were personified in St. Paul. From here followed naturally that the Apostle Paul should be chosen as protector of the Good Press. No means of diffusion today can be more universal and effective than the newspaper in particular and the press in general. Thus, the journalist enclosed in his editorial office extends his work and let it reach the ends of the earth. The statement of Ketteler is not without meaning or is proffered accidentally: ‘If St. Paul were born now, he would become a journalist’.” (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year II, no. 1, January 1919, p. 4).

<sup>94</sup> “Proclaim the word” (2 Tm 4:2).

<sup>95</sup> “Perform the work of an evangelist” (2 Tm 4:5).

<sup>96</sup> “The spirit of Saint Paul is drawn from his life, his Letters and his apostolate” (*ADds* 94).

<sup>97</sup> “The direction of scholarship, that was had before the war, brought by its nature the attention of the learned to the origins of the Church. The Church’s ancient history was the preferred object of scholars of things

75 The articles of the bulletin affirm continually the importance of the apostolate of the press,<sup>98</sup> its convenience for women,<sup>99</sup> and the ideal being cultivated in the foundation being born.<sup>100</sup> DFst 93-95

Christian. Many aberrations came up in the modernistic and protestant side; but good fruits were not wanting, rather, they abounded. From among these good fruits, one of the better ones is the broader and more profound knowledge of the life, the works and the doctrines of the apostle Paul. Not only this; but also, and this is the natural consequence, the desire to make the devotion to this great preacher of the Gentiles more practical and as if popularized" (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year II, no. 1, January 1919, p. 4). "Devotion to St. Paul. Msgr. Bonomelli well said that many of the most distinguished saints of the Church are those that are less remembered by the people. How many, in fact, pray to St. Peter, St. Paul, St. John Chrysostom, St. Ignatius Martyr, etc. If we only knew what St. Paul has done to the world, especially to us descendants of the gentiles! If only we read the life, the works, the epistles: how much more shall we pray to him, love him, imitate him. From him we shall learn two virtues that are the foundation of Christianity: love for Jesus and love that is shown in the zeal for one's neighbor. Let us celebrate devotedly the feast of St. Paul on June 30: it shall be a beautiful occasion for letting this great apostle known. Let us spread his image and let us pray to him as the protector of the Good press. It is as well most useful. Explain St. Paul's epistles at least once. This is already being done in some parishes where every 5, or 6 years, instead of the Gospel, the epistle of the Mass is explained to the people: and the epistle is almost always a passage from the letters of St. Paul" (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year II, no. 6, June 1919, p. 2).

<sup>98</sup> Every issue of the UCBS bulletin refers to the said importance of the press. Let us quote some: "The world is governed by public opinion and this, by journalism," Pavissich (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year I, no. 2, 28 November 1918, p. 2). "Nowadays people do not form any other opinion and it regulates its life if not from the daily reading of newspapers" Leo XIII (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year II, [no. 2?, between Feb. and Apr.] 1919, p. 3). "Believe me, this need to consecrate our energies for the development of the press is a need of such an importance that I, bishop, would delay the building of a church in order to assist the foundation of a newspaper" Card. Mercier (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year II, [no. 2?, between Feb. and Apr.] 1919, p. 7).

<sup>99</sup> "The new mission of woman. Women cannot stay out of the great apostolate of the press; on the other hand, in the press there are parts that are especially suited to women. This is a most lofty mission. Besides, among the Salesians we can see its confirmation. I just saw in three places the sisters in the printing press: they are working so well; there are many of them who write, not long time ago, the Cardinal exhorted that the sisters joined the staff of the publication of newspapers. 1. There are women, employed at the post, telegraph offices, shopkeepers, educated women who could attend to columns for women, letters, various articles. 2. Many women have time to



76 The introductions to the Printing School always follow a line of continuity. The branch for men is divided into two sections: the simple artisans destined to receive a diploma of training; the artisan students destined to receive the professional training and to obtain a degree in social sciences.<sup>101</sup> Also the branch for women is divided into two sec-

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promote and gather subscriptions to our newspapers, religious bulletins, to distribute them; to make libraries work. 3. Many women have the possibility of donating, instead of spending much in things less useful. 4. Daughters who would want to give themselves to the good press through a work that is much better than the sisters of Schools, Clinics, Hospitals, Missions: they, for many things, in the printing press, work better than men. 5. Besides, all women can pray, make communions, recite the rosary many times for the good press, subscribe and diffuse the *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*" (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year I, no. 2, 28 November 1918, p. 2).

<sup>100</sup> "The fundamental idea. Is this: the good press is today a real apostolate, the first of apostolates, after that of prayer. However, in order that it be a true apostolate, we must consider it not as an *industrial undertaking* or as if a *profession*: but in view of forming souls, of minds, of hearts, of an apostle. Which means: that those who are dedicated to it are men of prayer, of sacrifice, of social virtues; that they be upright in character, learned persons, so that the enemies of the Church may be unmasked, the truths of religion be well presented, the morals and the dogmas are well defended. Needed too are workers-printers who do not give in to attractions of profit, subjecting themselves to the service of liberalism or the sects: workers who render their work with the spirit of faith as for a sacred apostolate: workers that are so capable that they do not fear competition from anyone. Let us therefore have printers and writers of virtue and knowledge. *The ideal*. The ideal would be to have: A family, union of souls and of hearts, consecrated to the very urgent work of the press. It shall be made up of printing workers, of writers; but persons who should bind themselves with a sacred and solemn promise that they will dedicate all their energies to the work of the press. With this the cooperators shall associate themselves within the limits of their possibilities, with prayer, offerings, work" (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year II, [no. 2?, between Feb. and Apr.] 1919, pp. 2-3).

<sup>101</sup> "The young students are divided into two sections: the simple artisan and the artisan students. The first learn the art of printing and they have their own time to study, to work, to do practices of piety. The second, less work and much study. For the simple artisans the complete course lasts for five years. At the end they receive a diploma of professional training and, if needed, a proper employment shall be sought for them. For the student artisans the course lasts for eight years and they can be graduated in social sciences (Pontifical faculty in Faenza). Should they not succeed in their studies, they would however have most certainly the most advantageous printers' profession" (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year II, [no. 2?, between February and April] 1919, p. 2).

tions: the students, destined to learn the art of printing and to obtain the diploma of elementary school teachers and the simple printers, destined to learn and practice the art of printing.<sup>102</sup> Readers are also informed regarding the apostolic nature, and not assistance, of the foundation.<sup>103</sup>

77 The war's end did not immediately mean peace for the Casa. In fact, the house of the section for women in Susa was just opened and commitments were made to buy a Linotype when, in the climate of hostility wherein they lived,<sup>104</sup> fear was heightened with the fire at the printing press on Christmas night of 1918.

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<sup>102</sup> “*Section for Women of the Printing School.* It surely is not a novelty if women are engaged in work for the press; it is something that in our times one ought to take as a much greater development. Girls can work in typesetting, printing, binding, mailing and writing. Numerous jobs can be done better and more easily by them than by young males and men. Intending to succeed in this, the section for women has been opened in the printing school in Alba. It went through a long work of preparation: now, capable of working on its own, it has been transferred to Susa where the diocesan director has entrusted to them the newspaper and the printing press, and Msgr. Bishop has furnished their residence. It has the same purpose as that of the section for men, that is, to benefit the good press. Only that: while the young men are trained to graduate in social sciences, the daughters (who intend to study) are trained to have the license of elementary school teachers. Apply to T. Alberione in Alba: or to teacher Boffi Angelina in Susa. N.B. In Alba, the section for women of the Printing School had the bookstore at Via Accademia which, as a consequence, is currently closed. Those who still have bills to pay, contact the section for men at the Printing School, publisher of the *Gazzetta d’Alba*” (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year II, no. 1, January 1919, p. 8).

<sup>103</sup> “*It would be a grave error.* To confuse the Printing School with ordinary charitable or recovery institutes. The Printing School is an institute essentially dedicated to the apostolate of the Good Press and the young persons *have to be good and must demonstrate genuine inclination to be welcomed.* Being more or less rich, having great or discrete intelligence is not a problem. No one shall be excluded from it only because of poverty” (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year II, [no. 2?, between Feb. and April] 1919, p. 5).

<sup>104</sup> Fr. Giaccardo wrote on 26 December 1919: “A number of malicious individuals would like to damage the press. The Sig. Teologo sleeps there with two young men. Yesterday evening he was telling me: We shall take human measures and what prudence suggests, from the roof down. As for the rest, I am most serene; the Guardian Angel should do the guarding. What consoles me most is the thought that these things are not mine, but the Lord’s; this way, I feel I am living up to the detachment of the heart; and should the case come that we leave them, I will not be afflicted; Providence

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**78** With the return of peace, it was time to make new steps forward. It was for this that a few days after the fire in the printing press, Fr. Alberione, on 6 January 1919, proposed to his young wards the celebration of a Pact: the next day “Our dear Father recited the formula of the pact, those who wanted repeated it in their hearts.”<sup>105</sup>

What formula was it? In his *Diary*, Giaccardo makes one understand that it was that inspired after Mt 6:33: “...Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides.” Let us take note that he refers to such a gospel expression for the first time in the *Diario* on 22 February 1917, when he was still a cleric in the Seminary of Alba, and he places it in relation with the Apostolate of the Press.<sup>106</sup> On 29 March 1919, Giaccardo notes a

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shall see to it that they come, to take care of them, to make them grow. Oh, Providence! Only yesterday even I came to know that people fear for my life: it was decided upon to kill me during the election week; and yet we walked through the streets at all hours of the night; and God has protected us” (G. T. GIACCARDO, *Diario...*, 26 December 1919, op. cit., p. 287).

<sup>105</sup> “7 January 1919. Yesterday evening the dear Father invited all of us to make a pact with the Lord. It is the pact he made with the Lord: to study for one and learn for four. This morning, at meditation, he repeated to us the importance, the bases, the conditions, the invitation. His word was burning and full of conviction and so persuasive... At Mass, for that matter, the Litany of the Blessed Virgin, the ‘Veni Creator’, 3 Pater Ave Gloria, one for each condition that must be placed. Before the ‘Hail Mary’ the dear Father recited the formula of the pact, those who wanted, repeated it in their hearts” (G. T. GIACCARDO, *Diario...*, 7 January 1919, op. cit., pp. 250-252).

<sup>106</sup> “My Most Holy Forty-Eight Hour devotion went well. Under the influence of Jesus Eucharist these texts have produced in me an impression of the most healthy kind: Docentes eos servare omnia *and...* et ecce ego vobiscum sum; prædicate evangelium...; quærite primum regnum Dei et hæc omnia...; non vos... sed ego elegi vos ut eatis. And all these texts in relation with the good Press. A stronger spirit of prayer was reawakened in me, prayer of living faith and of trust in Jesus Eucharist, formator of the Clerics: a passion for humility, humiliation and for sacrifice. I long to live entirely the whole life of Jesus C. Priest. I have seen more clearly, he has more greatly impressed on me my mission for the Press Apostolate and I felt myself better burning for it. The Apostolate of Christian civilization, based on Jesus C. first missionary, who now sends us. I long to seal a life entirely for the love of God and souls, wholly for holiness, humility, entirely for zeal, branded with zeal and the doctrine of God on the cross of Jesus C. Towards this I want to come with a series of small sacrifices, and spiritual and corporal, of the senses” (G. T. GIACCARDO, *Diario...*, op. cit., pp. 42-43).

conversation wherein Fr. Alberione, regarding a financial problem replies decisively: “Now, quærite primum regnum Dei: the rest is done!”<sup>107</sup>

**79** Certainly the broad meaning of this word of Jesus has been transmitted in the prayer known under the title of *Secret of Success*. The conversation between Alberione and Giaccardo, quoted just now, enlightens as on the title *Cambiale (Promissory note)* given to the *Pact* celebrated perhaps in 1920 by Fr. Alberione and by the newly ordained priest Giaccardo, where to the commitment “*Quæro primum regnum Dei et justitiam eius*,” signed by Fr. Alberione Giacomo and Fr. Giaccardo Timoteo, has the response of the Persons of the Trinity: “*Hæc omnia adiicientur vobis... Jesus Christus, Pater, Spiritus Sanctus*”.

**80** Giaccardo’s *Diario* makes us understand how for Fr. Alberione’s “seek first the kingdom of God” concretely meant the search for holiness in the total self-giving to the Press Apostolate. More, it is impressive to notice how, decades later, he still used the same expressions to comment on this *Pact*.<sup>108</sup>

**81** The spirituality of the *Pact*, in the Casa, is an application to the press apostolate of the spirit that sustained the Pic-

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<sup>107</sup> Here is the dialogue between Fr. Alberione and Cleric Giaccardo: “We have to put at the place of the Bianchi advertisement one of the bookstore.” “Will it earn more,” I interrupted. “If it earns more, I do not know: but it is of greater advantage to souls. Now quærite primum regnum Dei: the rest is gain!” Fr. Alberione continues: “Look after the substance: in accounting look after the substance, simplicity: when you shall be quite ahead, adopt as well a modern, precise accounting, you will do well: for now look after the substance. They were saying: To open a similar House we need directors, professors... If we wanted to begin like that, the house would not have ever been opened!” (G. T. GIACCARDO, *Diario...*, 19 March 1919, op. cit., pp. 261-262).

<sup>108</sup> Commenting on Mt 6:24-33 before the Pious Disciples on 16 September 1962, Fr. Alberione says: “‘Seek first the kingdom of God,’ in the first place, holiness and the other things shall follow suit, *adiicientur vobis*. That is the apostolate: to seek the kingdom of God either with Adorations or with priestly service or the liturgy. But above all, for every individual: holiness. First, that the kingdom of God be in us, that is, that we are saints, then the reign of God on all the earth, and then, all the rest is added, *et hæc omnia adiicientur vobis*. Because (the comparison is very material): if you buy meat from the butcher he thinks of adding the bone as well” (G. ALBERIONE, *Alle Pie Discepolo del Divin Maestro*, Rome, 1986, no. 164, p. 166).

cola Casa della Divina Provvidenza,<sup>109</sup> of Cottolengo in Turin: to live in God's presence,<sup>110</sup> seek the kingdom of God,<sup>111</sup> grati-

<sup>109</sup> "From us the Lord demands as well special faith, faith that must distinguish us from the others: this faith is the foundation of the Casa. The Casa possesses it and it shall succeed, but he who does not possess it shall not succeed and shall be a stumbling block to others. We need to have faith also without us understanding: because the Sig. Teologo himself does not understand certain things: and here is the proof of faith: when one works and believes without seeing, even more, with contrary foresights. What an act of faith had the Cottolengo to make when he was about to found the Piccola Casa, and he was believed to be crazy, and no one was supporting him! But faith made the miracles. What must we believe: that God wants the B.S. (Buona Stampa = Good Press), that God wants our Casa for the B.S., that the necessary knowledge will be acquired, also with less studies, and knowledge for writers and journalists, that one will have the piety that God requires from us also almost without spiritual direction. That God will send true vocations, also when the B. S. is little understood among our people; that God will send what is necessary for the job, the money, food and nothing shall be wanting" (G. T. GIACCARDO, *Diario...*, 19 March 1919, op. cit., p. 260).

<sup>110</sup> Gastaldi writes about Giuseppe Benedetto Cottolengo: "The grace of ingenuity, that sprang up in Giuseppe, through miracle so to say, demonstrated as well how God had for him designs that were not ordinary and common... Grateful, then, the young man for the sake of such a precious gift, wanted to show his gratitude for it, by proposing and setting his mind *to want to become a saint*. He then started to penetrate deeply this truth, that God saw him in every place and in every moment; and wherever he would go and whatever he would do, God was most present to him, and he was most present to God. Not content with having etched it in his heart, he wanted to see it with his own eyes; and so on the frontispieces of books and notebooks, instead of short sayings or epigraphs as was customary among the young, he used to write this truth: *God sees me*. In his study room, bedroom he had hung a billboard that reminded him continuously of God's presence; he was not satisfied with this either, and perhaps in order to remind others, he had painted in big letters on the wall along the courtyard where he used to play with his companions: *God sees me*" (P.P. GASTALDI, *I prodigi della carità cristiana descritti nella vita di San Giuseppe Benedetto Cottolengo*, Piccola Casa della Divina Provvidenza, Cottolengo, Torino, 1959, pp. 18-19).

<sup>111</sup> "The Venerable Father, speaking sometimes of prayer and of trust that one must have in God, spoke of himself: Whenever one can ask the Lord for some specific thing, also things material, the Church herself gives us the example, nonetheless, as for me, I would be afraid to fail if I should ask in a similar manner, because I am attracted by another spirit. He therefore prayed much, very much, but in his prayer he was asking neither for help nor assistance; and speaking with the patients themselves, he used to say: In the Piccola Casa no one has ever to pray for material bread. Our Lord, he used to add, taught us to seek first the kingdom of God, and the rest would follow, and we must pray like that. I do not condemn anyone, he used to say some other times, but as for me, along the road that God wants for me, I feel instead the duty to

tude to the Divine Providence<sup>112</sup> while receiving everything with a “*Deo gratias*”,<sup>113</sup> horror of sin.<sup>114</sup>

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pray that way, and to abandon myself completely in his hands praying: Quærite primum regnum Dei, and this is enough for us. He knows our needs: Scit Pater vester quia his omnibus indigetis; let us think only in making him happy; let us pray to him, yes, but in broad lines. From such a noble beginning it happened that not only the saint but no one else in the Piccola Casa, at least in public, asked for particular requests for temporal needs, many instead prayed that they become saints; and thousands of times during the day and night, this most beautiful prayer was repeated: Virgin Mary Mother of Jesus, make us saints” (P.P. GASTALDI, *I prodigi della carità cristiana...*, op. cit., pp. 314-315).

<sup>112</sup> In places of the Pauline Family being born the example of the Piccola Casa della Divina Provvidenza was being perfectly followed; to always say, “*Deo gratias*,” as it can be garnered from the testimony made by Domenico Bosso in the process of Beatification and Canonization of Cottolengo: “No action was ever begun without invoking God’s help; often this phrase was said *in Domino*: and it was willed that these words were repeated by the Piccola Casa. Then the houses and the various families and courtyards had sacred names, for example, Providence, the House of God, Hope, Faith, Providence, Charity, etc. Then the families were placed by him under the protection of saints. He founded the whole Piccola Casa on faith. It is enough for me to say that he had established the *Deo gratias* in the Piccola Casa, with which he wanted, beginning with himself, that everything were received from God, material bread, spiritual bread and all the rest, repeating always, *Deo Gratias!* He considered all the benefactors of the Piccola Casa as so many instruments of the Divine Providence and wanted for everything thanks be given only to God by repeating *Deo gratias* and in the receipts of money or of things the Venerable ordinarily wrote the *Deo gratias*. I take note that in the Piccola Casa the *Deo gratias* is heart beat of every family and that even in our times it is repeated for every small thing received either from the superiors or from companions. Also in the church for the public, whoever has finished his sermon, the patients greet him this *Deo gratias*, as it was already mentioned at the end of the sermons of the Venerable. And he wanted that these repeated this *Deo gratias* also when some accident takes place or when one received some correction as he himself used to do in similar instances, one of which I have referred to earlier, so that he wanted the Piccola Casa to live in gratitude and thanksgiving towards the Lord by always hoping in the Lord, hence, *in Domino* and *Deo gratias* were the heart of the piccola casa” (*Recensio Virtutum*, pp. 19-20, in SACRA RITUUM CONGREGATIONE, TAURINEN. BEATIFICATIONIS ET CANONIZATIONIS VEN. SERVI DEI JOSEPHI BENEDICTI COTTOLONGO, *Nova Positio Super Virtutibus*, Romæ, 1899).

<sup>113</sup> “He who gave everything to the Casa is the Lord Providence and the Sig. Teologo wanted that we expressed to the Lord the sense of gratitude by *Deo gratias*, as it was done at the Piccola Casa of Cottolengo: and the use was introduced among the older ones and the young, and the *Deo gratias* repeated each time one receives something good. Besides, it is the form that one reads in every epistle, the hymn of thanksgiving of St. Paul,

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**82** A special resonance of this experience of faith is found in the affirmations of Fr. Alberione: “At times there were urgent and serious needs: we prayed and we sought to drive out all sin and every fault against poverty: and unexplained solutions, money arrived from unknown people, the offer of loans, new benefactors and other things that he never knew how to explain...; the years went by, the forecasts [made] by many of certain failure, the accusations of madness... all dissolved and everything was settled peacefully, although not without hard work” (*ADds* 166).

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**83** Holiness and apostolate<sup>115</sup> become the strong points of the Covenant assumed through the celebration of the

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also for the least of things” (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VII, no. 4, 15 April 1924, p. 8).

<sup>114</sup> “With so much horror for sin from the start of the Piccola Casa, he [Cottolengo] wanted that at the beating of the hours everyone prayed: *a peccato mortali libera me Domine* (from all mortal sins deliver me, Lord). After a short while, however, observing that being delivered from mortal sin was quite little, he wanted yet that each one be delivered from venial sins, too, so correcting, he let people say: *ab omni peccato libera nos Domine* (from all sin, deliver us Lord). If something contrary happened, or if the Divine Providence was delayed with his aid for a while, he used to immediately say, *let us examine our conscience*, as if to say that he was rather finding out if he himself has committed some sin, though small, to delay that much the divine assistance. So it went that he used to say, *let us examine ourselves, it must be me, I must be the cause of the delay*. Doing so, he was doing more than any sermon or correction. From here followed that the Venerable Servant, aside from the examination of conscience that by rule he gave to the Piccola Casa in the evening during time of prayers, he wanted that during the aforementioned circumstances of adversity an examination of conscience by each one be done, asking himself, could it be I the cause so that Providence is late in coming?” (*Summarium super dubio, Summ. Num. IX, De Heroica Charitate in Deum*, p. 401, in SACRA RITUUM CONGREGATIONE, TAURINEN. BEATIFICATIONIS ET CANONIZATIONIS VEN. SERVI DEI JOSEPHI BENEDICTI COTTOLONGO, *Positio Super Virtutibus*, Romæ, MDCCCXCVI).

<sup>115</sup> An expression of these two points of reference are the works of St. Alphonsus and of Chautard, that inspire the meditations proposed by Fr. Alberione: “Aside from the Spiritual Exercises on piety, all the meditations and spiritual labor of this year are directed to the interior life in order to develop it; the dear Father read to us and explained very well *The great means of prayer* in the first part. Now he has taken up *The soul of the apostolate*. All the novenas are directed to the resolution of the Exercises and the sermons are conclusions on it” (G. T. GIACCARDO, *Diario...*, 17 January 1919, op. cit., p. 252).

*Pact.*<sup>116</sup> Everything is done with this spirit. Holiness takes the first place among the preoccupations of Fr. Alberione.<sup>117</sup> A season of very abundant fruits takes place for the Pious Society of St. Paul<sup>118</sup> being born, engaged by Fr. Alberione to achieve two goals: “year of vocations” (1919) and “year of consolidation” of the foundation (1920).

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<sup>116</sup> The celebration of the Conversion of St. Paul, on 25 January 1919, was utilized also as a monthly retreat. Giaccardo affirms that the four entertainments of the dear Father were such that in order not to vaguely narrate it, photographs would have been needed. He nonetheless quotes the words of Fr. Alberione: “Listen attentively to me, open your ears and don’t sleep: stay awake. In every effort, you should progress ten times over. Why so? Because the Lord calls you to a most lofty holiness at which you cannot arrive with but your own efforts and with ordinary graces. How much holiness! ... You are at the foot of a great mountain, climb up, look at your horizon: it is the whole world; when a ball is so smooth and round, let it rest on well-polished marble, only a part of it touches and all the ball’s weight is on that point. On your conscience a million, three million, ten million souls weigh... this is why you should be very holy and much holier than ordinary priests. It is all about saving many souls, of saving ten million or saving a million only. But the Teologo is crazy to speak to us of ten million. I say that a good journalist saves much more. Raise your eyes, look up to a giant tree whose top you can’t see: this is our Casa and it is truly a huge tree, you are nothing but the roots. The present Casa is nothing but the root of this giant tree. Oh, if you only understood the treasure that is in you, where the Lord calls you, you shall all be full of life, and you will not let yourself stay put, that is, you shall not leave the Lord alone, you shall be beside him to tell him, ‘But I still need this, but I still need that, but give me yet this grace...’ But, you will say, where does the Teologo want to bring us tonight? I want to bring you to the mountain of perfection. Understand how much must you be saints” (G. T. GIACCARDO, *Diario...*, 1919, op. cit., pp. 254-255).

<sup>117</sup> “The only irritations are these: I am not yet sufficiently good and you are not yet saints enough. As for the rest, it matters to me as much as a slipper in the drainage. If you love me, take also these irritations, feel them, suffer them, choose to free the house of them. We need more spirit of humility, of docility, of enthusiasm; everything depends on your fervor, perfect union of spirit and heart with me is needed. Go ahead, take to yourselves these irritations, the only irritations of the Heart of Jesus and pray much. In Heaven we shall see how much harm our sins has done to our institute; we shall see how holiness was the only true irritation here on earth. We shall laugh over the other irritations and we shall be amazed how we have not done much of this second” (G. T. GIACCARDO, *Diario...*, 15 February 1918, op. cit., pp. 191-192).

<sup>118</sup> In 1919, beginning from 13 April, mention is made more and more of the Society of St. Paul. Cf. also 25 April 1919, 25 May 1919, 30 June 1919, 17 August 1919 (cf. G. T. GIACCARDO, *Diario...*, 1919, op. cit., pp. 263ff).



## 1.2.2 “I am with you”

DFst  
71-72  
77-78

**84** Fr. Alberione moves on to insist on the need of new vocations and sets up also a more spacious residence along Via Vernazza, where the young wards transferred on May 1919.<sup>119</sup> Faith would multiply vocations and the means for the Good Press.<sup>120</sup> Some features of the life of prayer are drawn<sup>121</sup> as well as some devotions of the first week of the month.<sup>122</sup>

DFst  
93-95

**85** The U.C.B.S. bulletin encourages parish priests to publish parish bulletins<sup>123</sup> and mobilizes the Cooperators

<sup>119</sup> “For days now, the dear Father is imparting on us the truth above [= faith and holiness]. This evening he told us: ‘The next issue of the UCBS shall describe the house. Let us try to welcome for this summer about ten boys. I count on you, too. Pray: that the Bulletin be well accepted, that it produces fruits, that young boys having the vocation come, that they allow themselves to be trained; you are firm, having good will, capable of training them. That I may understand how to get along with *festina lente* (move fast by slowing down), and another thing that I know’.” (G. T. GIACCARDI, *Diario...*, 21 February 1919, op. cit., p. 259).

<sup>120</sup> In the quoted sermon of 19 March 1919, Fr. Alberione continues: “We should not think that this faith comes only from God; we also ought to sweat it out to acquire and keep it. When all human forecasts are against, to firmly believe is a great merit and it obtains grace. Faith under test: do you believe that before the year ends we shall have 40 boys? Let no one doubt: if someone doubts, we shall have only 39. Do you believe that by January the second machine shall have been paid? If one doubts, about a thousand lire less!” (G. T. GIACCARDI, *Diario...*, 19 March 1919, op. cit., pp. 260-261).

<sup>121</sup> On 30 June 1919, before the first renewal of the vows, Fr. Alberione takes into consideration ‘why the casa is not bearing all the fruits’: “It is said, because we are not united enough among us in charity and in spirit: but the root evil is found in our lack of adequate spirit of prayer and the above is solved: from it follows the resolution: ALL OF US SHALL DO AT LEAST A QUARTER OF AN HOUR VISIT TO THE MOST BLESSED SACRAMENT! The dear Father spoke of this resolution in the casa as if it were a matter of primary importance. As love is nourished, we could ask for more and we could achieve an hour a day for adoration. After 17 days all of us have been faithful with a little exception: and most of all we are very happy about the resolution” (G. T. GIACCARDI, *Diario...*, 30 June 1919, op. cit., p. 267).

<sup>122</sup> “The first week of the month in the Casa: Monday: St. Paul, Rites for the Cooperators of the Good Press; Tuesday: Souls in Purgatory; Wednesday: St. Joseph; Thursday: Guardian Angel; Friday: Blessed Eucharist, Sacred Heart, hour of adoration. Saturday: Mary Most Holy” (G. T. GIACCARDI, *Diario...*, 1 September 1919, op. cit., p. 285).

<sup>123</sup> “Along with newspapers and weeklies, for sometime now, parish bulletins have surfaced. They have the purpose of integrating the parish priest’s

so they may send offerings for the acquisition of a Linotype<sup>124</sup> and open in every parish outlets-selling points of books and religious articles.<sup>125</sup> The promotion of libraries is also started.<sup>126</sup> Advertisements of the “Edizioni della Scuola

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work: by bringing the parish priest’s word also to those parts of the population that, for whatever reason, do not participate in the instructions of the parish priest; for reminding also by writing notices of the parish priest; for keeping alive and making all the institutions that have arisen in the parish (child-care center, hospital, catechism classes, etc.) prosper. In the Diocese of Alba there are about twenty of them; as far as we know none of the parish priests who started its publication had second thoughts over it or had to suspend publication. Voluntarily, the population has given and the bulletin has never been at a loss. The Scuola Tipografica of Alba prints some of them of every size, periodicity and format. It also tries to facilitate the work either for the price as for the compilation and the shipping. For example, it could provide shared materials for two or three pages of the periodical: it can take care of shipping, etc. Ask for samples, quotations, etc., from the Scuola Tipografica of Alba” (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year II, no. 5, May 1919, p. 2).

<sup>124</sup> Cf. *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year I, no. 2, 28 November 1918, p. 3. In issue no. 6, June 1919, p. 5, notice is posted that the necessary amount of L. 20,034.95 was reached; it concluded: “Trust was not in vain: the machine was fully paid, as one can see in the statement we are publishing above. H. E. Our Bishop has deemed to come and bless it: we hope that by divine grace, things proceeded well. Therefore we address our most felt gratitude: with prayers for everyone, the Lord’s great blessings to all.” Cf. also G. T. GIACCARDO, *Diario...*, 5 March 1919, op. cit., p. 259, where mention is made of an acquisition of another machine that would cost £ 16,500. Cf. *Ibid.*, 30 May 1919, pp. 265-266, where Giaccardo speaks of the Bishop’s blessing and of the name “Paolina” given to the Linotype.

<sup>125</sup> “In every parish. There ought to be an outlet for selling books and religions articles... The members of the Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa are especially invited to see to it that the outlet-selling point is opened in every parish. No one more than they know well what the good press can do: and perhaps few other ways of diffusion can achieve results as much as a store-selling point can do” (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year II, no. 5, May 1919, p. 6).

<sup>126</sup> It seems useful to quote the entire promotion article: “*Library made!!!* Let us propose to the Ladies and Gentlemen Cooperators of the Good Press. A certain number of them are desirous to promote small libraries for the common good of the population of a parish as a whole, or especially of a certain class of persons. Well, the bookstore of the Scuola Tipografica, using the method already practiced in England, provides at fixed prices, a small library, with selected books, secure as regards good morals, at very special conditions. For now, it proposes for every kind of person the following, while proposing to offer later other kinds for ladies, students, workers, farmers, etc. Small library of 25 books L. 25. It includes 5 volumes of light reading, 5 volumes of lives of saints, 5 volumes of culture, 5 of ascetics, 5 volumes of novels. Small library

Tipografica”<sup>127</sup> and then of the “Scuola Tipografica Editrice - Alba” are made.<sup>128</sup>

DFSt 85 **86** From May 1919, in Giaccardo’s Diary, beside the title Pia Società San Paolo, mention is made of “forming the family,”<sup>129</sup> the first seed of the future name, Famiglia Paolina (Pauline Family).

DFSt 84-85 **87** From June onwards, life is marked by the preparation for the ordination of the first priest of the Casa. Giuseppe Giaccardo<sup>130</sup> receives the minor orders on 22 June, Subdeaconate on 29 June, Diaconate on 20 September. So he could assist the gravely ill mother, Fr. Alberione obtains the permission that the Ordination to the Priesthood be an-

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of 50 books L. 50. It includes 10 volumes of pleasant reading; 10 volumes of lives of saints; 10 volumes of culture; 10 volumes of ascetics; 10 novels. Small library of 100 books L. 100. Includes 20 volumes of pleasant reading; 20 novels; 20 volumes lives of saints; volumes of ascetics; 20 volumes of culture. Small library of 200 books L. 200. Includes 40 novels; 40 volumes of pleasant reading; 40 volumes of culture; 40 volumes of ascetics; 40 volumes of lives of saints. We have ready also libraries of 500 volumes: of culture, of educational and pleasant narratives, etc. That we could offer at L. 450” (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year II, no. 6, June 1919, p. 2).

<sup>127</sup> The list of newspapers (*Gazzetta d’Alba*, Torre di S. Stefano Belbo, *Avvisatore Ecclesiastico Albese Astese Alessandrino Saluzzese*), about fifteen Parish bulletins, five published books, Bookstore and bindery, Catechetical specialties (Christian doctrine for 3 classes), Class booklets (for fourth grade) and Easter Cards (cf. *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year II, [no. 2?, between February and April] 1919, p. 8).

<sup>128</sup> Two books of Fr. Alberione are introduced *La donna associata allo zelo sacerdotale* and *Vigolungo Maggiore Aspirante all’apostolato Buona Stampa*, and the book *Un modello di Catechista Emilia Moglia*, by Can. Francesco Chiesa (cf. *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year III, [July ?] 1920, p. 8).

<sup>129</sup> “The dear Father called around himself the Pious Society of St. Paul; he admonished for not keeping him well informed about what is happening in the Casa; then he went back to the basics. We need to form the family: otherwise the work of the G. P. (Good Press) dies with us. Because of this it is necessary that we should be united among us first of all, that we love each other, that we help one another, that we pray much; and that we fill ourselves well of the spirit of the Casa. We need to form the spirit: to work for God: the Sig. Teologo in order to train us to live by ourselves does not offer us caresses: we resist. We need to form the family” (G. T. GIACCARDO, *Diario...*, 25 May 1919, op. cit., p. 265).

<sup>130</sup> Giaccardo would receive the name Timoteo, secretly wanted by him, on the occasion of his religious profession on 30 June 1920, after his priestly ordination.

ticipated for eight days: it took place on 19 October. As an immediate preparation of the Casa, Fr. Alberione, while preaching the Spiritual Exercises in the seminary from 13 to 20 October, proposed to the students of the Printing School the meditation on the Priestly Dignity.<sup>131</sup>

**88** The year 1920 is characterized as the year of consolidation.<sup>132</sup> Now it was possible to render public what the Casa was for and how people lived and what was taught in the Casa.

**89** After much prayer and waiting, the land suitable for the new quarters is finally found<sup>133</sup> and preparations are made for the construction as tasks are distributed.<sup>134</sup> On 30 May 1920 the directorship of *Gazzetta d'Alba* is entrusted by Fr. Alberione to Fr. Giaccardo. He also leaves behind, from this year, his commitments in the Seminary; and, on the occasion of the request of clerics for admission, he writes the Bishop explaining the meaning of the Printing School: "The members of this family, as I have already written you other

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93-95

<sup>131</sup> Cf. G. ALBERIONE, *LV01*, p. 92.

<sup>132</sup> "10 February 1920. Many things worth noting and useful to us and to our children are taking place: I forget or do not find time to write. This year is called the year of consolidation as last year was the year of vocations. The current year brings to mind what the Sig. Teologo said inaugurating the first of January" (G. T. GIACCARDO, *Diario...*, 10 February 1920, op. cit., p. 288).

<sup>133</sup> "We prayed for a house. St. Paul has given us the grace the day of his conversion: he has given us a field in a very good location. Providence is to be admired: three suitable lots, at the eve of closing the deal every contract provisions went off; this, unplanned, came; and no one thought of having it. Hence, it is the place of God: the prayer that everything gets done rests under the feet of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament signed by all the components of the Society of St. Paul. Means are thought as to how to pay the 350,000 lire debt. First: faith and prayer; second: holiness and diligent work for the G. P. (Good Press); third: each one does his part well so that we could earn at least our food through work" (G. T. GIACCARDO, *Diario...*, 10 February 1920, op. cit., p. 288).

<sup>134</sup> "Then: Master: look for souls that would do good by helping the G. P.; Torquato: secret ways of Providence; Assistant: U.C.B.S. and the means of the bookshops: holy pictures, cards; Vice-Piazza: subscriptions to the *Gazzetta*, lottery...; Ambrosio: subscription. The Sig. Teologo directed every project and work. Everyone prays and the processing of papers regarding the contract are also taken into consideration: legal security, construction..." (G. T. GIACCARDO, *Diario...*, 10 February 1920, op. cit., p. 288). The *assistant* is Costa and the Vice, Marcellino, as we can see in this text: "27 September: Today assistant Costa and Vice Marcellino have arrived from Bergamo: they have happily passed the first course of social sciences. Deo gratias!" (G. T. GIACCARDO, *Diario...*, 27 September 1919, op. cit., p. 286).

times, bind themselves to this mission by consecrating themselves to the Lord through the special vows: a part of them also undertakes sacred studies with the intention of becoming writers and priests. We are persuaded that the Good Press is a very important part of the priestly office.”<sup>135</sup>

**90** Also as regards the building of the new quarters, one could notice how Fr. Alberione had a project that matured in reflection and prayer. It is even said that he had received a special light as how to set up the entire arrangement of buildings.<sup>136</sup>

DFst  
19-20

**91** In the U.C.B.S. bulletin, the need for a house for the Printing School is mentioned, trust in providence is made known and appeal is made to the generosity of Cooperators while indicating five paths, or streets of the Divine Providence.<sup>137</sup>

<sup>135</sup> Cf. G. ROCCA, *La formazione...*, op. cit., p. 559.

<sup>136</sup> “One of the first young men attests that, on November 1919, the founder told him straight: ‘Take courage: next year we shall have a big printing press and a beautiful house, and then a beautiful Church that we will dedicate to St. Paul. But we are not going to stop in Alba.’ And many years later during the course of exhortation to his young men, the founder confided that, while he was examining for the first time the lot wherein the houses and the Church of St. Paul now stand, he had a moment of mysterious confusion during which he saw most clearly the entire complex of buildings, the way it is now seen by the visitor” (L. ROLFO, *I primi passi (1914-1930)*, in AA.VV., *Mi protendo in avanti*, Edizioni Paoline, Alba, 1954, p. 117). Cf. G. ALBERIONE, *Mihi vivere Christus est*, Edizioni Paoline, Roma, 1972, no. 138.

<sup>137</sup> “*We expect from Providence. What do we need?* We need a house capable of accommodating a hundred people: because currently the *Printing School* has 46 and this number shall have to double soon, in order to still increase. Hence a shop where about ten printing machines could be placed (which is the number that the *Printing School* has and where the compositors, printers, linotypists, binders, shippers and proofreaders could comfortably work; at least three rooms for the director’s office, accounting, conference room; rooms useful for study, classes, kitchen, refectory, chapel, etc.; dormitory for an adequate number of beds; vast courtyard wherein the young could do recreation; garden and vegetable patch so we could save a bit of the considerable amount that currently is spent for meat and vegetables. For now, we only want to provide for what is immediately necessary. *At what point are we?* A piece of land, big enough for building a house, allow a courtyard, a garden and what is necessary for the current need and also that of the near future. It has cost much though: but what is not too expensive these days: The area is found in Alba and it covers the property commonly called *Fornace*; it is found near piazza *Savona*, at

The people show sensitivity to the calls of the new apostolate; they respond with a generosity that seems a swollen river and are informed regarding the participation of everyone, above all, of the spirit that is behind the steps being taken.<sup>138</sup>

**92** The building of the first house started on June 1920. Practically, the floors of the house were furnished gradually as the foundation structures were ready. The printing press bought in Sesto San Giovanni in April 1921 is installed in the new quarters.

**93** The year of consolidation has completed the preparatory stage, adopted according to the principle of graduality referred to above (cf. DFin 62). Such foresight has set up the features of the Casa according to the needs dictated by the novelty of the press apostolate.

DFst  
93-95

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the left of one who goes from the city and leads to the Sanctuary of the Mor-etta and goes to the limits of the street. *The five paths*. Varied are the ways through which Providence will send us what we need: 1. There are his secret ways of which we men know little or nothing. 2. let us open pledges. 3. We approach people who have. 4. We promote a lottery. 5. Address ourselves to the cooperators of the good press" (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year III, no. 2, 1920, pp. 3-4).

<sup>138</sup> In the month of June [1920] digging was done; during the first fifteen days of July, the foundations were finished; in the second half of the month construction of the walls began; at the time of writing (25 September) the steel beams are being placed for the vault of the first floor... The ground floor is destined for the printing machines, warehouse, with two rooms that would be used for visitors. The place for the machines is notable: it's height is convenient, length is 20 meters, width 11.5, it could very well accommodate 10 machines, allow yet a free space for the printers to move about and a corridor for helpers, for the transport of forms, paper, etc. Well visible, airy, abundant light; it could be equipped with an elevator to allow the compositors of the hall upstairs to bring the forms for printing. The student printers almost every evening come to see the building of their place of work and they bless Providence and pray for their benefactors. *The spirit* with which the house of the Printing School is being built is different from that which pushes the building of other houses. Here work is done as if to raise a Church: from the Church of the Good Press the word of truth shall continually go out, word that is written on paper; it shall fly to all parts in order to enlighten, comfort, urge towards good. Even more, this house shall be as if a Seminary of Apostles and Workers of the Good Press! It is going to be a seedbed, a blessed greenhouse from where they shall be transplanted into many, many places (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year III, no. 7, September 1920, pp. 3-4).

To keep high the image of the new vocation as mission mattered: “The press is considered a profession by many: in the Printing School, it is wanted that it be raised to the level of *a mission, an apostolate*.”<sup>139</sup> More precisely it is declared as an expression of priesthood: “And above all, let that spirit be kept and nurtured: it is the principal wealth, the only capital, the best gift of Providence to this house that is: ‘to consider the press as apostolate, as a sacred priesthood’ by bringing to it the intellectual and moral training that is being brought to the apostolate, to a priesthood.”<sup>140</sup> Of this priesthood of the Good Press, made up of writers, technicians, diffusers, one must say that “the harvest is great” inasmuch as it responds to the “needs of the times”: “In every region and diocese, a new need is felt: it is the need of the times; and in every region and diocese a serious need is felt: apostles of the Good Press are wanting. This is the soul of our entire movement: it is a great modern means for doing good; and today it is a most important part of the spirit of the priesthood so that it can give true and abundant fruits to souls! Exercising a *profession* is very different from exercising an apostolate! It is precisely because of this that everywhere *our* press has many difficulties: we need *our* writers, *our* printers; we need *our* diffusers.”<sup>141</sup>

DFst  
93-95

**94** This priesthood is comparable to that of the mission *ad gentes* and to it women are also called: “To the Good Press women missionaries are necessary as it is to the work of the propagation of the faith among infidels. The women missionaries among infidels assist the missionaries and in many circumstances they replace the priests in places where they cannot go. The same must be said of the mission of the good press. Many tasks are suitable to women: in many things the daughters succeed better, in others, they show better results.”<sup>142</sup>

DFst  
78-79

**95** Fr. Alberione was strongly driven,<sup>143</sup> but he also had piercing doubts. Returning from war, some clerics of the

<sup>139</sup> *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year IV, no. 5, 15 July 1921, p. 10.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, year IV, nos. 3-4, 10-15 April 1921, p. 2.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, year V, no. 2, March 1922, p. 4.

<sup>143</sup> On 16 March 1921, Giaccardo writes: “The words of the Sig. Teologo on our holiness penetrate my soul, shake me up: I propose to pray

Seminary of Alba had chosen to move to the Pious Society of St. Paul, eliciting many conflicts within the diocese; the financial unease had grown and this complex of things had caused “a stormy wind” to rise against the house, hitting as well the most trusted friends.<sup>144</sup>

**96** At the same time, in Italy, raged the storm of the Socialists,<sup>145</sup> of the fascists<sup>146</sup> and of the conflict among them,<sup>147</sup> not sparing the institutions of the Church.<sup>148</sup>

DFst  
78-79

better... I can see that the Sig. Teologo runs and runs, and I am able only to follow after him, on my part, I can do only the least!” (G. T. GIACCARDO, *Diario...*, 6 March 1921, op. cit., p. 298).

<sup>144</sup> Giaccardo’s description is precious: “A rather stormy wind has risen these days against the Casa; it came as a serious economic problem; ‘The Sig. Teologo was disillusioned, rejected by the ecclesiastical authority: these voices have also hit the parish priests of Vezza (Fr. Vigolungo) and of Benevello (Fr. Brovia). The Sig. Teologo drew the balances of the Casa and there is a surplus of 524,000 £. Good, a letter arrived from Pisa; it insisted that we went to Card. Maffi. The Vicar Msgr. advised us to stay in Alba. Msgr. Bishop tells Can. Chiesa that he esteems the printing school more than he did. These things referred to the aforementioned persons, and to whomever needed it, calmed the winds, and the ever good Lord wanted to grant us, in his mercy and wisdom, serenity” (G. T. GIACCARDO, *Diario...*, April 1921, op. cit., pp. 298-299).

<sup>145</sup> “A new Socialist dirty trick has bloodied the streets of another Italian city. On the municipal hall of Ferrara the red flag waves since the last elections: and the comrades wanted, on 19 December, to hold a protest rally at the municipal theater for certain maltreatments that were said to have been done against two officers of the party in Bologna, Bentini and Niccolai. The authorities, who had permitted the socialists to hold the meeting, could not forbid the adversaries to hold a patriotic demonstration in the hour following the meeting in the theater: thus was it arranged. It was not true, however, that the socialists kept the injunctions of the authority: hence while the fascists and the nationalists in closed groups went through the principal roads of the city, at the corner of the Piazza del Commercio, they met a group of socialists from the League of nurses of the mental hospital, preceded by a red flag. Plunging forward to take the flag, they were welcomed by a pistol fire that wounded one of the fascists. At that signal, from the terrace of the oranges which, from the Castle’s top, dominated the street, started a storm of rifle fires against the fascists who found themselves between two fires, surprised by the ambush and in a very dangerous situation. The victims were many; three dead and twenty wounded among the fascists; among the bystanders: a person dead and a number of wounded, among whom was Doctor Magrini who was going to the hospital” (cf. *Cronaca contemporanea*, 23 December - 6 January 1921, in *La Civiltà Cattolica*, year 72, vol. I, quad. 1694, 8 January 1921, pp. 180-181).

<sup>146</sup> “In the entire country bloody clashes still continue, clashes that we deplored in the preceding reports, with the addition of some circumstances



Some threats to Alberione and to the printing press have been recalled; to them we must add the episode when some

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that makes brutal violence even more repugnant. In not a few cases, the clashes are seen to be provoked by predatory aggressions by socialists against the fascists... It is becoming clearer, however, through the confession of the same leaders of fascism, that the movement, started early as a reaction against the acts of arrogance of the socialists-bolshevists-communists or anarchists of some breed, not infrequently goes beyond the limits, thus committing the same sin of arbitrary violence rightly brandished against the subversives and doubling the confusion instead of benefiting order and public peace. To cite some example of arbitrary acts of arrogance made part of the fascists' ways, it is enough to recall the abuse committed in Pisa some days ago against Hon. Modigliani who was traveling with his wife, and was obliged to get down the train that the troublemakers did not want to depart. In Pavia, Hon. F. Mani, insulted while seated in a café, followed up to the higher floors of the house, was brutally beaten and attempts were made to throw him down through the balcony to the street because he did not want to shout what the caprice of those violent men was imposing on him. In the same manner the Hon. Albertelli was jeered and called a villain in Pavia while obliging him to withdraw from a public meeting place and retire in his house. In many places, the fascists broke into private homes looking for men of another party and beating them up and offending them in all manners, just as they did in Mantova against the Socialist Zanolli, with an open violation of a private residence" (cf. *Cronaca contemporanea*, 28 April - 12 May 1921, in *La Civiltà Cattolica*, year 72, vol. II, quad. 1702, 14 May 1921, p. 371).

<sup>147</sup> "The duel between socialists and fascists is becoming more bitter and bloody every moment at the expense of the country's order and peace. The socialists, as usual, shout to hoarseness against their adversaries, who are making themselves complaining victims of their acts of violence; however, on closer look, it is like an affair between shipmasters and mates. Meanwhile, however, it cannot be denied that Italy, not only in major cities, but in the smaller neighborhoods and even in the rural areas, looks like a country not worth calling a civil one; for that matter, we would want to give proof to this the events of the weeks. On the 6<sup>th</sup> of April, in Padova a fascist student was attacked and beaten by workers; in return, the Labor Office is devastated and burned. The next day, a fascist is maltreated and wounded by the railway workers at the station of Reggio Emilia; his companions came to his aid to defend him and these occupied the Labor Office and the offices of the socialist newspaper *La Giustizia* and set it on fire. On the same day, in Venice there was fisticuffs between two parts in the Campo santi Apostoli: the guards intervened: two pistol shots against them; one dead and fifteen wounded... And the destruction is multiplied each day so that it would be quite long to follow their marks. While we write, troubles, rumbles, gunshots, fires in Taranto, in Minervino Murge, in Ortenova, in Spinazzola, in Parma, in San Damiano in the Piacentino area, in Legnago, in Viadana, in Campitello, in Girgenti, in

Blackshirts burned the newspapers that were being brought to the post office<sup>149</sup> and the aggression against Giaccardo, director of the *Gazzetta d'Alba*, by some fascists.<sup>150</sup>

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Nettuno, in Arcole, in Iglesias, Sardinia, again in Turin, in Livorno, in Figline Valdarno; and we can continue the sad listing if this were not enough to show the state of deep disturbance with which the country is being reduced" (Cf. *Cronaca contemporanea*, 7-28 April 1921, in *La Civiltà Cattolica*, year 72, vol. II, quad. 1701, 30 April 1921, pp. 275-277).

<sup>148</sup> "The savage bullyings and the socialist criminal aggressions against the Catholics are being multiplied in a rather serious manner; it is clear by now that there is an order, a violent campaign to suffocate, perhaps also in blood, every manifestation of religious freedom. The most recent tragedy took place at the Abbazia San Salvatore, that one in Siena, on Sunday, 15 August. The feast of the Assumption was being celebrated there with a procession wherein mostly women and young girls participated. The socialist league held on the same day a meeting wherein a socialist lawmaker, among the most furious bolshevists, had vented all his bile against priests and the police, exciting those villains to every excess. In fact, a group of those brutes affronted the procession and, having beaten the priests, "they wounded seriously the parish priest and brandished fists and batons as if they were crazy". Then, as the *Resto del Carlino* reports, a newspaper not suspected of anticlericalism, "sensing that a group of running ruffians was directed towards the church of the Convent, the police officer of the carabinieri went there with 17 officers: but the socialists met them with stones and pistol fires. Two shots fired at close range wounded the targeted Nazzareno Ciarrocchi who died moments later, and some stabs brought down police officer Burriaggi. At this sight, the police officers used their guns; and the flag bearer Ovidio Sabbatini, who the soldiers are certain to point as the one who shot the victim, fell wounded by a bullet." At the same time a group of socialists had penetrated the church, attacking the faithful who had taken refuge there. A religious, Friar Angelico of the Minors, was killed. In the terrifying mix-up that followed, the police officers had again to use their guns for defense, and the church echoed with shots from one side and the other: two of the aggressors and a poor child fell in their blood. The police officers had to withdraw to their headquarters and braced themselves up against the mob that tried to set them on fire. New gunfire and stones and pistol shots until 10 in the evening. The count of the day amounted to eight dead and numerous persons wounded; furthermore, many of the rebels were arrested. In exchange, the socialists, as usual, called for a general strike, the height impudent brutality after the most ferocious brutality" (cf. *Cronaca contemporanea*, 12-26 August 1920, in *La Civiltà Cattolica*, year 71, vol. III, quad. 1685, 28 August 1920, pp. 464-465).

<sup>149</sup> Cf. L. ROLFO, *I primi passi (1914-1930)*, in AA.VV., *Mi protendo in avanti*, op. cit., p. 127.

<sup>150</sup> Cf. S. LAMERA, *Lo spirito di don Giaccardo, servo di Dio*, Edizioni Paoline, III edition, no date, p. 115.

In that burning atmosphere, the boys of the Printing School offered themselves to substitute the striking socialists, at the start of 1920, in the printing of the newspaper *Il Momento*, of Turin.<sup>151</sup>

DFst 45-46      **97** Face to face with these dangers and considering his own ever unstable health, Fr. Alberione asked if really it was “being imprudent: summoning people for a mission, with the grave danger of abandoning them halfway down the road” (*ADds* 112). To the question, “For all that, [was it] an illusion?” (*ADds* 113), he always had peaceful replies either in prayer, or due to some unexplainable experiences, or through the words of his Spiritual Director who led him to no longer have uncertainties (cf. *ADds* 112).

DFst 39-40  
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49-50      **98** At the decisive moment of getting into the new residence, this “spiritual torment” receives an extraordinary confirmation in a “dream” that convinces Fr. Alberione to consider the Casa as God’s work. Later, preaching the Spiritual Exercises from 1 to 7 June 1938 to the older priests of the Society of St. Paul, in Alba, Fr. Alberione recalls: “How clear did it seem to me, what I saw down the house, in that room (*the office that P. M. used in the casa San Paolo during the first years that it was built*), during one of those days when I don’t work: the Divine Master was walking and he had along with him some of you and he said, ‘Do not be afraid, I am with you; from here I want to enlighten; only, maintain yourselves in humility... and, it seems to me, be sorry for your sins...’”<sup>152</sup>

DFst 39-40  
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49-50      **99** The precise dating of this “dream” is not easy.<sup>153</sup> Luigi Rolfo points out as a probable date the first months of 1923.<sup>154</sup> According to Caterina Antonietta Martini, this,

<sup>151</sup> Cf. G. BARBERO, *Il sacerdote Giacomo Alberione...*, op. cit., p. 311.

<sup>152</sup> G. ALBERIONE, *Sectamini fidem...*, Ricordi del Primo Maestro ai Sacerdoti Sampaolini, Pia Società San Paolo, Alba, p. 48.

<sup>153</sup> Cf. G. BARBERO, *Il sacerdote Giacomo Alberione...*, op. cit., p. 362.

<sup>154</sup> “The Founder always attributed a great importance to this dream that should date back to 1923 and, perhaps, during the first months of that year when his health was about to suffer the most serious crisis of his life, in the sense that the words he was saying to have heard from the lips of the Savior became for him a certainty and a program of life” (L. ROLFO, *Don Alberione*, Appunti per una biografia, Edizioni San Paolo, 1998<sup>3</sup>, p. 187).

which she calls “grace of confirmation” should be located during Fr. Alberione’s serious “moment of suffering” that Fr. Alberione spent in Benevello, where he was welcomed, from July to the first days of September or, nonetheless, it is thought to have been a date prior to the Eucharistic Congress of Genova celebrated on September 1923.<sup>155</sup>

**100** We have, however, some testimonies that would direct us to an earlier dating of the “dream”: the declarations of Fr. Paolino Gilli and Prof.-Dr. Edoardo Borra who knew personally Fr. Alberione from the earliest times of the Casa.

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Fr. Gilli writes: “The carpenters were working at the finishing of the building and were setting the areas according to the needs and dispositions of the Teologo. We must not fail to say something regarding the place of the Lord of the house, the Chapel. Its place was on the third floor, counting the groundfloor as first; it was at the start of the construction over the office of the Primo Maestro. Nothing special, quite spacious and comfortable for the existing persons, well lighted by three windows. A simple wooden altar, above a pew, a small picture of St. Paul, of the Sacred Heart and of Our Lady. Always clean. It was in that Chapel that, entering one morning, we saw at the side of the Tabernacle two writings, with gold letters on black background: Do not be afraid I am with you – From here I want to enlighten and, after a while, on the pew under the Tabernacle: Be sorry for sins. These were thoughts that the Teologo explained to us for many days as he gave us meditation.”<sup>156</sup>

On his part, Prof. Edoardo Borra, well known doctor of Alba, gave a priceless testimony during a course of formation on Pauline Spirituality in Alba. He affirms: “Fr. Alberione received me in a small room, which was his office and where he slept, because he had there an iron divan... where he slept. In this small room he welcomed me; there was also a table and a small cabinet... Something very im-

<sup>155</sup> C. A. MARTINI, *Le Figlie di San Paolo*, op. cit., p. 129.

<sup>156</sup> P. GILLI, *Così come mi ricordo, Cenni sulla storia della Congregazione*, Alba, July 1995. Unpublished notes entrusted to the author at the CSP.

portant: getting to know the Chapel. It was a small room. There was the altar with a beautiful white linen and the tabernacle, a small, modest tabernacle, and a small lighted lamp. Some pairs of predieus, because, generally one knelt on the ground. At any rate, I went there and I saw something extraordinary that remained in my mind. On the altar, in front of the tabernacle, there were two pieces of cardboard, folded. On one was written: “Non temere,” (Do not be afraid) and on the other was written “Io sono sempre con voi” (I am with you). This saying, this principle of Fr. Alberione, which was written in a very simple manner, in separate letters, on a piece of cardboard, is now etched, in Latin, beside the main altar of *San Paolo*: “Nolite timere”, “Ego semper vobiscum sum”, it seems to me. Now every time I come to *San Paolo* I cannot but stare at it because, precisely, I remember those two pieces of cardboard that have become magnificent memorial tablets, written in gold, etc., but still have the same meaning as before.”<sup>157</sup>

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**101** Going back to the subject of date, in these two testimonies and in the affirmation of Fr. Alberione, we find references “ante quam” (before) and “post quam” (after), within which the dream took place.

Fr. Alberione affirms that it took place in the “room” or office of the new house. On the other hand, Fr. Gilli and Prof. Edoardo Borra witness that the written words “Io sono con voi” and “Di qui voglio illuminare” were found already in the chapel, located at the floor over Fr. Alberione’s office.

The “ante quam” date, therefore, is 29 June 1922, the date of the blessing of the second chapel at the courtyard, and of the transfer of the Blessed Sacrament from the first chapel. The “post quam” date is the occupation of the office in the new house by Fr. Alberione, where he experienced the “dream.”

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<sup>157</sup> Transcription of the video recording of the round table discussion held at the Stabilimenti del Gruppo Periodici, in Alba, on 13 September 1995, with the participation of Acc. Antonio Buccolo, Prof. Edoardo Borra, Dr. Gianfranco Maggi and Dr. Piero Reggio. Cf. M. BUCCOLO, *Alba 1914-1925: don Alberione fondatore e il suo tempo*, in *Il Coopera-tore Paolino*, no. 9, November 1995, pp. 12-13.

It is known that the transfer from Via Vernazza was completed on 10 August 1921, but the occupation of the new house, according to Fr. Gilli's testimony, was started much earlier. In fact, the issue of the *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, bearing the date of 15 July, proposes already a visit to the new house. It describes the printing press installed on the ground floor and affirms that, on the first floor, among other things, "beside the staircase is found the office of the Director." It was, precisely, Signor Teologo's office. Most probably, hence, Fr. Alberione had it hurriedly set after the first days from the start of the transfer, or prior to 15 July.

Prof. Borra, however, used to come to Alba during summer, and his description of the new house leads us to think that the transfer was just over. He narrates that the ground was very irregular and that he fell on a pool of water while going through wooden planks that were used as bridge. Although that inconvenience was repaired by the Cooperators only around February 1923,<sup>158</sup> it is unthinkable that such a passageway, used by many persons should remain dangerous for many months. It is safe to suppose, then, that his visit took place during the first summer of the Casa San Paolo, that is between July and August or, at most, September 1921.

**102** It is entirely plausible that the "grace of confirmation" might have taken place during the summer of 1921, that is, at the start of the transfer to the new house, considering that it drew the threatening attention of the socialists or of the fascists, an important element of that "complex of circumstances" that made Fr. Alberione afraid.

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<sup>158</sup> "The courtyard had to be done as soon as possible: during the rains it became a pool that stayed on for a while. The inconvenience was serious. Twenty young men of Priocca offered themselves to level it off. A beautiful Monday morning they came in two carts with shovels, picks, pails... Heading the group was Mr. Corsero Stefano, who was doing a lot of good to our Casa. They leveled down the hump in front and expanded the courtyard for more than three meters. They raised the ground in various places by 30, 40, 50 cms., by transferring soil with hand a drawn carts or horse a drawn. If they worked on their own, they would not have done so with greater fervor... The work was finished late Friday evening" (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VI, no. 2, 27 February 1923, p. 4).

Revealing himself to Fr. Alberione and to his religious family being born, the Divine Master has marked his seal of God's approval to the Casa: "Neither the socialists, nor the Fascists, nor the world, nor the haste of creditors in an instant of panic, nor failure, nor Satan, nor the passions, nor your inadequacy on all sides... [will be able to obstruct you], but make sure you let me stay with you; do not drive me out by sin. 'I am with you,' that is, with your Family, which I willed, which is mine, which I nourish and of which I am a part, as its head. Do not waver, even if there are many difficulties; but let me remain always with you! No sins..." (*ADds* 156).

DFst  
63-65

**103** This "grace of confirmation" brings light to the engaging affirmations of the July 1921 issue of the U.C.B.S., dedicated to let the importance and the need of the apostolate of the Good Press known. It constitutes a memorable document for knowing the beginnings of the Pauline Family and publishes among the most beautiful pages written on the new apostolate.<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>159</sup> We reprint entirely this memorable page: "*In front of the machines. Reflections.* The machines are material, and this would not have any attraction to the Christian: it were not that man himself were spirit alone. But this material thing that makes up the machines are God's handiwork, and are worked on by the marvelous ingenuity that God has entrusted to man. These marvelous machines become dear and venerable as the pulpit to the sacred speaker. St. Paul in that monument of science and charity raised before the centuries, his letter to the Romans, exclaims: faith comes from hearing and from hearing the gospel: how beautiful are the footsteps of those who proclaim peace, who announce joy! How beautiful are the machines meant for the good of those evangelizing. The apostle of the good press before the machines experiences something more than St. Francis when he felt the hymn for brother sun come through his soul. The thought of the apostle goes through the machine that makes it material in paper, that is, almost alive, because it brings eternal truths, spiritual nourishment that feeds an infinite number of readers: *not by bread alone that man lives, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.* Divine wisdom, through the divine word, has nourished the heart and the soul of the apostle, who has meditated on it in the Divine Scriptures. From his soul it has taken form, is incarnated, become material through the melting pot, the coils, the gears, the plates, of a machine; it has come out with a body of paper; it shall become the thought of other men, of other souls; it shall cross seas, go mountains, turn into brothers the sentiments, the ideas of two souls who have never seen each other, the writer and the reader; Christian the writer, Christian the reader. The divine truth illumines the

The issue is solemnly headlined, "GOD'S WORK. The house of the Printing School of Alba" which manifests the real project of Fr. Alberione: "*Now we start*": "The Printing School was opened some seven years ago, on August 1914. This has been a period of preparation, an apprenticeship, a training. Finally a house will be ready for the real purpose; there is an adequate number of persons that are bound together as a society of *souls*, of *wills*, of *hearts* for the work of the good press: it has been understood a little that God alone will do everything infallibly if the kingdom of God and his grace are sought, the teachers of science and of art are quite ready: there are true and numerous vocations that the Lord sends in proportion to the need... etc. Now we ought to begin therefore. Hence, the Casa assumes its true name: 'Pious Society of St. Paul,' while gradually leaving behind the time of preparation, hence its sections for males and females have been formed, each of them having people who attend to work and others to both study and work: hence we hereby furnish a synopsis of the rule for those who may be interested." <sup>160</sup>

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world, the kingdom of Jesus, wins over new minds, new spirits, new hearts. The missionary of the good press loves his machine; he wants it beautiful, modern, very fast, so much so as to reach and overcome in the race the bad press; he loves his small church, keeps it clean and orderly; he dreams of it as always working, bringing forth good word. I wish to be found always at the pedestal of my machine. The saints are painted with their tools in hand, the symbols, the emblems of their sanctification: I, apostle of the press, wish to be portrayed with the pen and inkwell, or standing straight near the machine that runs. How can one otherwise paint on a canvas the thought of that most broad mind that was Tertullian: a day shall come when the ink of writers shall be as valuable as the blood of martyrs. The martyrs show swords, bonfires, grates, crosses, wild beasts... And how are many saints represented? St. Paul is depicted with a book of his epistles in hand; St. Thomas holds a pen between his fingers, Dominic Savio holds in his right hand a sheet of paper; the evangelists are shown writing down in scrolls what the Spirit of truth inspired them; St. Francis of Sales has beside him the works that made him be declared doctor of devotion; St. Gregory the Great is portrayed in the act of writing his book of *Morals*; St. John Berchmans keeps close to his chest the book of rules meditated upon for long" (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year IV, no. 5, 15 July 1921, pp. 5-6).

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.



DFst 49 59-61 **104** The Casa is “God’s work” inasmuch as, “it has been understood a little that God alone does and will do everything infallibly if the kingdom of God and his grace are sought”: this certainty, originating from the encounter with Jesus Master, came down on the whole Casa as fire of true Pentecost.

The thought rushes to the Apostles, on whom, “...suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were” (Acts 2:2). One could think that, at least at the start, that “noise” had renewed in the spirit of the apostles the experience of the sufferings of cross; then, that “driving wind” was transformed into “tongues as of fire” that “filled them up with the Holy Spirit” (cf. Acts 2:2-3).

In the suffered circumstances during those months, certainly some expressions from the Letters of St. Paul were lived as if personally by Fr. Alberione and Fr. Giaccardo: “But we hold this treasure in earthen vessels, that the surpassing power may be of God and not from us” (2Cor 4:7); or, also, “Therefore, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and constraints, for the sake of Christ; for when I am weak, then I am strong” (2Cor 12:10).

DFst 85-86 91-92 **105** It was precisely in the stormy wind that “it was understood... that God alone does everything and shall infallibly do it if the kingdom and his grace is sought”: hence, other than closing to self, before the signs of God’s mercy and wisdom, Fr. Alberione prepares the integration of the Casa in the Church setup through the approval of the Institution. Towards this end he inculcates unity and co-responsibility, as Giaccardo testifies: “The Casa must be one: intimate union, trust, prayer, with the department head, with the master, with the confessor, with the Sig. Teologo. To give the house the solemnity of the constitution and to consider it great.”<sup>161</sup> More: “The Sig. Teologo gathers the highly placed persons in order to let them feel and to divide the responsibilities of the payments, of formation and the smooth operation of the Casa. The Casa is not a *domus formata* (house formed), but *in fieri* (in progress): we need to

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<sup>161</sup> G. T. GIACCARDI, *Diario...*, May 1921, op. cit., p. 299.

take it as *in fieri* and not as *formata*. Much more grace and more virtues are needed now. From our part, what is asked is generosity and total dedication. From God never withdraw anything, refuse anything, and stay in total communion.”<sup>162</sup>

### 1.2.3 The apostolic times live again

**106** More than a point of arrival, settling in the new house was a point of departure. In a short report regarding the origin and the development of the Pious Society of St. Paul, on 23 November 1921, Fr. Alberione, referring to the date of blessing of the house held with the participation of Msgr. Re, underlines the two events of the profession of perpetual vows and the constitution of the Pious Society of St. Paul: “The two moving ceremonies, happily combined, took place on 5 October, at the end of the Most Holy Spiritual Exercises. Before Jesus solemnly exposed, after the hymn *Veni Creator* the constitution of the Society of St. Paul was held and 14 of the older ones bound themselves with the holy vows of chastity, poverty, obedience and fidelity to the Roman Pontiff, promising to solemnly commit themselves in consecration to the work of the good press, everything that is good that they received from the Lord, all their knowledge, their health, their activity. Amidst everyone being moved, the Director, in God’s name, received these holy vows, promising to the generous young men, in the Lord’s name, the hundredfold in this life and eternal life in the next. Herein is the formula: ‘Before the Most Holy Trinity, the Immaculate Queen of the Apostles, St. Paul, the following persons consecrate everything they received as gift from the Lord to the work of the good press of the Pious Society of St. Paul for their entire life, renewing every year, the holy vows of poverty, chastity, obedience and fidelity to the Roman Pontiff’.”<sup>163</sup>

DFst  
85-88

**107** Concluding his report, Fr. Alberione strongly states his conviction of being engaged in God’s work: “It therefore appears: that the Pious Society of St. Paul has the visible

DFst  
85.91

<sup>162</sup> G. T. GIACCARDO, *Diario...*, 19 June 1921, op. cit., p. 299. “To live entirely in common” here means most likely “having everything in common.”

<sup>163</sup> G. ROCCA, *La formazione...*, Document no. 31, op. cit., pp. 569-570.

protection of the Lord; it was willed by him, guided by him, by him brought to the current status. In it there are fourteen persons of the section for men, eight for the section of women who are consecrated to the apostolate of the good press; that in it the students, boys and girls, are conveniently trained, intellectually, professionally and spiritually to dedicate themselves as religious to this means of good; that in it there are initiatives for doing good that are truly useful and stable in character; that it has the means of livelihood; that open to it is a vast field for doing good; that the members strongly desire to promote only and for the rest of their lives the glory of God, with their own sanctification (also through the vows and common life) and the salvation of souls; that this desire is in them for a long time and was effectively tried through a preparatory process lasting for years.”<sup>164</sup>

DFst  
44-48

**108** Fr. Alberione identifies his experience with that of the Apostles: hence on 1 December 1921, he writes Msgr. Re: “To judge a vocation belongs to the internal forum of the confessor and through the external forum of persons equipped with prudence, holiness, knowledge. In the aforementioned case, all the means advised for making a right decision were used. From one-two-three-four-five years tests were made, prayers were said, advice was asked: there still exist the proofs of this, at least in part; the pros and cons were evaluated for long and advice was asked from Can. Allamano Giuseppe, from Frs. Coraglia, Reffo, from Card. Maffi, from Fr. Sibona, and from Can. Chiesa. Now also regarding this matter talks were made at length with those persons and with others of equal merit and esteem, who now desire not to be mentioned... The case: either not to correspond to that which secondly can be humanly judged to be God’s will that is, vocation; or there may be other ways that I ignore ...If there are all the certainties that could be had in this matter that the Society of St. Paul is willed by God; if it were not so, then, it would immediately be dissolved. Granted, however, that there is doubt, Gamaliel’s advice regarding the Apostles seems proper: if these are activities that

<sup>164</sup> G. ROCCA, *La formazione...*, Document no. 31, op. cit., p. 570.

cannot sustain and make man grow, it would hence disintegrate by itself; if, however, it is the Lord's then it redounds to his glory; and here, there only and always is the will of the Venerable Superiors, of the undersigned and of all the members of the Pious Society of St. Paul."<sup>165</sup>

**109** The reference to the beginnings of the apostolic activities is full of meaning, relevance and emotions for Fr. Alberione; and it is related with the person of the Pope as we can learn from the Diary of Timoteo Giaccardo: "This is our banner: the medal that, on one face represents Sts. Peter and Paul and on the other, the Pope. Oh, should I write all the words, should I ever describe the tender and firm love that our Father nourishes for the Pope: he speaks about him each time he can, with feelings, and his calm, serene words are full of praises, of persuasion that they always impress as new, always most acceptable and each time they fill the soul with the most healthy and efficacious impressions. He wants that we loved the Pope. This love inspires him before the clerics; he wants it alive among the people. To the clerics he recommends many, many times that every year there should be at least a talk on the Pope, on the missions, on the good press."<sup>166</sup>

DFst  
68-70

Almost in the manner of St. Francis, who moves to Rome to present himself to the Pope, Fr. Alberione begins the year 1922 with a trip to Rome to bring to the Sacred Congregation of Religious the letter of introduction of the Society of St. Paul, written by Msgr. Re.

Benedict XV promoted and encouraged the Catholic Press and established the National Organization of the Good Press. Fr. Alberione was convinced he would obtain the approval of the Pope for the apostolate being born: "From January 2 to 8, the respectable Director was in Rome for important interests of the Casa. He was admitted in private audience with the Holy Father, whom he had the fortune of seeing during the last days of his life, whose Blessing he brought us."<sup>167</sup>

Benedict XV's death on 22 January 1922, was then a painful trial for the Casa: "Even during his last days, when

<sup>165</sup> G. BARBERO, *Il sacerdote Giacomo Alberione...*, op. cit., pp. 319-320.

<sup>166</sup> G. T. GIACCARDI, *Diario...*, 10 February 1918, op. cit., p. 190.

<sup>167</sup> *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year V, no. 1, 5 February 1922, p. 5.

our Director referred to him about the young men and daughters who embraced this Mission as their life, Benedict XV welcomed the news with felt joy and fixing his penetrating and eloquent gaze on him who was addressing him, he blessed, with an effusion of affection, him and the whole house and all the cooperators.”<sup>168</sup>

DFst  
43-44  
49-50  
95-97

**110** Meanwhile in the Casa, there reigns a conviction: the apostolic times live on. The Pious Society of St. Paul is introduced as a seminary for the formation of men and women, missionaries of the Good Press.<sup>169</sup> The frame of reference is the apostolic times: “The beginnings of Christianity are its golden era. We always read with emotion, with fruits, with passion, the pages of the Gospel, when the Apostles at the school of Jesus were telling him: Teacher, teach us to pray; when the crowds were upon each other to listen to the Divine Master’s words of eternal life; when the young men were trustfully coming to him and asking: Master, what must I do to reach eternal life!... Magnificent are the scenes where the Apostles gathered around Mary, Jesus’ Mother. She was the Mother, the Teacher, the Queen of the Apostles: she enlightened them, she directed them, she prayed... Magnificent is the first Christian Pentecost of the Apostles guided by Mary Most Holy in the first and most important novena to the Holy Spirit... More: impressive are the descriptions of the Acts of the Apostles, when St. Paul made his trips of evangelization and the great men of the areopagus were inviting him to present the new doctrine in the most famous assembly of the world: and the Christians converted by him remained from sunset to midnight and from midnight till morning to listen to his words... The Apostolic times live on.”<sup>170</sup>

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**111** In the Pious Society of St. Paul, men and women are aware that “an inextinguishable thirst to read and to learn torments mankind and all call for newspapers and books: children, adults and elderly ask for them; intellectuals and manual laborers, and from the missions come insistently to us the

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, year V, no. 7, August 1922, p. 4.

voice of apostolic vicars and missionaries who ask donations of books, good books, many books...”<sup>171</sup>

On the other hand, they sense the “imperious command” of the Church: “Make Catholic newspapers, spread the good press! Today, as ever, we need good press; blessed is the apostolate of the good press!”<sup>172</sup>

The response of the new apostles, just like at the beginnings of Christianity, shall be that of closing ranks with the Divine Master, be led by the Queen of the Apostles, be oriented according to St. Paul in order to proclaim the Gospel “with the fastest means”: “We shall effectively teach the Savior’s doctrine, if before, like the Apostles, we close ranks around the Master. It is a devotion that shall mature in these times of apostolate. And the devotion to Mary, Queen of the Apostles, shall also be developed... she will guide the new Apostles to new marvelous conquests... After St. Paul, the Apostle, the Doctor, the Preacher, the Teacher of the Gentiles, the Prisoner of Christ, the Knight of the Holy Spirit, shall orient those who today labor in order to resolve in a Christian manner the most serious religious, social, political problems; those who yearn to let pure Christianity penetrate the masses and do good through the fastest means; those who know more deeply his spirit, pray to him and are devoted, and the devotion shall be widespread and shall become gigantic in these times of apostolate and it shall be widespread among those dedicated to the apostolate and among those who want to live a robust Christian life.”<sup>173</sup>

**112** A fruitful wellspring of Fr. Alberione’s inspirations—even as a young man—have been prayer and the deeper knowledge of the appeals of current events, under the light of God’s Word: “The supporting force of the affections of the heart, the motor of the invisible kingdom of thought, in the intellectual and moral union, individual and social, that runs through all the centuries, and expands over all nations is the power of the word. Man speaks and God speaks” (SC 155). Listening to God’s word has made the deep conviction take a deep root on Fr. Alberione, the conviction that the Gospel pre-

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<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

sents Jesus surrounded by the apostles and disciples, men and women: "Among the great spectacles of faith and of zeal that we admire in the Church there is one, more than any other, that makes us marvel: to see the part exercised by women in the propagation of the faith: the woman apostle of faith and morals. – Beside Jesus and in his school we find women who spread his doctrine: they cooperated much in spreading the Christian faith and the queens and ladies and the poor women of the people, brides, mothers or daughters though they were."<sup>174</sup>

Therefore, not only men, but men and women.

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53-54

**113** In the process of further deepening such a reading of the Gospel that emphasized the role of women, Fr. Alberione availed with many writings. Here we cannot but remember two authors among those that inspired him greatly: R.F. Rohrbacher<sup>175</sup> for the history of the Church<sup>176</sup> and Gioacchino Ventura.<sup>177</sup> It is known that Fr. Alberione knew these authors and, as we shall see later, he recommended their reading.

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93-95

**114** G. Ventura especially fascinated Fr. Alberione, due to the former's zeal and for his different subject matters: for example, the importance given to God's Word, meditation on the mysteries of the life of Christ, prayer, the Eucharist, Marian devotion, the continuous reference to the Fathers of the Church and to Thomism, the relationship between reason and faith, the importance of women in the work of evangelization and in social life, the attention to current social problems.<sup>178</sup>

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78-79  
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99-100

**115** The homily on *Jesus Christ in the house of Martha and of Magdalene*<sup>179</sup> appears important for understanding the binomial contemplative life and active life in the DF, in

<sup>174</sup> G. ALBERIONE, *Quaderno 39*, 29 November 1909, p. 15.

<sup>175</sup> R.F. ROHRBACHER, *Storia universale della Chiesa*, 16 voll., Giacinto Marietti, Torino, 1869-1870<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>176</sup> Cf. for example, G. ALBERIONE, *Quaderno 39* and R.F. ROHRBACHER, *Storia universale della Chiesa*, op. cit., vol. IV, pp. 149ff.

<sup>177</sup> G. VENTURA, *Le donne del Vangelo*, Giosuè Rondinella Editore, Napoli 1856-1875; ID., *La donna cattolica*, 3 voll., Carlo Turati, Milano - Dario G. Rossi-Genova, coeditori, 1855; ID., *La Madre di Dio Madre degli uomini ovvero La Santissima Vergine a piè della croce*, Rondinella & Loffredo, Librai-Editori, Napoli, 1903<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>178</sup> Cf. F. ANDREU, *Ventura*, in *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*, vol. 16, fasc. CII-CIII, Paris, 1992, coll. 364-372.

<sup>179</sup> Cf. G. VENTURA, *Le donne del Vangelo*, op. cit., second part, pp. 24-77.

the whole line of thinking of Fr. Alberione, and in the orientations given to the congregations for women. It deals with the subject matter of prayer and wants to present “the great and sublime doctrine of the only one thing necessary,” while considering the conditions and the work of service to God, its necessity and importance and its reward or *guiderdone*, in the desire to offer a comment to the words of Paul: “But now that you have been freed from sin and have become slaves of God, the benefit that you have leads to sanctification, and its end is eternal life” (Rom 6:22).

After having given the accent on holiness as the ornament that makes the house of Martha, Mary and Lazarus an environment pleasing to the Son of God, Ventura points at the renunciation of sin as the first condition for entering service to God and, hence he describes an articulated itinerary so that works rendered a true service to God: “To receive Jesus Christ intentionally in the spirit by believing in him is therefore rendering him the homage of reason through faith; to receive him morally in the heart, to keep his sanctifying grace, is to render him homage of the soul through love; to really receive him in the body through communion in his holy table is a way of rendering him homage of the flesh through chastity and mortification; finally, to receive him in the house in a figurative manner by taking care of the poor is to render him homage of goods through charity.”<sup>180</sup>

**116** Ventura presents the three interpretations of the Fathers of the Church of Christ’s words addressed to Martha: the historical or literal interpretation, the ascetic interpretation and the allegorical interpretation.

Although his presentation of the historical and ascetical is particularly close to the proposal of Fr. Alberione, it seems useful to take up here some of the points of the allegorical interpretation.

**117** In the first place the symbolism of the active and the contemplative life is taken up: “In that instruction, the Divine Master declared that the only, indispensable condition, as well as the infallible condition for securing eternal happiness is that of loving God above all things and our

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<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.



neighbor as ourselves... Martha would be the model of the love that we should have for our neighbor; Magdalene, that of love we ought to have for God. And, according to St. Gregory and other famous interpreters, Martha expressed in herself the active life, with all her attention; Magdalene, the contemplative life in all its perfection. Hence, St. Gregory continues, we see that the Lord does not already condemn Martha's occupation, but exalts that of Magdalene in order to teach us that the merits of active life are truly great, but those of the contemplative life are also greater... The truly necessary thing, of which merit is complete and perfect and must be proposed to all, is hence, only the life where the Christian soul, abandoning itself to God, concentrating itself in God, through love, extends the solicitude of one's devotion to men as well as to all their needs."<sup>181</sup>

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**118** The considerations on the contemplative life are especially vibrant: "The more sensible souls, the more merciful to human conditions, and enflamed by an ever alive desire to bring relief to them, the souls more zealous for the coming of the kingdom of God among men, the souls who sense more clearly the dangers, the ills, and the loss of their kind and who are greatly involved with the destiny of mankind and of the Church, these are not found in greater numbers if not among the solitaries and the contemplatives."<sup>182</sup>

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**119** The paragraph on the strength of prayer also mirrors a deep certainty in Fr. Alberione, that is, that prayer must make the work of every apostle fruitful: Jesus Christ was one day telling his apostles, 'The harvest is great, but the workers are few. Pray therefore the Lord of the harvest that he sends workers to his harvest' (Mt 9:18). It is then evident that if the Spirit of God forms good bishops, good priests, the missionaries, the apostles who cultivate souls, who sow in the vast fields of the world and place them in the granaries of the Church, then, it is prayer that obtains them. Now, this prayer—that multiplies the number of workers of the gospel and attracts heavenly blessings on their labors, blessings that

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 41-42.

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 42-43.

make these fruitful—is in a special manner the prayer of those souls dedicated to contemplation, wherein everything is prayer, also study, also work, and whose entire life is none other but prayer and sacrifice, never interrupted, that rise up to heaven in the odor of sweetness and attract all the assistance, all the graces that lessen the miseries and the scandals on earth. Thus these generous souls speak less of God to men, but speak much of men to God.”<sup>183</sup>

**120** The new apostles are so, thanks to the contemplative life lived amidst the world: “Do not believe that the contemplatives and the solitaries are not found if not outside the world, in the hermitages, in deserts, in convents separated by every form of contact, every form of interaction with the world. There are, and in a number greater than one would believe, also in the world... These are the new apostles, these new proclaimers of the good news, these men who are so superior to humanity of which humanity boasts, admiring them without being able to explain them, who move about the world and evangelize it, and wherein they are renewed at every hour, who manifest themselves, who perpetuate the spirit, the life, the struggles, the miracles, the triumphs of the apostles of the past for the welfare of souls.”<sup>184</sup>

**121** After having highlighted that “the divine Savior was... the true model of active life and of contemplative life,” Ventura affirms that Martha and Mary embody a figure and an allegory of what Mary, the Mother of God, achieved: “infinitely most happy than Martha who received the Lord in her house, the Blessed Virgin received the divine Word and gave him hospitality worthy of him in her own womb, whose purity eclipsed that of the angels, and beautiful with all the ornaments of holiness. Infinitely more recollected and more meditating than Mary, Martha’s sister, the Mother of God kept undivided the word of God in her soul; she had her mind fixed on the sublime contemplation, never interrupted, of his word, and her heart rejoiced in it: *Conservabat omnia verba hæc, conferens in corde suo* (Lk 2:51). Infinitely more

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<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 43-44.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 44-45.

jealous of the two sisters in making the *grace of which she was full* bear fruit, after the Lord's Ascension, the Queen of the Apostles divided her divine life between meditation on the heavenly things and works of zeal and of charity, consoling the faithful, telling the Gospel and helping the apostles with her encouragement, her advice, her prayers in the immense work of the foundation of the Church (see Homily VII, *Append.*). Finally no one, not even among the angels, has ever understood better than the Queen of Angels and lived up to the doctrine of the *only thing necessary*. ...It is meanwhile in the Savior's mother that the sublime and perfect life, of which allegory and figure were Martha and the Magdalene, has been accomplished, in all the rigor and fullness of the letter. Formed in the school of the Son of God made man and of His divine mother, the apostles have also united all the works of zeal and of charity of the active life to the occupations of the contemplative life."<sup>185</sup>

DFst 68-69      **122** Martha and Mary signify the Church: "It is in this house that the love of man is none other than the reverberation, the blooming of the love of God; and that God's love grows and expands through the practice of the love for man."<sup>186</sup>

DFst 16  
24-25  
27-28  
35-40  
60-63      **123** In the second part of the homily on the importance and the need of service to God,<sup>187</sup> Ventura draws inspiration from St. Augustine in order to point out that God, One and Three, is that "*unum necessarium*" of the Gospel of Martha and Mary. So many, indeed, are the points of contact between the text and the thought of Fr. Alberione, especially in those pages that have as a background the doctrine on exemplarism, the following of Christ Master, Way, Truth and Life; the anthropology that sees man one and three after the image of God: "Since God is three in Persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, our soul, too, is three in its own faculties: the faculty to form ideas—or to generate by itself in the depth of its own being, its own internal word, its own word—; the faculty of reasoning and the faculty of willing."<sup>188</sup>

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 45-46.

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48.

<sup>187</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 49-67.

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 53.

**124** Aside from these references to the book *Le donne del Vangelo* (*The women of the Gospel*), that have a character of similarity with the basic lines of Fr. Alberione's spirituality, we can find some other convergences among the two authors as regards the story, if we take into consideration the books on the *La donna cattolica* (*The Catholic woman*).

DFst<sup>189</sup>  
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In his book *La donna associata allo zelo sacerdotale* (*The woman associated with the priestly zeal*), Fr. Alberione writes: "The story of woman in the Catholic Church would be very interesting and we hope someone writes about it."<sup>190</sup> In reality, one can notice that he makes explicit reference to Ventura: "Over and above other reasons of hope, we also have this: in general the woman is ours, the woman is Christian and this can be of so much help to us. Fr. Ventura, after having described the present moment had to say that the Church would have entrusted to the Catholic woman a mission of restoration, almost an apostolate."<sup>191</sup>

Fr. Alberione refers to the first volume of *La donna cattolica*, where, in the first part, the author presents "*The need to attend to woman under the Catholic aspect*," a broad historical view that goes from biblical considerations to the problems of the modern world; and, in the second part, he presents the '*Cooperation of woman in the foundation of the Church*.'

This second part, composed of six chapters, proves to be extraordinarily important for deepening the thought of Fr. Alberione.<sup>192</sup>

<sup>189</sup> These references to DFst are valid also for the next numbers of this section (nos. 125-131).

<sup>190</sup> G. ALBERIONE, *La donna associata allo zelo sacerdotale*, op. cit., p. 46.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 24.

<sup>192</sup> Ventura's work helps to locate Fr. Alberione's affirmations on the "*Woman's apostolate in the past*", in the fourth chapter first part of the book "*La donna associata allo zelo sacerdotale*" (*The woman associated with priestly zeal*), 1915, pp. 42ff. Cf. for example, what Fr. Alberione writes about St. Olimpia (pp. 49-50) and the II vol. of *La donna cattolica*, pp. 126ff. Although Ventura favors the exposition on woman as mother and in the non-monastic church roles, and leads himself to present the women who worked in the French Church, the book *La donna cattolica* serves as a very vast point of reference for the mind of Fr. Alberione.

Idem **125** In the third chapter, or paragraph, Ventura speaks of the women in Paul's mission: Lydia, Priscilla, Evodia and Syntyche. A highlight drew Fr. Alberione's interest on Phoebe's mission: "It is something known that St. Paul did not entrust to a man, but to a woman, St. Phoebe, the task of bringing from Greece to Rome his Epistle to the Romans, that first commentary on the Gospel, that masterpiece of exposition of the Christian dogma. Speaking of this woman to the faithful of Rome, at the end of the same letter, St. Paul tells them: 'I commend to you Phoebe our sister, who is also a minister of the church at Cenchreae, that you may receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the holy ones, and help her in whatever she may need from you, for she has been a benefactor to many and to me as well.' Now, to be a minister of the Church is something more than practicing charity. The matters that Phoebe had to deal with in Rome were not temporal but spiritual. Such a step makes it clear that this woman has been supporting Christianity and St. Paul himself in Corinth, that the more serious tasks in the Church were entrusted to her, and that in the company of the Apostle, she exercised a kind of apostolate in the Church."<sup>193</sup>

Idem **126** The fourth chapter presents the life of St. Thecla, "the woman who greatly helped St. Paul in his apostolate in the Orient."<sup>194</sup> Thecla is St. Paul's associate par excellence: "St. Ambrose calls her 'the Associate of the Apostle, *Socia Apostoli*'... because, for the whole time that St. Paul stayed in Asia, the rich and generous virgin helped him with her means in the work of the apostolic ministry, in such a manner that Paul was greatly indebted to her for the success achieved in this area. Truly, it seems that St. Thecla, as we are told by the *Acts of her martyrdom*, with her ingenuity, her eloquence, her wealth, her relations, and much more yet with her constancy and ardor of her faith and the holiness of her life, she converted souls for Jesus Christ as many as St. Paul did with the power of his speech ("Cujus fidei ar-

<sup>193</sup> G. VENTURA, *La donna cattolica*, op. cit., vol. I, p. 258.

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 259.

*dore et vitæ sanctitate, multi ad Christum conversi sunt*” – Brev. Rom., 23 sept. ex actis).”<sup>195</sup>

Among the many women who have “assisted the apostles and shared the labors and the glories of their ministry,” Thecla is she who receives great praises from the Fathers of the Church: “She has been, among the women, the most noble of St. Paul’s disciples, the first of the virgin-spouses of the divine lamb, the first sprout of his blood, the first wonder of his grace, the first to practice his counsels, the first witness of his religion, the first standard bearer among thousands of sublime souls who for eighteen centuries followed him in his life of virtues and martyrdom. Not only St. Ambrose but also St. Augustine, St. John Chrysostom, St. Gregory of Nazianzene, St. Gregory of Nissa and other fathers have celebrated, too, the glories of St. Thecla and have showered on her the greatest and extraordinary praises. So was she to be honored by the Church, this first of the marvels and glories of the Church and one of the most beautiful ornaments of the apostles’ century.”<sup>196</sup>

**127** This enthusiastic presentation of the woman’s ministry during the apostolic times found a strong resonance in the spirit and in the projects that Fr. Alberione was cultivating for sometime. At the beginning of 1922, Fr. Alberione and the whole of his Casa feel the call to be “St. Paul alive today,” that is, to take part in the “apostolic community living today,” men and women who live joyfully the Gospel and communicate it. In this climate, on 29 June the first three priests, after Fr. Giaccardo, are ordained, and in the evening the chapel dedicated to St. Paul was blessed, a chapel that was destined to be, for the members of the Casa and for the people of Alba, “a center of the principal devotions that the Pious Society of St. Paul intends to spread: Devotion to the Divine Master, to Mary Queen of the Apostles, to St. Paul the Apostle...”<sup>197</sup>

Idem

**128** A foretaste of this goal is achieved the next day, through the solemn celebration of the Feast of St. Paul, with

Idem

<sup>195</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 260.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 263.

<sup>197</sup> *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year V, no. 7, August 1922, p. 9.

the first masses of the new priests and the participation of Canon Francesco Chiesa. During the Vespers, he intervened “by explaining the symbols of the portrait of St. Paul: the sword, the book, the stylus, and fusing together the words of Msgr. Swoboda: if St. Paul came back to life today, he would continue being the Bishop: and those of Msgr. Keteler: if St. Paul returned today, he would be a journalist, he said that the mission of the Good Press is an essentially priestly mission: that in order to be apostles of the good press, people have to be priests as well: that the most delicate and effective expression of the priestly zeal, of priesthood as apostolate, is today the Good Press.”<sup>198</sup>

Idem **129** In spite of the strong accent on the priesthood, the teaching of Francesco Chiesa wanted to be perfectly in agreement with what constituted as the hinges of Fr. Alberione’s project: the association of woman with the priestly zeal in the press apostolate. In fact, since the first years of his formation in the Seminary of Alba, Alberione was affirming with profound conviction, that in the Bible was found the strength capable of making “woman much more respected” and of winning over that culture that “reduces woman to an instrument of pleasure and childbearing” (SC 159).

After the constitution of the Pious Society of St. Paul, Fr. Alberione hastens, then, to the formation of the branch for women and in view of this, on 22 December 1921, he asked the city government for the doubling of the first trunk of the house. On May 1922, it is announced that the construction is growing speedily;<sup>199</sup> with work done, it would be occupied by the Daughters of St. Paul on 10 September of the same year.<sup>200</sup>

Idem **130** It becomes difficult to describe the teeming of vitality in the Casa, amidst the incessant rhythm of the constructions, the apostolic initiatives, the continuous increase of new arrivals, males and females and the tendency towards self-sufficiency. On his part, Fr. Alberione follows up eve-

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>199</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, year V, no. 4, 6 May 1922, p. 8.

<sup>200</sup> Cf. G. BARBERO, *Il sacerdote Giacomo Alberione...*, op. cit., pp. 373-374.

rything although he delegates to others the tasks of doing, but above all he wants to stay for long before God, in order to respond to the divine will in everything.

**131** Thus, from Sunday, 16 to Saturday 22 July 1922, he gathers the Casa for the Spiritual Exercises preached by Canon Chiesa and Msgr. Ugo Mioni. Emphatically, the bulletin *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa* announces that also for the Daughters of St. Paul the time of preparation is over with the constitution of the Pious Society Daughters of St. Paul: “July 22, 1922 is for the Daughters of St. Paul a historical date. After seven years of trial, of hidden labor, of humble sacrifice, of incessant prayer, of ignored religious life, on Saturday, 22 July, the week of spiritual exercises came to a close, and they made a big step, they perennially bound themselves to God and to the mission of the Good Press through the public [private] vows thus constituting the PIOUS SOCIETY DAUGHTERS OF ST. PAUL. Like the branch for males, they add to the three ordinary vows the fourth, fidelity to the Roman Pontiff. The first group has nine; from today begins their expansion.”<sup>201</sup>

Idem

The nine Daughters promise to dedicate themselves “for all their life to the apostolate of the Good Press in order to live the life of the Divine Master, under the gaze of Mary, Queen of the Apostles, under the guidance of St. Paul, the Apostle.”<sup>202</sup>

According to a plan prepared and studied deeply since long time, Fr. Alberione imposes on Teresa Merlo the new name, Thecla, the ‘Socia apostoli’, and names her Superior General of the Congregation.

### 1.2.4 “Vivit vero in me Christus” (Gal 2:20)

**132** Sharing the responsibilities, Alberione asked everyone for full communion with him in order to accomplish together the work willed by God: his feast day, postponed to Sunday 30 July 1922, became a strong expression and an occasion for vocational reaffirmation: “The Sig. Teologo left

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<sup>201</sup> *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year V, no. 7, August 1922, p. 11.

<sup>202</sup> Cf. C. A. MARTINI, *Le Figlie di San Paolo...*, op. cit., p. 119.



us these memories: an only irritation: we have worked so little at becoming saints; an only preoccupation: to work that we become saints; an only desire; that we become saints. The celebrations and the prayers of Sunday have certainly contributed that we moved ahead one good step towards the Father, whom the mercy of God has given us as guide, support, and nourisher of the most beautiful of all vocations.”<sup>203</sup>

DFst 39-40  
57-58  
63-64  
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93-95

**133** The intense tenor of spiritual life and the search for holiness, lived by Fr. Alberione and proposed to the community, can be sensed from the three pages of the *Diary* of Blessed Timothy Giaccardo, written during the Spiritual Exercises of 1922, which trace a general picture of his commitment, under the light of his initial resolution: “Lord Jesus, through the intercession of Mary, Queen of the Apostles and of St. Paul, you have poured on me the outflow of your mercy and of your love. You have made me a Christian, a priest, a religious, and you have held me very close to you in the apostolate of the G. P. Oh! Your love is infinite, and mine infinitely nothing! Love requires love. Lord, from me you want everything; and I give you everything. I am yours O Jesus; all yours through the hands of Mary: Dominus pars hereditatis meæ (The Lord is my part of the inheritance). And so I want to live your life, all your life, like St. Paul, like Mary Most Holy. I live... iam non ego, vivit vero in me Christus. Mihi vivere Christus est. My resolution is: to constantly humble my self love and to work for the acquisition of love for God, of perfect charity.”<sup>204</sup>

DFst 57-58  
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93-95

**134** Among the various vocations in the Casa, there was a clear awareness of their own identity: “Everyone understands the need of cultivating vocations for the mission of the priesthood, for the sisters of charity: many understand the need of men missionaries and sister missionaries: no longer all, no longer many, a few is persuaded that also the Good Press today needs its own vocations, true and holy; of priests, of writers, of diffusers, of printers that are truly religious; of women teachers, writers, diffusers, printers, genuine sisters. The need for these religious men and women for the

<sup>203</sup> *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year V, no. 7, August, 1922, p. 10.

<sup>204</sup> G. T. GIACCARDO, *Diario...*, July 1922, op. cit., p. 300.

Good Press, however, is a palpitating reality: it is the breath of souls who better see the flow of the times, of hearts that better feel the needs of the Church.”<sup>205</sup>

The historical moment is seen as “the hour of the Good Press”. Hence, the members of the Casa feel they are bearers and are made responsible of a true apostolic mandate: “*Eritis mihi testes*: you shall be my witnesses in Judea, in Galilee till the ends of the world, so Jesus told the Apostles; and the twelve and their disciples were witnesses of the divinity of Jesus Christ and of the Christian Religion through preaching. Then witnesses, too, were the Doctors with their books. Then the cloisters were witnesses with the holiness of the monastic life. Then the saints of the modern age with their institutes of Christian education. Today, what bears the principal witness to Jesus Christ is the Good Press. The newspaper that comes into the huts of the poor, and in the study rooms of the learned, and among the papers of the businessman and goes to find the farmer in the field, and rests on the chair of the law-maker and on the table of the minister, and on the throne of kings; and it leads politics and forms public opinion, and shapes consciences. The ink of good writers is worth the blood of martyrs long ago. The saints of today, the Catholics in action, the priests, the Bishops, the Supreme Pontiffs preach the most serious need for the Good Press; they speak of its urgency, they make it a serious obligation of conscience to attend to it. It is the *euntes, docete omnes gentes*, of the Divine Savior; it is always the command of the Divine Master to preach to all peoples, which preaching, in every period of time assumes new outfits suitable against new errors, to new social conditions, to new scientific progress, to the new life of humanity. And today it assumes the form of the Good Press. And this ability of the Church to adapt to all the needs of the times, this her fecundity to produce new effective means of defense against new evils and of evangelization, is a marvelous sign of her divinity; it is the character that assures perpetuity and triumph.”<sup>206</sup>

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<sup>205</sup> *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year V, no. 8, 10 September 1922, p. 2.

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.*

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**135** The December issue of UCBS publishes a summary with the title, “*While the year ends,*” mixed with joy and surprise: “And we think: That the year is over and perhaps we do hold numerous responsibilities before God inasmuch as through the Good Press we could do much more! That the year will no longer come back; it is lost for the lazy sower who could have sown more gospel seeds, and he did not do it! Instead, a very good harvest is expected for the good sower who has broadly sown thoughts, healthy ideas through the Good Press. That we have done some small things: the people in the casa have grown a hundred times more than last year. That the small chapel was built and that in it are celebrated six or seven masses and where many prayers are said. That another portion of the house was built, thus making it capable of housing 236 persons. That the parish bulletins have grown to about a hundred, from the fifty of 1921. That the *Gazzetta d’Alba* has grown in circulation and that it has improved much in technology. That the collection of beneficial reading has reached 30 volumes. That the collection of ascetical books has reached about a dozen of books. That more than half a million of catechism booklets have been sent to every part of Italy. That the collection of apologetical books has grown much. That the capability of the printing press has reached the point of being able to produce every day a book of about 300 pages. That in our bookstore an average of 2000 books is sold every day. For all these: thanks to God alone! We are useless servants. And yet nothing was done! If one looks at what remains to be done; and yet we do not yet see everything. Also at present we would have already the work not only for 200 persons, but for 200 thousand! We need personnel who writes, who prints, who spreads. Are there 8,000 cooperators! Yes, but we would need 800 thousand who pray, who assist, who spread the Good Press. The *Gazzetta d’Alba* ought to be the newspaper of each of the forty thousand families of our diocese. The people’s libraries urgently need healthy, benevolent, educational reading materials: and in order to confront the strong flow of bad books we still need to go a long way.”<sup>207</sup>

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<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.*, year V, no. 12, 23 December 1922, p. 3.

**136** The summary, in numbers, of the “work done”<sup>208</sup> and the influx of vocations<sup>209</sup> made possible a foretaste of a stage of growth according to the impelling need of evangelization through the means of the Good Press, reaffirmed also by the encyclical *Rerum omnium*, of the new Pope Pius XI, who declared St. Francis of Sales as patron saint of journalists.<sup>210</sup>

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**137** In contrast, in the year 1923, Fr. Alberione lived a portion of his human-spiritual journey which greatly left its mark on him. After the experience of the encounter with Jesus Master in the dream of 1921, sickness led him to live the mysterious passage of *naked faith*. On one hand, the signs that the Casa was God’s work were evident; on the other hand, he was experiencing danger for his life. This way, he could only count on faith, only in God.

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Between July and the start of September, welcomed by the Parish Priest of Benevello, Fr. Alberione went through an ex-

<sup>208</sup> “*Work accomplished*. In 1922, 350,000 copies of the *Gazzetta d’Alba* came out of the Printing School; 482,000 copies of *parish bulletins* of all formats and frequency; 120,000 copies of *Vita Pastorale* (magazine for priests); 150,000 of small and big catechism books; 9 books of devotions, for a total of 27,000 copies; 36,000 copies of “Dottrina e fatti”; 12,000 copies of “Armonie Sociali”, a sociology magazine of the Pontificio Ateneo of Bergamo. Two collections of novels “Tolle et lege” and “Fons aquae” for a total of 69,000 copies; eleven books of different kinds: in all 27,500 copies. Furthermore, 70,000 calendars were published; Easter cards of different kinds, about 75,000; about 75,000 of religious leaflets, an immense quantity of circulars, sheets, posters, registry books and tickets for catechism. And yet, nothing was really done! In the field of the press and face to face with the bad press we are nothing but an infinite minority, an imperceptible dot! We need vocations, printers, aids” (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year V, no. 12, 23 December 1922, p. 4).

<sup>209</sup> In the *Cenni storici generali della Pia Società S. Paolo*, (*Historical references of the Pious Society of St. Paul*), after having spoken of the beginnings of the foundation projects of Fr. Alberione, in 1903-1904, and of the two first young men, initiated in 1908 at the schools of the Seminary, there came a growth in number of students in the Casa. “On August 20, the first student entered to begin the new family; in 1915, they were 9; in 1916, the number went up to 14; in 1918, to 25; in 1919, to 35; in 1920, to 42; in 1921, to 90; in 1922, to 172” (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VI, no. 2, 27 February 1923, p. 10).

<sup>210</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3.

<sup>211</sup> These references to the DFst are valid also for the following numbers of this section (nos. 138-143)

perience which, in some sense, was similar to that of Ignatius of Loyola at the brink of losing his life, after getting wounded in battle. St. Ignatius tells it himself: "It continued to worsen: he could not eat and it was showing other symptoms that usually foretells the end. On St. John's day, inasmuch as the doctors were worried about saving him, it was suggested that he went to confession. He then received the sacraments and, on the vigil of Sts. Peter and Paul, the doctors declared that if within midnight he did not improve, he could be good as dead. The sick person was always devoted to St. Peter: our Lord wanted that precisely on that midnight he should begin getting better; and so he thus began improving that a few days from then he was declared out of danger."<sup>212</sup>

During convalescence, Ignatius lived the first and intense steps towards conversion, which are at the sources of his Spiritual Exercises.

Idem **138** On his part, Fr. Alberione was not at the beginnings of a spiritual journey; he was, however, receiving the gift of the most profound mystical experiences. And the immediate tool was precisely the climate of the Ignatian Exercises, as Sr. Angela Teresa Raballo, who was assisting him in Benevello witnessed: "The Signor Teologo was no longer celebrating Mass and neither could he recite the Breviary. He stayed in bed for fifteen days and received Communion in bed. Every day, he let a passage of the book of Spiritual Exercises by St. Ignatius, that he brought, be read. I read until the time that he told me: 'Enough for now. I have enough till tomorrow'."<sup>213</sup>

Idem **139** During the first half of 1923, Fr. Alberione waited for the Spiritual Exercises in the Piccola Casa della Divina Provvidenza, that of Cottolengo, a place which was the home of human fragility. Now, he found himself assimilated with derelicts, condemned in isolation till death: "He lost his voice, and always had fever... He did not show any sign of improvement. If

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<sup>212</sup> IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA, *Autobiografia (Autobiography)*, n. 3. Cf. ID., *Gli scritti*, edited by M. Gioia, UTET, Torino, 1977, p. 660.

<sup>213</sup> A. RABALLO (Suor Teresa, F.S.P.), *Memorie del Primo Maestro Rev. Teologo Giacomo Alberione*, unpublished work. Cf. G. BARBERO, *Il sacerdote Giacomo Alberione...*, op. cit., p. 359.

I cried, he would tell me: ‘Why cry? Don’t you know that someone else much better than me shall take my place!’ He used to repeat: ‘Not being able to go back to the community because of my sickness that forces me to isolation, I shall go to the Cottolengo, and there I shall see the end of my days’.”<sup>214</sup>

**140** Fr. Alberione had received the confirmation that the work he had undertaken was the work of God, but now God was asking him nothing less than the surrender of his life, he was taking him away from his son, the son of the promise, just born: it was as if to let a new Abraham rise, after the Covenant. God was putting Alberione to test. He was calling him to total surrender, in complete abandonment of self and of everything. It was the experience of total passivity, necessary for experiencing the joyous presence of grace. From this mysterious depth, from his yes to God alone, Jesus Master was taking him by hand, to teach him and, in his school, to guide him, with the profundity of God, through the revitalization of everything that he had in his heart. The time chosen by God to seal, for always, his Covenant with Alberione had come. But like a new Jacob in the night of the sickness, he was called to struggle against God, lasting long weeks. It was only that way, taken by the Spirit, that he could actively embrace again, in all things, the will of God, truly seek His greater glory, find His peace, unify the journey lived till now, and totally give himself to the communication of the Gospel. It is precisely for this that Benevello was also Sinai, where Fr. Alberione sought, before God, the face of the Casa willed by him, while dedicating himself also at the drawing up of the Constitutions, as soon as the improvement of his health allowed it. Idem

**141** During the long months of suffering, Fr. Alberione dwelt on the beauty and urgency of the mission entrusted to him and the Casa and, at the same time, he embraced fully the value of the witnessing, rendered according to the wisdom of the Cross, inspired by Paul: “For as I see it, God has exhibited us apostles as the last of all, like people sentenced Idem

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<sup>214</sup> A. RABALLO (Suor Teresa, F.S.P.), *Memorie del Primo Maestro...*, op. cit. Cf. G. BARBERO, *Il sacerdote Giacomo Alberione...*, op. cit., p. 359.

to death, since we have become a spectacle to the world, to the angels and human beings alike. We are fools on Christ's account...; we are weak..., but we are held in disrepute. To this very hour... we toil, working with our own hands" (1Cor 4:9-12).

Idem **142** The more the human situation made one think of a final collapse, the more Fr. Alberione understood that, in the work undertaken, one could and had to count only on God's power: "We are afflicted in every way, but not constrained; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying about in the body of the dying of Jesus so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our body" (2Cor 4:8-10).

Idem **143** Like Paul, Fr. Alberione felt crucified because of the Gospel. One day, however, "Fr. Alberione did not want to have to do any more with doctors and medicines, and he started to work as before, perhaps even more than before."<sup>215</sup> And the Lord wanted to seal this period of most intense teaching, by granting Fr. Alberione the strong experience of a special encounter with the Apostle Paul: "To St. Paul the healing of the Primo Maestro has to be attributed" (cf. *ADds* 64).

This healing certainly is one of the reasons for which Fr. Alberione, on the fortieth foundation anniversary, would state, full of wonder and gratitude: St. Paul "has made this family with an intervention that is so physical and spiritual that not even now, reflecting, can one understand well; much less, explain."<sup>216</sup>

Recalling this period, he could testify: "There were numerous dangers of different kinds: personal and financial, and written and verbal accusations: life was marked by danger for days on end; St. Paul was always our salvation... the years went by, the forecasts made by many of certain failure, the accusations of madness..., all dissolved and everything was settled peacefully, although not without hard work" (*ADds* 164.166).

<sup>215</sup> G. BARBERO, *Il sacerdote Giacomo Alberione...*, op. cit., p. 360.

<sup>216</sup> G. ALBERIONE, *San Paolo*, July-August 1954, p. 2.

## 2. THE BOOK OF HOLINESS

### “...How he has led us”

144 Even during Fr. Alberione’s sickness, the Casa practically went on with its usual rhythm, strengthening itself with the principal “devotions”:<sup>217</sup> to Jesus Master Eucharist,<sup>218</sup> to the Queen of the Apostles<sup>219</sup> and to St.

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<sup>217</sup> “Last year [1922] in the evening of 29 June, a first procession accompanied Jesus Eucharist from the inside Chapel in order to take possession of the new church, which was blessed then; on 1 May of this year a second procession *aux flambeaux* with the singing of the Laurentine Litany, brought in triumph to the new Church the portrait of the Queen of the Apostles; last June 1, St. Paul, the patron and the soul of the casa and of our Pious Society, was made to stay near blessed Jesus, the Divine Master, and Mary Queen, in the church dedicated to him” (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VI, no. 6, 21 June 1923, p. 7).

<sup>218</sup> In an article of June 23, entitled *Eucharistic dates*, the UCBS bulletin draws the development of the Eucharistic spirituality of the Casa from the beginning to 30 May of that year: Mass, Communion, Eucharistic presence, Eucharistic *laus perennis*, visit, greetings and short visit. Especially significant are the beginning and the end of the article: “The devotion to the Divine Master in the Casa is concentrated on the Holy Tabernacle. When the Casa was still small and composed of very young people, Jesus was satisfied that they went to him in the morning for Mass and to receive him in Holy Communion. We, however, already knew that when the Casa would have developed we would have the *laus perennis eucharistica* as at the Cottolengo. Meanwhile they grew bigger, one started in 1917 to make the visit to the Blessed Sacrament every day in S. Damiano... On 22 July [1922] visits were thus established: the members of the Pious Society of St. Paul would make *an hour* of visit to the Blessed Sacrament every day during free time; the Servants of Mary *half an hour* of visit together everyday; the Disciples and the students *twenty minutes* together. The Daughters of St. Paul would also make *an hour* of visit every day; the others, *half an hour*. This rule now exists in the Casa. Thus in the afternoon, from 2 to 9 Jesus continually has adorers while in the morning from 4 to 8 Masses follow one another. And so we were able, thanks to God’s mercy, to bring to realization that which is the dream at the beginning: the *laus perennis*... Half a day of *Laus Eucharistica*! But also during hours in the afternoon or morning they find us often present before the Tabernacle and we trust in another mercy: that Jesus would remain exposed from 4 to 21 hrs. And the other hours of the night? Oh also they are and must be of the Divine Master present in the Tabernacle!” (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VI, no. 6, 21 June 1923, pp. 8-9).

<sup>219</sup> Its own iconography is developed during the first ten years of the Casa: “The picture of St. Paul was placed in the Casa at the place of honor, between the Artistic Sacred Heart of Morgari, and the Immaculate by Murillo... The first and every Saturday of the month is consecrated to



Paul<sup>220</sup> towards whom, since the beginnings, everyone in the Casa had a special attachment.<sup>221</sup>

Mary: and in honor of Mary, the month of May with flowers, flowerettes, with thoughts and meditations; the close of the month of May, since the first year, was a divine poetry, a mystic harmony of hearts, of heartbeats, of flowers, of prayers, of songs. The devotion to Our Lady is the leverage of every initiative, of every progress, of every success, of victory over the devil, of the most beautiful and loftiest holiness" (*San Paolo* [= UCBS], year VI, no. 11, 22 November 1923, p. 8).

<sup>220</sup> "In the Casa, the whole month of June, which is the Casa's great month, is consecrated to St. Paul: twice a day he is spoken of: twice a day we go to visit him and render him homage and He exchanges our homage and love with abundant graces. The devotion to St. Paul is made popular in Alba and also outside: many are those who pray to him for conversion, for material help and they obtain it: in his church almost continually there is someone present, and the candles before him burn almost continuously" (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VI, no. 6, 21 June 1923, p. 7). – In 1923 UCBS, which from August to November comes out under the title *San Paolo*, publishes so many short articles on St. Paul. Mention is made of "Paologia dantesca" (Dantesque Paulology) (*San Paolo* [= UCBS], year VI, no. 8, 25 August 1923, p. 19) and, of all this, of the Eucharistic heart of St. Paul, as if he cultivated the devotions after the ways of the Casa (cf. *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VI, no. 7b, 20 July 1923, p. 5). Interesting are the brief articles on "The Paulines during the apostolic times," following the liturgical calendar: St. Thecla: 23 September (*Ibid.*, no. 9, p. 5), St. Dionisius the Areopagite: 9 October (*Ibid.*, no. 10, p. 3), St. Clement of Rome: 23 November (*Ibid.*, no. 11, p. 5), St. Philemon and St. Appia: 22 November (*Ibid.*, no. 12, p. 4), St. Timothy: 24 January (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VII, no. 1, 15 January 1924, p. 4), S. Titus: 6 February (*Ibid.*, no. 2, p. 8).

<sup>221</sup> In the issue of February 1923, the publication of the "General historical references of the Pious Society of St. Paul" begins. The annotations of the *Historical references...* of the June issue are interesting: they refer to the transfer from Villa Moncaretto to the Casa Perrando [=Perraud], along via Mazzini; it is noted that the name *Little Worker* is removed and remains alone the name *Printing School*, it concludes: "The Casa developed and assumed its face in casa Perrando [=Perraud]" (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VI, no. 6, 21 June 1923, p. 6). The July issue describes how, in the quarters along Via Mazzini, there was but one heart and one soul around Fr. Alberione and adds: "In the parlor of the Casa was placed, on very modest little throne, the picture of St. Paul: it was the very first beginning of the Chapel of St. Paul: there, kneeling down on the floor, they were reciting the morning and evening prayers, the "Angelus"; the examination of conscience was done, the Hail Mary is said before going out and as soon as entering; kneeling on the floor, the prayers of the Casa are said. An electric lamp was kept lighted in the Casa and in the Press. St. Paul watched, pro-

**145** Also the proclamation of the diaconship of women in the evangelizing mission, as sisters of the Good Press, was introduced with the usual vigor: "The Apostles trained the *deaconesses*, because a good part of the apostolate was proper to them: also beside Jesus Savior, and as helpers of the Apostolic College, there were *pious women*. The mission of evangelizing is not exclusive of man: as help to missionaries, God has raised and sends the sisters; the great missions, the great apostolic vocations, in the Church are complete with two branches. And now is the time of the Press: the time of the mission of the Press: and God raises the Apostles of the Good Press as well as the Sisters of the Good Press, who shall not be, so they say, in lieu of, but they shall occupy a place that today is of mercy and of Providence."<sup>222</sup>

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**146** One of the first and important novelties, after the Founder's illness, was the attention to the spread of the Gospel, especially in every home and in the schools. In the issue of *San Paolo* (= UCBS), November, Fr. Alberione launches the initiative of the Gospel at one lira, and locates the apostolate of the Good Press in relation with the spread of the Gospel: "Let us be familiar with the sources of our faith! The sources flow from the book of the Gospel: in it are the teachings, in it are the miracles, in it are the institutions and the examples of the Divine Master; the Gospel is the whole of Christian Religion. The Church has her bases on the Gospel, and her life is the Gospel in action. All the saints are the application and the incarnation of a verse of the Gospel of the Divine Master, who did everything that he taught. The Apostles and the Fathers have borne witness to the Gospel; the Doctors and the Theologians have defended and explained it; the priests preach the Gospel, the Good Press draws strength from the Gospel, and it is the fastest means to make the Gospel penetrate the hearts, the homes, the social and political life."<sup>223</sup>

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tected, blessed, gave growth" (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VI, no. 7b, 20 July 1923, p. 7).

<sup>222</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>223</sup> *San Paolo* [= UCBS], year VI, no. 11, 22 November 1923, p. 1.

The commitment for the spread of the Gospel in every home is motivated with great strength: “Just as Jesus-Host, clothed in bread, comes to our hearts, so Jesus-Word clothed in paper enters every home; let it be in the hands of every Christian.”<sup>224</sup>

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**147** On December 1923 the renewed trust in the Divine Providence is felt strongly and the Casa is introduced as a “house of pastoral initiatives,” in view of evangelization, “beside and at the service of the parish ministry.”

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<sup>224</sup> *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VII, no. 1, 15 January 1924, p. 12. Especially felt is the presentation of the Bible Society: “*Bible Society Section*. Why spread the Gospel. Let’s go back a little. Christian life will not be in us if Jesus C. does not infuse it; neither do the most marvellous discoveries make it come in us! The Jansenists blocked the Christian from the source of their own life: *from the Eucharist and from the Gospel*, and Christian life languished. Pius X, saint, whose greatness shall appear ever greater in the future, reattached the Christians to these sources and immediately one could see a reflourishing. If, however, much was done for leading people back to Communion, one cannot say so for the penetration of the Gospel among the people, although much work has been done on this. Thus work, discipline, order, pain, joy, poverty, wealth, entertainment, authority, force, rights, the law, private and, worse, public economy, everything is seen and guided by principles and maxims of the world, rationalistically and naturalistically; where the secondary causes reach, there is confidence; beyond it, nothing. It is because of this that we need to shout strongly to the low and the high with private propaganda and even more, with public affirmations, pertaining to the Gospel, to make it esteemed and to create its environment. From here, O people, we can move on to Christ, the only way and life, and he who is God only has done and said this and none other. This is for us a duty and a serious responsibility: we have salvation in our hands. Jesus Christ has entrusted it to us and he has imposed it on us to apply it; let us apply it with all patience, but also *opportune et importune*. J. C. shall ask of us an accounting of the blood that flows under our eyes, of the moral and material ruin that is accumulating, and of the souls that are lost. We cannot remain idle spectators and let it pass without any newspaper comment or complain, we are priests, other J. C., what would he have done in our place? This is the reason why the Gospel is spread: to reattach the intelligence of our people to the divine mind, so that thoughts and judgments are harmonized with it and consequently, actions. From this one could see already the spirit that is behind the Bible Society, farthest from any commercial speculation that could also do some good, but above all that the kingdom of J. C. should come into the minds and the hearts through the Gospel, and bring them back to communicate with the life of J. C.” (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VII, no. 8, 15 August 1924, p. 11).

Before introducing the picture of the initiatives for the evangelization of the people, it is strongly affirmed that “the existing initiatives shall be developed” and that “others shall be taken”: “The Pious Society of St. Paul for the apostolate of the Good Press is born at the appropriate hour, and God grants it mercy and graces, so that it lives its own time. The Pious Society of St. Paul, as a house is not a refuge for abandoned children, nor an institute of apprenticeship; but a seminary for the formation of Apostles and of Missionaries of the Good Press. So, too, is the institute of the Daughters of St. Paul. As a publishing house, it is not a printing press for commercial jobs that intends to live in order to print books cheapest possible; also this is a great secret for doing good: the training also demands numerous adjustments, as among missionaries who explore the ground to evangelize. *It is instead a house of initiatives*: those existing shall be developed; others shall be taken according to how Divine Providence shall guide us. The Pious Society of St. Paul stands beside and at the service of the parish ministry, it stands beside and close to parish priests and intends to assist them on the part that the Good Press ought to have in the evangelization of their people. For now, effective initiatives are: *the association of thousand Masses* to propitiate before God for the Press, the *weekly* magazine for the instruction of the masses of people in the diocese; the prosperous work of the *parish bulletins* spread through Italy, that bring to families the word of the Parish Priest and of faith; the work of the *roving and popular bookstores* that are healthy pastures for the many souls who are thirsty for reading materials; the *shops-retail outlets* for the formation of piety; the *anti-blasphemy work* for the purification of Italy from the cancer that humiliates it and makes it bad before God; the *Bible Society* for the spread of the gospels among the people. Oh! The field is still so vast!... And all the Cooperators ought to find ways to do this good and to participate in it.”<sup>225</sup>

**148** At the close of the year 1923, the *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, in a sidebar with the title, “*Our needs*”

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<sup>225</sup> *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VI, no. 12, 15 December 1923, p. 2.

presents the projects for the Casa, that manifest the full recovery of Fr. Alberione and a decided awareness of the three points of reference for spirituality: the Divine Master, the Queen of the Apostles, St. Paul. Among the new initiatives, those of the Bible Society and the construction of the Church dedicated to St. Paul deserve special mention: "Numerous initiatives of the Pious Society of St. Paul are prospering under the beneficial shadow of the Divine Master, of the Queen of the Apostles, of the Apostle. Among them: The bible section, the work of the Thousand Masses, the work of the parish bulletins, the weeklies of the diocese, the anti-blasphemy campaign, the general association of libraries, the shops-retail outlets of good books and religious articles, etc. Three are the needs that we more urgently feel on the material order: 1. a distinct house for the Daughters of St. Paul, capable of housing at least one hundred persons; 2. a beautiful Church for St. Paul; 3. a paper mill for the manufacture of paper. Anyone who knows closely the Pious Society of St. Paul sees it clearly; and we humbly invite our good Cooperators to pray, to think and to work with us."<sup>226</sup>

DFst 36 39-40 **149** After the experience of the encounter with Jesus Master, followed by that of the annihilation in Benevello, and his sudden recovery, Fr. Alberione feels deeply rooted in the Covenant experience; his presence in the Casa becomes even more incisive, accompanied every day by ever more courageous initiatives, and his teachings, that come from experience, come to be unified in Christ Way, Truth and Life.

DFst 36-38 **150** We can state that it is from the book of life (= the time of the Covenant) that the Casa assumes its authentic physiognomy (= the book of Holiness), whose salient features are expressed soberly and profoundly in the book *Donec formetur Christus in vobis*, a book that ought not to be separated from the *lived experience*, described till now, and from its interpretation that we shall attempt to describe.

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<sup>226</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

## 2.1 “I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE” (Jn 14:6)

**151** In 1923, we find in the “*General historical references of the Pious Society of St. Paul*” a piece of precious information on the months dedicated to St. Paul and to Jesus Master: “In the Casa, every first Monday of the month is consecrated to St. Paul. At the start, half of the month of June is celebrated in honor of the Sacred Heart and half, in honor of St. Paul: then the month of June is reserved entirely to St. Paul; to the Divine Master and his Eucharistic Sacred Heart is consecrated the month of January. The Sig. Teologo wrote the considerations for the month of St. Paul; and these are used each year for meditation or for reading.”<sup>227</sup>

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In the published part of Giaccardo’s *Diario*, we find pieces of information on the month of June dedicated to St. Paul beginning from 1918, but no information on the month of Jesus Master.

Very important is the information just now referred to regarding the “considerations” of Fr. Alberione for the month of St. Paul. It is a manuscript notebook,<sup>228</sup> that is the basis of the book<sup>229</sup> published by Giaccardo with the title, “*Un mese a San Paolo*” (*A month for St. Paul*).<sup>230</sup>

Fr. Alberione’s manuscript seems to date back to the first years of the Casa. One can notice the absence of references to Jesus Master Way, Truth and Life, contained, instead, in the edition of the aforementioned “*Un mese a San Paolo*”.

A brief prayer, published in UCBS on December 1923, makes one see the massive outburst of Jn 14:6 in the life of the Casa, that took place in 1924: “And you, Baby Jesus, Way, Truth and Life, have mercy on our desires, grant us the grace to love you and to work for you, and may your mercy

<sup>227</sup> *San Paolo* [= UCBS], year VI, no. 11, 22 November 1923, p. 8.

<sup>228</sup> An unpublished notebook containing 68 pages of Fr. Alberione’s manuscript and 49 pages of Fr. Giaccardo. Missing are many sheets; for example, those regarding the fourth, fifth, seventh, eighth, ninth and 23<sup>rd</sup> day.

<sup>229</sup> Cf. A. DAMINO, *Bibliografia di Don Giacomo Alberione*, Roma, 1994<sup>3</sup>, pp. 31-32.

<sup>230</sup> *Un mese a San Paolo, meditazioni e letture*, Pia Società San Paolo, Alba, 1925. Contains texts by Fr. Alberione, completed and reworked in some parts by Giaccardo.

make fruitful every means for doing good and the work of the Good Press.”<sup>231</sup>

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**152** The January 1924 issue of UCBS, like the “*No-tiziette mensili*” (*Monthly newsbits*), speaks more precisely and clearly on the month of the Divine Master, making references to the “grace of confirmation,” but now made explicit in the relationship with Christ Way, Truth and Life: “*The month of the Divine Master. We celebrate it in January: a month of meditations, of spiritual union with Jesus, of visits; a practice and characteristic of the month is the visit to the Eucharistic Divine Master: adoration, thanksgiving, propitiation and reparation, supplications after the example of Jesus, after the teachings and on the grace that the Divine Master grants. He is in the midst of us; from there, from the Host, he wants to give light. Jesus, the Divine Master, is the way that leads, the truth that enlightens, and life that sanctifies. How good one feels going out of the adorations to the Divine Master!*”<sup>232</sup>

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**153** This information allows us to shed a great light on the first month dedicated to Jesus Master, Way, Truth and Life preached by Fr. Alberione of which notes taken down by Fr. Timoteo Giaccardo we still keep.

Following these notes, one could see so many points in common with *Donec formetur Christus in vobis*.

One first similarity can be identified in the fact that the theme of each day was subdivided into three parts, in a manner similar to the chapters of DF. Let it be noticed that the third part was generally dedicated to the Visit.

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77-78

**154** But the points of contact concern above all the contents of the Month of the Divine Master and, especially the Way of Illumination of DF.

The first day is dedicated to the introduction to the whole month: “1. January for the Divine Master: we do not know how to make the visit to him: we shall learn. 2. Jesus Way,

<sup>231</sup> Cf. *L’Immacolata e il Natale*, in *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VI, no. 12, 15 December 1923, pp. 2-3.

<sup>232</sup> *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VII, no. 1, 15 January 1924, p. 11.

Truth and Life shall be the theme: example, teacher, sanctifier.  
3. To place ourselves with every intensity at his school..."<sup>233</sup>

**155** For the meditation on Jesus Way, nine days are dedicated:<sup>234</sup> II - Qui sequitur me; III - Abneget semetipsum; IV - Humilis corde; V - Subditus illis; VI - Veni ut vitam habeant; VII - Ut faciam voluntatem ejus; VIII - Ut faciam voluntatem ejus; IX - Ut faciam voluntatem ejus (quæ placita sunt ei facio semper); X - In oratione.

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**156** From the eleventh to the twenty-second day, the meditation is dedicated to Jesus Truth, presented especially through the themes of the Beatitudes.<sup>235</sup> XI - Docere eos; XII - Ecce mater tua...; XIII - Subditus,<sup>236</sup> XIII - Tanquam auctoritatem; XIV - Beati pauperes spiritu; XV - Beati mites...; XVI - Beati qui lugent...; XVII - Beati qui esuriunt...; XVIII - Beati misericordes...; XIX - Beati mundo corde...; XX - Beati qui audiunt...; XXI - Beati pacifici...; XXII - Beati qui persecutionem...

DFst  
49-54

The third point of the eleventh day deserves a special attention: "Jesus is here in the host: from here he wants to enlighten...; let us adore him as Divine Master... Let us be grateful that he has taught us... he forgives for our having wanted to do things by ourselves... Doce nos pugnare, orare, amare..."<sup>237</sup>

**157** To Jesus Life are dedicated the days from the twenty-third to the thirtieth.<sup>238</sup> The meditation of the first of these days contains something like a solemn enunciation of the subsequent themes, and it seems interesting to quote it in whole: "XXIII - Ut vitam habeant. Jesus, in the last supper discourse, tells Thomas: Ego sum via, veritas et vita; in order to go to the Father, you need to place your hands on mine. I. The Divine Master is life that sanctifies. From among the principal things we receive from the Gospel of St. John, this immediately comes in view: Jesus is life: in ipso vita erat... with Nicodemus: ut omnis qui credit vivat... habeat vitam æternam... with the Samaritan

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<sup>233</sup> *Quaderno manoscritto Timoteo Giaccardo*, no. 6, p. 125.

<sup>234</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 125-130.

<sup>235</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 132-150.

<sup>236</sup> Probably this meditation was held during the mass of Sunday, hence, in the morning.

<sup>237</sup> *Quaderno manoscritto Timoteo Giaccardo*, no. 6, p. 133.

<sup>238</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 150-155.



woman: *acqua salientis in vitam æternam*; after, the Paralytic: *filius habet vitam... verba vitæ...* Good Shepherd: *ut vitam habeant...* other quotations follow. II - Supernatural life of grace, life of resurrection, life of vocation maturity... III - Visit on Jesus, he is with us and from here he wants to enlighten.”<sup>239</sup>

The themes of the succeeding days are: XXIV - Life of grace and of fidelity: St. Timothy; XXV - Life of resurrection: Conversion of St. Paul; XXVI - Life through Mary; XXVII - *Qui manducat*; XXVIII - *Qui manet in me...*; XXIX - *Sic orabit*; XXX - Closing adoration.

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37-38

**158** From the sources available till now, this month for the Divine Master is an expression of the turning point towards the centrality of Christ Way, Truth and Life in the life of the Casa, as one could notice from the information of the February 1924 issue of the UCBS: “In the Casa, the month of January is consecrated to the Divine Master: an artistic portrait that represents to us his Sacred Heart: and we pray to him that the altar be soon built. As in the Cenacle for the last supper, as for the coming of the Holy Spirit, the Divine Master gathered around himself the whole family: because he wants everything around himself in Heaven at the table of his Father: he is the *way*, who gives example, who builds: how holy is Jesus’ life! He is the *truth* that enlightens, that preaches what we must believe and what we must do; before the doctrine of Jesus, human wisdom that is not enlightened by him, is ignorance and is foolishness! He is *life* who gives the grace for believing and doing, who sanctifies, who raises from the dead, who multiplies merits, who brings vocations to maturity, who transforms, and without him we are dead. The Divine Master teaches, and gives the example of the most beautiful devotion to Our Most Holy Mary, and he has made Her the treasurer of his graces. We all draw from the fullness of the Divine Master. The month was closed with the hour of adoration: the Divine Master is with us, he is in his house; from here, from the Tabernacle, he wants to enlighten both his family and the world... Principal practice of obeisance was the visit to the Most Holy Sacrament, to the Eucharistic divine Master; adoration, thanksgiving, propitiation and reparation and supplication;

<sup>239</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 150-151.

in the morning, the young ones made the short visit of one minute. The Divine Master brought us this other grace; the perpetual adoration shall begin in but a short while.”<sup>240</sup>

**159** Spared from the risk of a precocious death, Fr. Alberione continues his push towards the mission, received and confirmed by God, by busying himself to clarify the components of the Casa, altogether gathered under the name Pious Society of St. Paul. Thus in the February 1924 issue of the UCBS, one could draw four important news: the intention to open a house for the aspirants for the missions “ad gentes,”<sup>241</sup> the outline of the Statute of the Bible Society,<sup>242</sup> the

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<sup>240</sup> *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VII, no. 2, 15 February 1924, pp. 11-12.

<sup>241</sup> “Hence by the *coming autumn*, a house annexed to the Society of St. Paul for the young persons who aspire for the missions: with the understanding that they will work for the infidels and schismatic, in a special manner (not exclusively) with the press. Already 14 young men have requested to join, considering that the time destined for it is already usable” (G. ALBERIONE, in *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VII, no. 2, 15 February 1924, p. 3).

<sup>242</sup> “So that the spread of the Gospel may become greater and greater, a society from among the Cooperators was formed, with its own Statute. Outline of the Statute:

1 – At the Pious Society of St. Paul the section “*Bible Society*” of the Union of Cooperators of the Good Press has been instituted.

2 – The diffusion and penetration of the Bible, and in a special manner of the *Holy Gospels*, are proposed.

3 – It is made up of perpetual members who contribute L. 1000 once, of outstanding members who contribute L. 500 once, of ordinary members who contribute L. 5 every year, of those who make one Communion a week in behalf of the work, or are committed to spread the Bible personally, or with the newspapers and other means.

4 – They participate in life and after death with the Thousand Holy Masses that every year are celebrated in the Pious Society of St. Paul, with the indulgences granted by the Holy See to all Cooperators of the Good Press and with the good the Pious Society of St. Paul does.

5 – They receive monthly the bulletin “*Unione Cooperatori B. S.*” where a report shall be made of the good done.

6 – The income from the offerings are committed to the spread for free or with minimal prices of the Bible and of the Gospel.

7 – The Director’s Office is at the Pious Society of St. Paul.

This present statute has the approval of the Bishop” (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VII, no. 2, 15 February 1924, p. 5).

We must remember here also the influence of the encyclical *Spiritus Paraclitus* of Benedict XV, published on 15 September 1920, on the occasion of the fifteenth centenary of St. Jerome, wherein the importance of the study of the Sacred Scripture is called for.

prayer, “For those who thirst for souls like Jesus”<sup>243</sup> and the foundation of the Pious Disciples of the Divine Master.<sup>244</sup>

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<sup>243</sup> *For those who thirst for souls - Like Jesus -*. “Lord, I offer you, in union with all the Priests who celebrate the Holy Mass today, the Divine Victim, Jesus Host, and myself, a small victim.

1. In reparation for the innumerable blasphemies, errors and obscenities that are printed in so many printing presses from where every day emerges a river of paper that floods the world like putrid waters;

2. To invoke your mercy on the numerous readers, perverted or innocent, that the scandalous press grabs away from your Heart as Father, thirsty for souls;

3. For the conversion of many writers and blind printers, ministers of satan, false teachers who have raised their teachings against the Divine Master, poisoning every teaching, the human thought and the fountains of human activity;

4. In order to honor, love, listen only to Him, whom You, O Heavenly Father, in Your great heart have given to the world, saying: “This is my beloved Son: hear Him.”

5. In order to know that Jesus alone is the perfect Master: that is the Truth that enlightens, the Way or model of every holiness, the true Life that animates, that is, the sanctifying grace.

6. In order to obtain the grace that the number of Priests, Religious men and women, consecrated to the spread of the doctrine of Jesus through the press multiply.

7. In order that the writers and workers of this press are saints, full of wisdom and of zeal, for the glory of God and for souls;

8. In order to ask you that the Catholic Press may prosper, be spread, assisted, and be multiplied, thus raising its voice in such a way that it covers the inebriating and alluring clamor of perverse press;

9. In order that all may know our ignorance and misery, and the need to keep our pleading eyes and our heads bowed to your Holy Tabernacle, O Lord, invoking light, pity and mercy” (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VII, no. 2, 15 February 1924, p. 4).

Notice especially the fifth point that shows Jesus as perfect Master: “Truth that enlightens, the Way or model of every holiness, the true Life that animates, that is, the sanctifying grace.” Cf. “*Per chi sente sete di anime come Gesù*”, *Offertorio Paolino*, by A. COLACRAI, Edizioni Archivio Storico Generale Famiglia Paolina, no. 8, Roma 1985.

<sup>244</sup> “*The Pious Disciples*. They are a religious family of daughters, in Alba (Piemonte), from 16 up. They are consecrated to adore, continuously by turns, the Divine Master, Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, in order to bring to reality the “Your kingdom come” especially by means of the Good Press. They live common life in the manner of sisters living the vows privately. Each of them has two hours of adoration each day: aside from the common practices of piety, they are engaged also in common chores (sewing, mending, etc). They live in their own house, under the guidance of the Superior of the Pious Society of St. Paul. They are to be chosen among the young women

**160** Like before, for Fr. Alberione, the makeup of the Casa, as said above, had to mirror the relevance of the apostolic times: men and women associated with the mission of Jesus Master. DFst 52-53 76-79

Now had come another moment for a new step ahead in the foundation. The Casa was firmly established on Jesus Master Eucharist and for a time a special expression of the “*laus eucharistica*” was being preannounced.<sup>245</sup> Then, after the experience of Benevello, Fr. Alberione, on 21 November 1923, separates by “apostolic work,” in the house called Divine Master, two among those under formation in the Casa: Orsola Rivata and Matilde Gerlotto. Then, on 10 February 1924, St. Scholastica’s day, the new religious family of the Pious Disciples is officially started.<sup>246</sup> The UCBS bulletin describes “*the religious clothing of the Pious Disciples*”—eight of them—that was held on 25 March, feast of the Annunciation, of the same year.<sup>247</sup> Orsola Rivata receives the name Sr.

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inclined to piety, especially the Eucharistic one. They shall be healthy in body and in mind, and that they are not beyond the age of 25 years. Joining, they do not pay any fee of sorts, but they have to be furnished with enough personal outfit; and for their clothing, for two years, they will take care of the expenses for clothes, laundry, etc., etc. TEOL. ALBERIONE GIACOMO.

*The House of the Pious Disciples.* For the Pious Disciples, the furnishing of the house at the end of the garden is being properly done: there will be place for fifty daughters, and for their work of laundry, sewing, etc. The House has a divine name: it is called “Divine Master,” and he who wants to know where the Pious Disciples are, the answer is, at the “Divine Master’s” (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VII, no. 2, 15 February 1924, p. 28). – For further studies, the following carefully prepared studies published recently by the Pious Disciples may be consulted, especially: R. CESARATO, *L’albero visto dalle radici, Le Pie Discepoli del Divin Maestro tra carisma e storia*, Notes, booklet 1, Manuscript use, Rome, 1997; R. CESARATO - G. M. J. OBERTO, *L’albero visto dalle radici, Le Pie Discepoli del Divin Maestro tra carisma e storia*, Notes, booklet 2, Manuscript use, Rome, March 2000; AA.VV., *Eucaristia, Sacerdozio, Liturgia, l’unità come mistica del servizio*, Acts of the International Seminar on the unity of the three apostolic dimensions, Camaldoli, 22 February - 5 March 1998, Rome, Manuscript use, October 1998.

<sup>245</sup> Cf. this *Introduction*, no. 144, footnote 218.

<sup>246</sup> Cf. R. CESARATO, *Dagli inizi al 1944*, in R. CESARATO - G.M.J. OBERTO, *L’albero visto dalle radici...*, op. cit., Booklet 2, p. 43.

<sup>247</sup> “The Signor Teologo Alberione officiated at the ceremony at 6:30 and gave everyone a name, and celebrated the Holy Mass for them and said ‘paternal words that they had to meditate on’. It was a small recollected ceremony, simple of meaning and of love and of joy and of exaltation for those daughters who, with intense desire, wanted the day and the hour to

Scholastica of the Divine Providence and was given the responsibility over the internal affairs of the group.<sup>248</sup> Fr. Alberione had trained her by entrusting her the duty of reading the book *Le donne del Vangelo* (*The women of the Gospel*).<sup>249</sup> More than the name Scholastica, of which Ventura does not speak, this book had to prove useful for orienting the new family in its specific mission, in harmony with the general design of the Casa,<sup>250</sup> which was that of living the relevance of the apostolic times: “The Daughters of St. Paul are to attend to the Gospel of the Divine Master: to teach in school, to write, to diffuse, to printing work. The Pious Disciples attend to the Divine Master, and of His Ministers: adoration, work in the

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come soon. A little ritual was prepared for this ceremony. Here are the names of the eight Pious Disciples who made the first religious clothing: Sr. Scholastica of the Divine Providence, Sr. Antonietta of the Divine Master, Sr. Mary of St. Joseph, Sr. Teresa of Our Lady of Sorrows, Sr. Annunziata of Mary, Sr. Paolina of Jesus’ Agony, Sister Giacomina of the Guardian Angel, Sr. Margherita of the Souls in Purgatory” (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VII, no. 4, 15 April 1924, p. 24).

<sup>248</sup> Cf. M. RICCI, *Madre Maria Scolastica Rivata, fedele Discepolo del Divin Maestro*, Not for sale edition, Rome, 10 February 1996. Orsola Rivata was born in Guarene, on 12 July 1897. It is probable that she may have heard Fr. Alberione during his preaching in Guarene, for example on 9 October 1910 (on the *Most Holy Guardian Angels*) and on 10 April 1910 (on *St. Vincent Ferrer and the importance of God’s Word*). She joined the Daughters of St. Paul in Alba on 29 July 1922.

<sup>249</sup> Cf. this *Introduction*, no. 113.

<sup>250</sup> “The Pious Disciples. They are a religious family, at the side of the Daughters of St. Paul. They welcome young girls who want to consecrate themselves to the Lord with the perpetual adoration of the Eucharist, praying for the spread of the kingdom of O. L. Jesus Christ, and spending the remaining time in common chores for the Priests and the religious of the Good Press (sewing, mending, kitchen work, etc.). They profess the vows before the Lord and in particular they have two hours of adoration each day. They have their own habit... The name of the “Pious Disciples” is derived from their role: they have to accomplish before the Divine Master the role of the Pious Women, that of the first among the Pious Women, that is, the Blessed Lady. To adore Jesus, console him in the Most Blessed Sacrament, to be in vigil before the Holy Tabernacle in order to burn even more and better than candles of wax, to pray to the Divine Master for the triumph of the Good Press over the bad, then to do the tasks and service for Priests, those that Our Lady was doing for Jesus and the Apostles. Thus their humble life is summarized, life lived in silence, in love, in prayer, reminded also by the color of their habit that bears the colors of Our Lady; white and blue, with the eucharistic rays, burning on the breast” (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VIII, no. 9, 20 August 1925, pp. 10-11).

Church, house chores, embroidery, sewing, kitchen. These wear their habit; those, no. The Daughters of St. Paul are women religious, with persons in formation, novices; and they have made their perpetual vows; during profession, they assume the new name: they are called *Maestre (Women teachers)*. The Pious Disciples assume the new name during religious clothing, and they make the private vows, and they are called *Suore (Sisters)*.<sup>251</sup>

**161** In the year 1924 the Pious Society of St. Paul is introduced as “an institute of persons living in common in the manner of religious men with the aim of sanctifying themselves and in order to spread Christian life and thought through the Good Press; newspapers, periodicals, magazines, bookstores, books, parish bulletins, etc. In it may join Priests as much as lay persons: by taking the usual commitments of religious, that is, perfect charity, poverty, obedience with the obligation of living life in common under the defined rules. In order to carry out the apostolate of the Good Press, it has various initiatives; while for training personnel, it has opened different sections of aspirants.”<sup>252</sup> And the list is always made: workers’ section, young students, press for the missions, the Pious Disciples, the Daughters of St. Paul.

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**162** The August 1924 issue of UCBS, opens with a touching commemorative article on the “Ten years” of the Casa:

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“On St. Bernard’s day, 20 August 1914, the Casa was opened. On 20 August 1924, ten years have passed. How much work of grace in this span of time! The Father’s Design has been given flesh, confirmed, diffused, making means out of *things that are not*. With deep gratitude, we shall celebrate this date. May all the Cooperators join us on that day in prayer of thanksgiving, and in the expression of the liveliest love: a great mercy the Lord has bestowed on them!...

Work of God’s mercy. The first two students have been multiplied a hundred times: the branch for the daughters has grown: the group of the Pious Disciples is born: around St. Paul with the heart, with sacrifice, with prayer more than ten thousand cooperators are gathered; in order to do good and to enrich themselves with merits.

The Casa has had its name, form and structure: the Holy See

<sup>251</sup> *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VII, no. 11, 15 November 1924, p. 20.

<sup>252</sup> *Ibid.*, year VII, no. 5, 15 May 1924, page after cover.

has approved the existence and the mission and opened for it the treasures of the indulgences.

The Divine Providence has given house, courtyard, garden, machineries, and various branches of apostolate. The idea of the good press covers the hearts and God rules supreme with his spirit, in spite of the infinite acts of ingratitude, rebellion and human limitations...

The Heavenly Father holds the family in his loving arms. The titular, the patron saint, the protector of the Pious Society is St. Paul, the Apostle, who has lived better the spirit and the life of the Divine Master, and has better brought the Gospel to the souls and to nations.

Mary, Queen of the Apostles, is the mother, the protectress: She has formed the Savior: to Her are dedicated the Novices, called *Servants of Mary*.

The principal devotion is to the Divine Master: he is the way, the truth and the life. Also the priests of the Casa are called masters after His honor. To Him perpetual adoration is made, to Him are dedicated the postulants, called the *Disciples of the Divine Master* and the Pious Disciples. The Holy Spirit is prayed to every day. The other principal devotions are: to St. Joseph, to the Guardian Angel, to the souls in purgatory.

Men don't count; men would not have done anything.

The Casa comes out of God's will; otherwise, it would not have any sense, it would be a foolishness, it would not be existing at all.

People speak of admiration: more marvelous is that which is not seen: the vocations and the hidden sacrifice of the Cooperators. But this was not done by men; God did it out of his love: it is the will of God who guides and supports: and everything is done for God alone. With the will of God taken away, even humanly, every fruitfulness of life is taken away; there would be dryness in everything.

No one has therefore to count on human beings and their wealth: infinite is wealth: God.

The first end of the Society is therefore that of letting her members become saints: in order to please God, to please him in everything, in order to hate sin, to serve Him well, to seek his will, his glory, his pleasure above all. This is what is preached.

The principal book for formation is the Exercises of St. Ignatius.

The principal work that is done in the Casa even today is the choice and the care of vocations: today, the G. Press needs persons, vocations, more than any other thing.

Here the most delicate and assiduous concern of the Sig. Teologo is concentrated.

Then comes the apostolate: the G. Press; not any press whatsoever; but the press that is the Gospel that is the Revelation that is the commentary of the Gospel, the popularization of divine Revelation."<sup>253</sup>

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<sup>253</sup> *Ibid.*, year VII, no. 8, 15 August 1924, pp. 1-2.

**163** After a journey of ten years, the name “Paulines”<sup>254</sup> has begun to be used and, for all, men and women, insistence is made on the formation according to the style of the Casa.<sup>255</sup>

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**164** On 31 December 1924, Fr. Alberione addresses a warm greeting to the cooperators, expressed in 4 “*Deo Gratias*” and 6 “*Ora et labora.*”<sup>256</sup>

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We have to underline that the first “*Deo Gratias*” is meant for the Exercises of St. Ignatius: “*Deo gratias! For all the benefits that have come to us, as if from a unique, inexhaustible, most pure spring, from the Divine Master. The spirit of the exercises of St. Ignatius has penetrated better and the*

<sup>254</sup> “The new Paulines have also assumed a new name, a witness and an admonition to the newly clothed man” (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VII, no. 8, 15 August 1924, p. 8).

<sup>255</sup> “The arrival of a student or of an adult in the Casa is welcomed with that pleasure, with that joy that is had for a newborn child. As of now, the principal duty of the Daughters is especially the formation of the spirit that prepares them to become good apostles. As the new ones arrive, they find their Guardian Angel, and are raised as little plants. To them are taught the way of making well the holy meditation, how to practice the exercises of piety: the Holy Mass, the Holy Communion, spiritual reading, the Holy Rosary, spiritual work, the examinations of conscience in the morning, at noon and in the evening, the manner for doing good confession, for staying united with the Lord; to imitate more closely the examples of Jesus, especially his obedience, humility, spirit of sacrifice and love. Then the young ones with filial trust they reveal their spirit to their Assistant, the adult ones to the Mistress of Novices, by manifesting the difficulties met, the defects, the virtues, the holy desires, in order that they be guided, comforted, and supported in the personal and constant work that each has to do in order to win over herself, in order to progress in the purity of heart and in the gradual practice of the virtues” (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VII, no. 8, 15 August 1924, p. 22). – In this same period, is published the handbook *Metodo di esame particolare, secondo Sant’Ignazio*, Alba, Pia Società San Paolo, no date, pp. 54. At the end of the book the weekly *graphs* useful for marking failures and victories in the daily spiritual work.

<sup>256</sup> Among the commitments listed in one of the “*Ora et labora*” is found the spread of the *Gospel* among Christian families and of the *Giornalino*, an illustrated color weekly for children, whose publication began on 1 October 1924. The October issue of the UCBS informed: “The Section of the ‘Bible Society’. The spread and penetration of the Bible among the people is being proposed, and in a special manner of the *Most Holy Gospels*. In a year of life, 200,000 copies of the Holy Gospel have been diffused. Under preparation as well are the unified Holy Gospel, the Holy Gospel for families, the Holy Gospel for children, the letters of St. Paul and of the Apostles, the Sunday Gospel pamphlets, the complete Bible” (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VII, no. 10, 25 October 1924, p. 11).



meditation on the end for which we have been created has cast shafts of living light on the entire journey of our life. I prayed the Lord that he grants to all the grace of making the complete most holy exercises; at least once in a lifetime. What a grace this is!! Many of us have already received it.”<sup>257</sup>

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**165** As an expression of the spirit of the Casa the Gospel, the letters of St. Paul and the Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola are indicated: “THREE BOOKS: They shall be the spirit and life of the Cooperators who shall take them as spiritual pasture. For the Pious Society of St. Paul they are three books, let’s say, fundamental for formation. Let each one use them according to his capacity. Here they are: the *Holy Gospel*, the *Letters of St. Paul*, the *Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola*. The Divine Master is ‘way, truth and life’, example, light, grace. *The Gospel* is the Divine Master’s book. The truths of the Gospel are not man’s teachings. The teachings of the Gospel are lived teachings, they are the life of God, and they have the strongest efficacy. The words of the Gospel contain the graces for one to understand, for one to practice. One who reads the Gospel walks in order to please God. *The Letters of St. Paul* train souls and hearts for the apostolate: they train the apostles according to the heart of Jesus, solid apostles, holy apostles, fruitful apostles, apostles of the times: they teach the secret of cultivation, they furnish the seeds, and they teach the secret of making the sowed field productive. *The Exercises of St. Ignatius* have a weighty spiritual power. They establish the life of man on the true foundation, and they orient to God, they give the meaning of life. They organize the spiritual life and educate one to live it fruitfully.”<sup>258</sup>

<sup>257</sup> G. ALBERIONE, *A tutti i cari e buoni Cooperatori della Pia Società San Paolo*, Alba, 31 December 1924, in *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VIII, no. 1, 20 January 1925, p. 1.

<sup>258</sup> *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VIII, no. 1, 20 January 1925, p. 9. The February issue opens with an article on *The Letters of St. Paul*, wherein, among others, it is affirmed: “We managed to examine and had others examine the manuscript of the Letters of St. Paul, which is in Rome for the revision: it was found to be truly beautiful and within the reach of the people, both for their clear translation, simple, and for the notes, abundant, suitable and alive... St. Paul has a mission and a social, religious duty, which has to be well valued: it is the ministry for the Gospel for the Gentiles. Humanity was divided by a deep division: God’s people (the He-

**166** Beginning with the March 1925 issue, the articles on “The new church of St. Paul in Alba” or “The Church of the Good Press” or “The Church for St. Paul” began to occupy the first place in the UCBS bulletin.

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Emphasis is made on how the new church contains the spirituality of the Casa,<sup>259</sup> which has as its center Jesus Master, Way, Truth and Life: “It is the Church of the missionaries of the good press: the church is incorporated with the houses: and the houses make one body with the church as in the parishes, beside the Church there are the halls for catechism classes, side by side with the Church of St. Paul, incorporated in it, a church one with it, are the houses for the sons and the daughters of St. Paul. The plan reproduces it: the houses are like small choirs of the Church: in it are taught, are educated, are trained the missionaries of the good press: and in it little missionaries write and work for the spread of the kingdom of God. The Divine Master in the Church casts his light that are the way, that are the truth, that are the life: and these rays of light radiate in the house through the heart, through the spirit, through the mouth of superiors; they form the apostles of the press: and through the pen, the types and the machines of the house they enlighten

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brews) and the people not of God (all the rest of mankind). Jesus Christ came to save all, the ministry of St. Paul was this: to preach the universality of redemption and to attach the people not of God to that of God making out of it only one people, to graft the wild olive into the good olive, so that all may be saved. His letters do this work: *instaurare omnia in Christo*, to restore all things in Jesus Christ: and then to make men live a heavenly life, because the members of the body, that first have been used for evil deeds, might now be consecrated to the service of God as living hosts and temple of the Holy Spirit. Even more: that the whole nature, ruined also as it is by the original sin, might be associated with man in a continuing hymn of blessing to God... We hope that the great Apostle, who takes the pagan people and plants them on Jesus Christ in order that his spirit may penetrate in them and vivify their whole life to the point of making man God, shall know how to attract not only admirers, not only critical scholars, but souls that may love him, that may fall in love with him and attempt with him at ascending to God until *vivo iam non ego, vivit vero in me Christus*” (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VIII, no. 2, 20 February 1925, pp. 1-2).

<sup>259</sup> The Church of St. Paul was built between the Casa San Paolo (at the right of one who faces the façade of the Church) and the Casa della Divina Provvidenza (on the left), and parallel to the Casa Regina degli Apostoli. The August 1924 issue of UCBS publishes the photograph of these three houses (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VIII, no. 9, 20 August 1925, pp. 7-8).

souls, lead them, vivify them. And from here shall depart the missionaries of the press for the Mission lands.”<sup>260</sup>

Presenting the still incomplete plan of the Church, it is added: “It shall be open to the public, especially for the ease of approaching the Sacrament of Penance; there shall be held a continuing adoration, night and day, before Jesus exposed; it shall be utilized especially for the religious service of the Pious Society of St. Paul,<sup>261</sup> whose center shall be Way, Truth and Life.”<sup>262</sup>

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<sup>260</sup> *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VIII, 1 April 1925, pp. 1-2. In this same issue, information is given that “a movie projector has been bought, for the educational recreation of the grand days. At the beautiful evening of Easter was presented: Fabiola, with St. Sebastian, St. Agnes, St. Tarcisius and the art of maps” (*Ibid.*, p. 9). Reference is as well made as regards other new means of apostolate: “Train, telegraph, telephone, stenography, linotype, rotogravures, electricity, etc. These elements that God created for his glory... woe to us if neglectful we let the kingdom of satan make use of them” (*Ibid.*, p. 24).

<sup>261</sup> Considerations on the need to hurriedly build the Church of St. Paul are often found in the UCBS bulletin, also in order to meet the needs of the numerous members of the Casa, that now reached the number of 408 persons, coming from 30 Italian provinces (cf. *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VIII, no. 9, 20 August 1925, p. 1). On May 1925, a four-page pamphlet, like a supplement of the UCBS, is published. It contains an interesting introduction of the Casa to the Cooperators and Friends: “This family is composed of two big branches: the interns, the members of the Pious Society of St. Paul who are working for the spread of the Gospel and who pray; they are the male Religious and the Daughters of St. Paul; and the externs, the Friends and Cooperators, take care of their works and help the Casa with their offerings.” The Pious Disciples are called sisters: “The family of the Pious Disciples is also born in the midst of the Casa. They are sisters who, aside from attending to the ordinary needs of the numerous Institute, take turns day and night, uninterruptedly before the Most Holy Sacrament, exposed in the Chapel, in order to pray for God’s blessing over the Casa and on the families of Cooperators” (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VIII, 10 May 1925, p. 1).

<sup>262</sup> *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VIII, no. 9, 20 August 1925, pp. 7-8. The celebrations of the Feast of the Divine Master, for the spread of the Gospel, increase. The enthronement of the Gospel is solemnized as it is learned from the description of what was done in Benevello: “On the little throne, at the right and at the left of the Raggio are placed two books of “The Divine Master,” the unified Gospel, quite visible, in order to also materially project the idea that the Holy Gospel is like the continuation of Jesus Eucharist, his *Parabola* (=Parable) [*Parola* = Word], his complement” (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VIII, no. 13, 20 December 1925, p. 20). The book referred to is *Il Divin Maes-*

One cannot but admire how, in a short period of time that spans the end of October 1923 and the half of 1925, the centrality of Christ Way, Truth and Life has affirmed itself in the life and in the activities of the Casa. It is a very important stretch of time that has to be borne in mind in the reading of *Donec formetur Christus in vobis*.

## 2.2 “DONEC FORMETUR CHRISTUS IN VOBIS” (Gal 4:19)

**167** In the Month of the Divine Master of 1924, we find these affirmations: “Jesus, way, truth and life shall be the topic; example, teacher, sanctifier”,<sup>263</sup> “Coepit facere et docere: via edificante; e verità illuminante”,<sup>264</sup> “The Divine Master is life that sanctifies.”<sup>265</sup>

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**168** The parallelisms among way-example-edifying; truth-teacher-enlightening; life-sanctifier-sanctifies constitute a clear reference to Jn 14:6, in the key of the salvific functions of Christ.<sup>266</sup> It is precisely this key that will direct

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*tro*, a concordant text of the Four Gospels, with notes, Società S. Paolo Editrice, Alba-Roma, 1925.

<sup>263</sup> *Quaderno manoscritto Timoteo Giaccardo*, no. 6, p. 125.

<sup>264</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 132.

<sup>265</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 150.

<sup>266</sup> This combination among Truth-Master-Doctrine; Way-Example, and Life-Grace is not new in the Casa. Rather, already in 1910, speaking to the seminarians of Alba, Fr. Alberione affirmed: “It is after the Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ that we have to model ourselves: quos præsavit et prædestinavit conformes fieri imagini Filii sui. He has given us the example of the highest and perfect virtues. He is such a good Teacher that while he teaches, he gives us the example and communicates medicinal grace to our weak will” (G. ALBERIONE, *Quaderno* 8, 1 June 1910, p. 35). Furthermore, Timoteo Giaccardo notes in a text of his *Diario* of September 1918: “On the evening of the entrance, after the prayers, the Sig. Teologo introduced me to the young ones and gave me the name of maestro and invited me to say some words: I did not want to talk because I was not ready. I would have said: if I entered today = after a year or more... I would say: Master: I obey: but our master is only one: Jesus who speaks to us and cultivates us through the Sig. Teologo.” In another text of the same period, Giaccardo has certainly in mind the trinomial Truth, Way, Life, considered under the aspect of doctrine, example, grace, where the term Master acquires a special connotation with Truth-Doctrine: “*Jesus Master*: 1. Vos dicitis me magistrum et bene dicitis quia ego sum: with doctrine, with example, with grace. 2. The Teologo lets me be called master: I must have doctrine, example, prayer. 3. Exami-

us towards the works of Francesco Chiesa that constitutes a first exposition of Way, Truth and Life and are located in the prospects of the DF's directions: *Gesù Cristo Re*,<sup>267</sup> *Gesù Maestro*<sup>268</sup> and *Ego sum Vita*.<sup>269</sup> "*Euntes ergo, docete omnes gentes, baptizantes eos in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti, docentes eos servare omnia quaecumque mandavi vobis* (Matt. XXVIII, 18). Go therefore, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. In these words, the triple power of the kingdom of God is clearly expressed: the *doctrinal* power, docete; the *sacramental* power, baptizantes; the *jurisdictional* power, servare omnia quaecumque mandavi vobis".<sup>270</sup>

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**169** The book *Gesù Cristo Re*<sup>271</sup> is a commentary on the encyclical *Quas primas*, published by Pius XI on the occasion of the feast of Christ, the King, at the end of the Liturgical

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nation of conscience, resolution, prayer" (cf. *Quaderno manoscritto Timoteo Giaccardo*, no. 68, schema LXX).

<sup>267</sup> F. CHIESA, *Gesù Cristo Re*, Pia Società San Paolo, Alba, 1926.

<sup>268</sup> F. CHIESA, *Gesù Maestro*, Pia Società San Paolo, Alba-Roma, 1926.

<sup>269</sup> F. CHIESA, *Ego sum Vita*, Pia Società San Paolo, Alba-Roma, 1927.

<sup>270</sup> F. CHIESA, *Gesù Cristo Re*, op. cit., p. 22.

<sup>271</sup> The magazine *La Civiltà Cattolica* published, on 11 September 1926, a review of the book that we are quoting completely here: "Along the marks of Pius XI's Encyclical, 'Quas Primas' the cleric Canon Chiesa has drawn thirty readings, 'that, distributed through the days of the month of October, shall be useful as very good preparation for the feast of the kingship of Jesus Christ' that falls on 31 October this year. The idea has been most opportune and the A. has had the good fortune of executing it on time and well, two things that usually don't go together well. The book, which can be of great advantage to the clergy, also for preaching, leaves nothing to be desired for precision in doctrine, which is proposed in clear and worthy form of this most noble subject. We would have omitted, in a book of this kind, the figure at the start of reading XXIV, and the explanation which, at some points is not clear, e.g. on p. 239 where a printing error (*la volontà unita alla morte* [?]) makes the Author's psychological analysis less clear. The thirty readings by Fr. Chiesa, on the sovereignty of Jesus Christ, show also how important is this prerogative, which reunites around its light, so to say, all the splendors of the Catholic doctrine, as for example one could see from the readings XVII-XXI, on the *Kingdom of Jesus Christ*, on its *general form*, its *organic constitution*, the *form of government*, the *extension of the Kingdom*, that give an exact idea of the true Church of Christ" (*La Civiltà Cattolica*, year 77, vol. III, quad. 1830, 10 September 1926, pp. 535-536).

Year of 1925,<sup>272</sup> and it can be considered as the expression of the salvific function of Christ Way, or jurisdictional power.

**170** The following part of a paragraph of the encyclical has especially inspired many pages of the book *Gesù Cristo Re*: “For a long time Christ used to be called with the name King for the highest degree of excellence that he has in a highly imminent manner among the created things. In this manner, in fact, it is said that He reigns in the *minds of men* not only for the loftiness of his thought and for the vastness of his knowledge, but also because he is Truth, and it is necessary that men drew and received with obedience the truth from Him. Similarly, he reigns over the will of men either because the perfect integrity and submission of the human will responds to the divine will or because with his inspirations, he influences our free will in a manner that he sets us afire for more noble things. Finally, Christ is recognized *King of the hearts* because of the *charity of Christ that surpasses all understanding* (Eph 3:19), human, and for the attractiveness of his meekness and kindness: in fact, no one among men has been so much loved and shall ever be in the future as much as Jesus Christ.”<sup>273</sup>

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**171** Thus Francesco Chiesa dedicates three chapters to the “Territory of Christ’s Kingdom,” that is, on the mind, on the hearts and on the will. He dedicates also different chapters to the “Extension of the Kingdom” of Christ. To comment on the DF, it is good to remember especially these: “The Kingdom of Jesus Christ in us,”<sup>274</sup> “The King-

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<sup>272</sup> Cf. *La Civiltà Cattolica*, year 77, vol. I, quad. 1814, 8 January 1926, pp. 97-126.

<sup>273</sup> In F. CHIESA, *Gesù Cristo Re*, op. cit., p. XI. The importance for Fr. Alberione of this passage of *Quas primas* can be derived also from the fact that it inspired the monthly retreat of the Feast of Christ the King, on 31 October 1926, according to the notes taken down by Maestra Thecla Merlo (cf. *Quaderno no. 4*, unpublished, pp. 5-6).

<sup>274</sup> “The Kingdom of God covers the universe, society, families, but it is certain that its final purpose are we. It is in us, or in our soul, in our person that Jesus Christ wants to reign. *Regnum Dei intra vos est*. All the perceptible universe is not worth a soul. The soul is spirit and in the spirit there is freedom. In the spirit God exemplifies himself. In the spirit the entire universe returns to God, because the spirit is capable of knowing that everything comes from God, and everything returns to God, thus

dom of Jesus Christ in the mind,”<sup>275</sup> “The Kingdom of Jesus Christ in the will,”<sup>276</sup> “The Kingdom of Jesus Christ

giving knowingly and freely glory to Him, as the first Principle and final End” (F. CHIESA, *Gesù Cristo Re*, op. cit., p. 234).

<sup>275</sup> Can. Chiesa presents some important considerations for the interpretation of the DF. In the first place, he traces its framework in the faculties: “The kingdom of Jesus Christ must above all be established in our soul. This we have considered in the preceding reading. But our soul has various faculties: intellectual, sentimental, moral faculties. Let us see now how this kingdom must be established in our *mind*” (*Ibid.*, p. 245).

He then starts his teaching by speaking, in the first paragraph, of the *importance of the idea*, compared to a seed that gives origin to an animal or a plant, to a cedar of Lebanon or to an elephant. He continues: “On what does all this depend? From the *entelechia* as Aristotle would say; - from the *form*, as St. Thomas would say; - or from the soul that gives it form. If that matter is in-formed in the soul of a grain of wheat, it shall become grain, if in the soul of an elephant, then it shall grow into an elephant. What guides the evolution of the seed is the soul. In fact, from where did the infinite diversity of species and the variety of living things come? Precisely from the soul... Now, we need to think that what animates it, in the biological evolution, is the idea in the history of men. Alfred Fouillée wrote beautiful books on the *idea-force*. Eymieu, in his *Governo di se stesso*, beautifully utilized the doctrine regarding our education. Everyone knows, in whatever century, that the thought is always the seed of progress. The whole of the *Christian era* has come from the *Christian idea* that was spread, penetrating humanity deeply and producing its fruits... In short, I repeat: the idea is a seed; and to have a plant one must sow the seed, in the same manner to have men of developed character, one must begin from the idea. Education must begin from instruction. Nothing can be willed and judged without it being known. *Nil volitum quin praeognitum*, so the proverb says. And thus, Christ’s kingdom must begin from the mind. Before it is *Christian life*, it must be *Christian idea*. Without the idea, life would be wanting of foundation” (*Ibid.*, pp. 245-247).

In the second paragraph of the reading, Chiesa affirms that wherever Christ’s teaching is found, there is the *Christian idea* and that “Jesus Christ is King of the mind, because he is essential truth like God, and because in Him dwells the fullness of wisdom and divine knowledge.” He goes ahead indicating that the Christian idea is found in the Sacred Scriptures and in the Christian tradition and is interpreted by the Magisterium.

In the third part of the reading, he affirms that we must know the Christian idea through study and listening to the teachings and appropriate them through faith, that must be universal, firm and constant (cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 247-253).

<sup>276</sup> “The will of God is manifested in three principal modes: in the commandments, in the examples and in the events. The first and the second are called will of *sign*, the third is will of *approval*... And what commandments! To love God above everything and our neighbor as ourselves. To respect life, honor, things, good name of neighbor. To give food to the hungry, clothing to the naked, to forgive one’s enemy, to do good to him who offends us, and many others of which the Gospel is full. Other things more

in the hearts,”<sup>277</sup> “The Kingdom of Jesus Christ in our body”.<sup>278</sup>

perfect, e.g., evangelical poverty and perfect chastity belong as well to the will of Jesus, not as command, but as counsel. The same will of Jesus the Christ is manifested in the *examples*. Rather, the examples of Jesus comprise the first expression of his will. *Coepit facere et docere* (Acts 1:1). And what an abundance of examples! His birth in a poor shed in Bethlehem, and the whole of his private life of thirty years are the most effective expressions of his will that commands us humility and love for poverty and for hiddenness. What a clear expression of his will in his fasting of forty days, in the continuous example of prayer, of union with his Eternal Father, of meekness, of patience, of forbearance. What would we say then of his Passion, of his prayer for his enemies, of his death on the cross? The example is much clearer and much more effective than the word. *Verba movent, exempla trahunt*, so the proverb says. Words *move*, but examples *draw*. How much have we thanked our Divine Savior for deigning to give us his examples! Words could always leave some uncertainty on the manner of practicing the law. But example takes away all shadows. The will expressed in the examples comes to us through *Imitation* of the life of Jesus. Finally, there is the will of approval that is manifested in the *events*. Also here, how vast is the field of the Kingdom of God in us! All the events of history, of our family, of our person, express divine will, or at least divine permission. Good or bad weather, abundance or want, health or sickness, wealth or poverty, peace or war, success or failure, life or death, everything takes place around and within us, everything we can recognize as coming from God” (*Ibid.*, pp. 259-261).

<sup>277</sup>“1. *The human heart*. — Physiologically the human heart is a muscle as big as the fist, that is the propulsory center of the circulation of the blood. Inasmuch as all the parts of the body are maintained by the blood, one could say that the heart is the cause that nourishes and preserves the human body. Psychologically speaking, the heart is the center of the *affective life*. We can consider in the heart as if various levels or strata that represent different degrees of the affective power of man. First of all the *tendencies* constitute the base of the heart, first of all the tendency for *happiness*. This brings with itself the other tendency to hate everything that may bring distaste and unhappiness to the heart. Above the tendencies come the *inclinations*, that are tendencies, too, but are more defined. Thus, for example, the tendency for happiness generates the *inclination* for wealth, for honor, for work and the like. The *inclinations*, however, are dispositions permanent in character, calm and equal. Passions, that occupy the center and principal part of the heart, are placed over them and they form even a vast and complex world within us. Over the passions fluctuates variably and changeably the multitude of sentiments and affections... 2. *How can one establish the Kingdom of Jesus in the heart*. It is clear that to have dominion over one’s heart must be something of very great importance. Of a certain king it was said: if you want to win him over, try to win over to yourself first his favorite minister who holds the key to his heart. The will is the queen by right; but the heart is its favorite. Having dominion over the heart is having dominion over the man. Fortunately, however, the will can have a *dominion of industriousness*, as St. Francis of Sales would say, over the heart.



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**172** This vision of the mind, will, heart and body as expression of the totality of the person is taken up and developed in the book *La chiave della vita*.<sup>279</sup> The importance of this book for the Pauline spirituality<sup>280</sup> so dear to Fr. Al-

How then can one lord it over the heart? This way: by letting a true and strong love enter into it, and this is the love of God. Already we have observed above that all the twelve generals of the army of the passions are under the command of a supreme general, which is love. Thus St. Augustine says: *Ama et fac quid vis*. Love and do what you want. If divine love dominates the heart, we can tell one without fear: *do what you want*. We are sure that he will not do anything but what is good" (*Ibid.*, p. 267-271).

<sup>278</sup> "1. *The body and its members*. – Man is made up of soul and body. The soul is the invisible and spiritual part, the body is the visible and material part. We intend precisely to speak of this body inasmuch as, united with the soul, it is an essential part of the living and active human being. It can be robust or weak, healthy or sick, perfect or defective. The body may be used well or badly, as the soul. It can be an instrument of virtue or of vice. As for the *parts of the body*, they are the exit doors of our impressions, as the senses are the entrance doors. Every cognition begins from the senses, and every expression ends at the body or at the members. The name *member* is given above all to the hands and feet... But together with the other parts there also are the senses, which can be useful for many uses under the rule of the will. [F. Chiesa reviews the eyes, the ears, the tongue, the mouth, the senses of smell, taste and touch]. – 2. *In order that the Kingdom of God may extend also over the body and the members*. – Even if we consider the body, its members and things by themselves, without any relation with the soul, they as well belong to the Kingdom of God inasmuch as this extends over all created things. *Domini est terra et plenitudo eius* (Ps 23:1). But we consider here the body and the members inasmuch as they are essential parts of man and hence dependent on the spiritual and immortal soul. In this sense they fall within the spiritual kingdom of Jesus Christ, precisely as they belong to the souls created, redeemed and sanctified by him. – 3. *How the Kingdom of God may be extended over the body and its members*. – It is something most simple: by making the body and its members serve as instruments not for doing our will, our caprices or pleasures but only for doing the will of God... Here is the genuine turning into truth the famous words: *Vivo autem iam non ego, vivit vero in me Christus* (Gal 2:20). I live now not I but Christ lives in me. And what is all this? It is the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, that, begun in the *mind*, has moved to the *will*, has gone down to the *heart* to move, to cast its light with the body and in the members. It is the complete realization of the Kingdom of Jesus in us!" (*Ibid.*, pp. 279-286).

<sup>279</sup> F. CHIESA, *La chiave della vita*, Pia Società S. Paolo, Alba-Roma, 1927. Cf. A. F. DA SILVA, *Cristo Via, Verità e Vita, centro della vita, dell'opera e del pensiero di Don G. Alberione*, in AA.VV., *L'eredità cristocentrica di don Alberione*, op. cit., pp. 253-254.

<sup>280</sup> In its 11 February 1929 issue the *La Civiltà Cattolica* published a very positive review of it: "That the *five lessons* contained in the beauti-

berione is not affirmed enough so that he takes it up in a chapter of the DF.<sup>281</sup>

ful book that the untiring Canon Chiesa presents to the public, should meet 'the satisfaction of the 62 teachers who took part in the course' of *teaching culture*, organized by the *Istituto Superiore di Magistero del Piemonte*, and that many of them asked 'officially for its publication' (p. VII) does not surprise us at all. For the solidity and profundity of the doctrine, for its clear, approachable, almost familiar form, for the marvelous order, and tightness of reasoning, it could not be otherwise. And yet. Cl. A., without making his listeners tire too much, guides them to the heights of sublime thoughts. What is the life of man? What in it and through it must he achieve? What would be the natural end of human life, and what is in fact its supernatural end? (pp. 1-48). Hence, our life here on earth is a *preparation*; we must prepare ourselves for the life of heaven: preparation of the mind by faith and religious instruction (pp. 49-96); preparation of the will by the observance of the divine law (pp. 97-145); preparation of the heart by cultivating the sentiments of the good and the beautiful through virtue and the means of grace (p. 146-195); preparation of the body through mortification and the exercise of what is good (p. 196-258). Such bone structure of the beautiful work, without saying of the clear-headed Author's art, leads the minds to abstract and subtle concepts to offer a solid intellectual foundation to life. It is so for example with the happy comparison with the X-ray (p. 54). Aside from some printing errors (see pp. 3, 51, 65, 71, 76 etc.) some expressions do not seem exact to us like that (p. 58) concerning the light; neither would we say that 'the state of seeing things with one's own and natural light' is for the mind 'object more of *renunciation* than of *exercise*' (p. 72); because the supernatural life cannot do away in man with life natural to him. At any rate, the book appears to us to be well conducted and relevant to our times, and we would like that it were read by many" (*La Civiltà Cattolica*, year 80, vol. I, quad. 1888, 11 February 1929, pp. 359-360).

<sup>281</sup> Cf. *La chiave della vita*, in *Donec formetur Christus in vobis*, Pia Società San Paolo, Alba-Roma, 1932, p. 16 (DFst 16). Since it is not possible to present here even a simple summary of the points of contact between the *La chiave della vita* of Francesco Chiesa and Fr. Alberione's thought, it seems interesting to quote at least this passage on the preparation of the will: "Well, here we are ready to understand in what the preparation of the will must consist. We are always in the same principle: to prepare ourselves is *to do now what we can do by then*. When they spoke of the *beatific vision*, this meant to train our mind in this world to understand the things of God; how in God it shall see them in the future life. And here what could it mean? It is clear. To begin even from this life to live in the will of God and not in our egoism. The distinction that shall be seen clearly in the future life between the blessed and the damned is seen also in the present life. There are human beings who live by themselves and of men who live in God. Those who seek to do what pleases them are

DFst 39-40 49-50 **173** The trinomial example-to enlighten-to sanctify, as expression of Jesus Master Way, Truth and Life, however, is undertaken, in a simple and captivating manner by Francesco Chiesa, under the clear solicitation of Fr. Alberione, in his book, *Gesù Maestro*.<sup>282</sup>

DFst 49-50 **174** In the *Preface*, the author traces the book's plan: "The present booklet is divided into three parts: in the 1<sup>st</sup> part, the *need* of a teacher is discussed; in the 2<sup>nd</sup>, it is demonstrated how Jesus is precisely the *true Teacher*, and his *qualities*, the *method*, and the *subject matter* taught; the 3<sup>rd</sup> part teaches the *manner* of drawing benefits from the teaching of the Divine Master."<sup>283</sup>

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human beings who live by themselves. This is not the way that our Savior and model Jesus, who is way, truth and life, has taught us. He has taught us first with example, and then with the word, that the way to take is another. *I came down from heaven*, he says, *not to do my will but the will of him who sent me* (Jn 6:38)" (F. CHIESA, *La chiave della vita*, op. cit., pp. 128-130).

<sup>282</sup> F. Chiesa, *Gesù Maestro*, Pia Società S. Paolo, Alba-Roma, 1926.

<sup>283</sup> F. CHIESA, *Gesù Maestro*, op. cit., p. 1. The 20 February 1927 issue of UCBS informs that: "The month of January was dedicated to the Divine Master: everyday a meditation was conducted for the Casa on the Divine Master, following the book, *Gesù Maestro*, written precisely in order to offer the material for suitable preaching" and a synthesis of the book follows (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year X, no. 2, 20 February 1927, p. 12). In the 29 September 1928 issue, the magazine *La Civiltà Cattolica* published the following review: "The *Pious Society of St. Paul*, that with so much generous zeal promotes the apostolate of the *Good Press*, if it publishes often books like this of Can. Chiesa, cannot but find favor and help. *Gesù Maestro* is a book that shall please and shall do much good to souls; we wish, however, that it were read and meditated upon especially by priests, who, under the guidance of Jesus are called to be teachers. The book certainly deserves it: sure doctrine and expressed with much clarity, drawn from *De Magistro* of St. Augustine and more from St. Thomas; joy in the presentation of concepts, also the subtle and sublime ones under the configuration of objects and of ordinary relationships and above all a prominence of logical order, that certainly would show even better if the cl.A. expanded the index of titles into an analytical index of doctrines. Canon Chiesa must have intimately formed, in the clear doctrinal visions of St. Thomas, a clear and effectively assimilating mind, to enable him to expose with such precise clarity the doctrine of our means of knowing (p. 46, ff). At times, however, it seems to us that he insists too much on analogies, like precisely that of the sun and of the moon (pp. 46 and 278, ff), and that simple references without entering into a

**175** In the first part, in 6 short chapters or *readings*, as he calls them, Chiesa deals with the true Master, with the need of the Master, on the part of our nature, on the part of the human person, on the part of the disciple<sup>284</sup> and on the part of the subject matter to learn.

DFst  
49-50  
51-52

**176** The second part on Jesus true Master is composed of 19 readings and repeatedly discusses, from different points of view, the trinomial way, truth, and life, according to the threefold function of Christ considered as light, example and sanctifier.

DFst  
39-40

**177** The first four lessons deal with Jesus true Master by nature, by vocation, necessary Master and Master by universal acceptance. Then follow two series of three readings on the qualities of Jesus Master.

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historical wilderness of their doctrines, (see especially Zarathustra, p. 57, ff) at this time, when on the History of religions rather detailed studies are being done, much more when he has not mentioned anything of the masters of the Old Testament. We would have excluded some neologisms in a book that wants to be and is for easy understanding, e.g., *valorizzate* (p. 9), *torpetica* [sic!] (p. 193), *plastica pedagogica* (p. 207)" (*La Civiltà Cattolica*, year 79, vol. IV, quad. 1879, 29 September 1928, pp. 73-74). In UCAS, part of this review has been taken up more than once, for example, in the issue 12, of 15 December 1928, p. 9.

<sup>284</sup> Chiesa's thought that considers nature and the Sacred Scriptures as two teachers given by God to mankind is most interesting: "Tertullian, in a most happy statement that proves truly that he is a genius, summarizes and draws the divine master of humanity and he marks the purpose. He says: *Præmisit tibi naturam magistram submissurus et prophetiam, quo facilius credas prophetiæ, discipulus naturæ* (*De Resur. Carnis*, c. 12). It is as if he says: two are the masters (= teachers) that God has sent to mankind: nature and the Sacred Scriptures. God, however, as that supreme teacher that he is, wanted to observe the due order, proceeding from the easy to the difficult. And so what did he do? He sent first nature, because in the variety and magnificence of its spectacles, it could serve as teacher to mankind: and so human beings, taught at the school of nature, could easily profit of the teaching of the Sacred Scriptures. These are his words: '*He sent nature to you first, in order that prophecy would be sent next, and that you could easily believe the prophecy, insofar as you have already become disciple of nature.*' Well, we, also face to face with nature itself, already need a teacher who may guide us and help us to interpret it rightly. This we mean especially in the matter that is of our utmost interest, that is, in the field of moral and religious truths" (F. CHIESA, *Gesù Maestro*, op. cit., pp. 27-28). These are concepts that Fr. Alberione frequently took up in his writings.

DFst 39-40      **178** In the first series the *qualities* of Jesus are presented: knowledge, exemplarity, and charity, which correspond to truth-way-life.

DFst 51-52      **179** The first quality of Jesus Master is knowledge (Ego sum veritas, Jn 14:6)<sup>285</sup> “The qualities of an ordinary teacher are of three kinds: intellectual, moral, pedagogical. The intellectual talents may be grouped together under *knowledge*. The teacher must be a teacher, or to teach and communicate doctrine, knowledge... Let us see how in Jesus the first quality, or knowledge: knowledge of the *truth* to teach, knowledge of the *disciples* to be taught, knowledge of the *method* to use.”<sup>286</sup>

DFst 52-53      **180** It is proper to emphasize here the considerations on the method of Jesus Master: “From the dual knowledge of the truth to teach and of the disciple to be taught follows the possibility of another knowledge, not less necessary, which is that of method. There are most knowledgeable scholars who know but only for themselves. When they must communicate to others their knowledge, they prove themselves not at par at all, or very much below mediocrity. And why? Because they do not know the *method* of teaching. *Method* is the way to follow: not knowing the method is not knowing the way to let the truth reach the disciples’ mind. Now he who knows not the way how to let the goods reach their destination is, evidently, in the worst condition. Instead, he who knows well the method finds himself in the possibility of making understood and with ease every difficult truth. Now in the divine Master Jesus we find, concerning the method of teaching, knowledge that is at par with the two already con-

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<sup>285</sup> In her notes of Friday, 25 November 1927, Maestra Thecla Merlo takes note of Fr. Alberione’s pointer: “Jesus Christ says: I am the Truth (to understand better this, read the book Gesù Maestro)” (*Quaderno no. 4*, unpublished, p. 102). On her part, Maestra Teresa Raballo also notes: “*Io sono la Verità*, to consider it as it deserves, one ought to read the book printed in the Casa, entitled: Gesù Maestro. Topic discussed in the said book under different aspects: philosophical, theological, ascetical and pastoral” (A. T. RABALLO, *Quaderno no. 19*, unpublished, Friday, 25 November 1927, p. 56).

<sup>286</sup> F. CHIESA, *Gesù Maestro*, op. cit., pp. 138-139.

sidered: most lofty knowledge, full of prudence and practicality; infinite knowledge that we are incapable of penetrating to the bottom. However, the little that we can perceive is enough to give us some idea. The method of teaching chooses the time, the place, the manner, the persons.”<sup>287</sup>

**181** Among the moral qualities of Jesus Master, Canon Chiesa underlines the example of his life (*Exemplum dedi vobis*, Jn 13:15): “Jesus, supreme teacher of man’s moral life and perfect expert of human nature could not but put in the first place the example. Giving *example* was the first step of his redemptive work: *Coepit facere, et docere* (Acts 1:1). Even more, his entire life was a model to imitate, beginning from his birth till his death.”<sup>288</sup>

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48-49

**182** Can. Chiesa also considers another moral quality of the Divine Master, a quality that summarizes in itself all the others, that is, charity: “This is the light with which He, having come from heaven because of love, wanted to clothe himself; also in love, he wanted to accomplish his mission. St. Francis of Sales who said these words, *Benignitas et humanitas apparuit Salvatoris nostri Dei* (Ti 3:4), observes that Jesus appeared first as benevolence before as man. Like the sun that begins to cast its light at dawn, at sunrise, before appearing on its orbit, so our Savior began to spread rays of goodness even before he appears as a person. We see how *important* is the quality of charity in the teacher and how Jesus exercised it in his teaching, with *words* and with *deeds*.”<sup>289</sup>

DFst  
37-38

**183** In the second series of readings on the qualities of Jesus Master, Can. Chiesa takes pleasure in using the words “terpic” and “plastic” pedagogy, rare words indeed, but they effectively express his teaching: “Aside from the intellectual and moral qualities, the so-called *pedagogical* qualities are necessary for the teacher. These refer to the manner, or method of teaching. St. Augustine, speaking precisely of the teacher of religion, says that he needs three things: *ut doceat*,

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37-38

<sup>287</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 147-148.

<sup>288</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 155-156.

<sup>289</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 165-166.

*delectet, moveat*. They are precisely the pedagogical qualities that belong to every teacher: *ut doceat*, this refers to that art that is called *didactic*; *ut delectet*, thus the *terpetics*, or the art of pleasing and of drawing interest in the class; *ut moveat*, and here the supreme art of shaping characters is most beneficial and hence it can be called *plastic* pedagogy. We shall consider here the *didactics* of the Divine Master, and we shall see its importance, and how Jesus practiced it in his gospel metaphors and parables.”<sup>290</sup>

As one can see, Francesco Chiesa proposes the truth, way, life dynamics from a joyous and progressive point of view.

DFst  
49-51

**184** As equivalent of *truth*, he presents the illumination of the mind in spousal terms: “The illumination of the mind is not the whole of education, but it is a part of the summary value. Just as God, the Creator, before anything else, created light: *fiat lux*; in like manner, before everything else it is necessary that light shines on the soul of the person being educated... And this through the teaching of the truth. Now the intellect and truth are like bride and groom. One looks for the other continuously because they have been destined by the Creator to be united in perpetual marriage. But before this desired marriage takes place, comes first an entire novel of harsh and difficult ups and downs. How much struggle first before man can unite his intellect to legal science and become a doctor of the law! To the science of numbers, so one could be called professor of mathematics!... And it concerns only the union of the mind with a single truth, e.g. the truth of the way of adding two numbers. The same thing takes place always: the marriage of the mind with the truth. *Didactics* is destined to diminish the difficulties of that union and to speed up the time.”<sup>291</sup>

DFst  
40-45  
48-49

**185** As equivalent of *way*, Francesco Chiesa presents the *pedagogical “terpetics”* of Jesus: “This is the second of the qualities necessary for the teacher: the art of pleasing and drawing interest of students: *ut delectet*, as St. Augustine

<sup>290</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 179.

<sup>291</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 180-181.

says. That such an art is of summary importance to the teacher is easily understandable either when the class is directed towards the instruction of the mind, or when one aims also at the education of the will as it ought to be. In either one or the other case, it is always of summary importance to catch interest. If it concerns *education*, this is evident. Hence, the will must be pushed towards virtue which, by itself, is tough and difficult, and one must know how to stir esteem and admiration towards it. The real purpose of the art should precisely be this. Between knowing the virtue and practicing it, there is an abyss in between. Ovid says, "*Vide meliora, proboque, deteriora sequor.*" The art throws a bridge across this abyss so that the will may easily cross it. It is for this that effectively educational books are those that do not contain precepts but those that are artfully written... If it concerns only pure *instruction*, also then, one needs to know how to please and draw interest from the will. Everything depends on the will: the presence in school, diligence in application, attention, reflection, initiative, constancy in overcoming obstacles. Give me a student with good will and you will be sure of good results. Because of this, in books of pedagogy, so much is said about the *interests* of the student on different ages; and, especially in modern schools, so many means are used in order to make the school likeable and pleasant. Attempts are made to draw interest and to please in order to more easily educate. This is "terpetic" (so called from Greek τέρω – delight) art of drawing interest and pleasing. An art so natural and necessary could not be set aside by the Divine Master. More, He who, more than all the educators, has used this art in a divine, and unsurpassable, manner. And this in the manner of teaching, in the substance of doctrine and in the manner of confirming it."<sup>292</sup>

**186** As equivalent of *life*, Francesco Chiesa presents the *pedagogical plastics*, by initially making a very important consideration on the formation of character: "True education does not stop at instruction, but proposes for itself education, which in turn must succeed in the formation

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59-60

<sup>292</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 193-195.



of character. This is the ideal that those who seriously are concerned of education long for in achieving the real good of humanity. Just as the will is the queen of all human faculties, so formation of character is the highest peak which education must reach. The real worth of man depends on this because character is virtue. Without good will all the other beautiful qualities can become a danger, like firearms in the hand of an evil or crazy person. We are all called to perfection. *Hæc est voluntas Dei, sanctificatio vestra* (I Thes. IV, 3). Now, only the perfection of the will is in our hands. No one could scold a man because he is not handsome, healthy, robust, learned, noble, rich, because these things do not depend on him. But he deserves blame if he is not virtuous. Virtue depends on our freedom.”<sup>293</sup>

DFst  
63-64

**187** Can. Chiesa then presents the persons formed in the school of Jesus: the apostles Peter and Paul, the martyrs and the saints. As regards the means of formation adopted in their education, he affirms that together with the supernatural means, Jesus did not neglect the natural means; but it is in the explanation of what he calls *pedagogical plastics*, that Canon Chiesa writes a most beautiful page, fully shared in by Fr. Alberione:<sup>294</sup>

“The *pedagogical plastics* is not like the *industrial plastics* that does everything by itself, and mechanically prints its form on materials, like when bricks and tegolas are machine made, or when statues are cast in metal. The art of pedagogical plastics has to do with living and free beings and treats them in a manner that respects their nature.

A living being, more so if intelligent and free, works by an intrinsic and immanent principle and a freely understood and pursued goal. To shape such a being means to form it in its perfection, but respecting all these facts: rather, by leaning on them.

Has that living and reasoning being an intrinsic principle that, as what St. Thomas says, is expressed in two elements: in the *form* that is within him and in the *end*, that is outside? The educator or formator should see to making this form more alive

<sup>293</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 207-208.

<sup>294</sup> Cf. G. ALBERIONE, *Metodo d'educazione*, in *Quaderno 40*, 17-19 October 1911, pp. 143-157.

and active, by reinforcing its activity if the form is adequate by itself, and adding potentials if the form is inadequate. As regards the *end*, he must make it known with total clarity and certainty by surrounding it with those elements that would enhance its attractiveness.

Then, does the same free being need to operate freely in view of its end? One needs to help it bring down the obstacles of freedom, let grow and stimulate ever more its will power so that, with courage and energy it may run towards its end.

It will only be then, that is, when the intelligent and free being may have acquired a total awareness of itself and, having made itself independent of all the obstacles of all sorts, it shall have acquired the habit of pursuing its end with energy, constancy, effectiveness; it is only then that that being shall have acquired its moral *character*.

Now, all this the Divine Master did with his disciples.

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The tasks of the educator are intended to be gathered in these two verses:

*Del savio educator questa è la legge:*

*Eccita, lascia agir, guida e corregge.*

*(The wise educator's law is this:*

*Stimulate, let do, guide, correct.)*

The first is *stimulation*: the stimulus towards action. Jesus stimulated with the teaching of the truth, with letting its beauty be seen through his example with the promises made to those who listened to his words, with the strength of the miracles.

What an unsurpassable stimulation to the spirits in the discourse of the beatitudes. What fire it must have lighted in the souls of the listeners!

But Jesus always respects freedom: "*si vis ad vitam ingredi* (Mt 19:17), *qui vult venire post me*", etc.

*He lets do also St. Peter who denies him.*

Jesus *guides* his disciples: "*Caveat a fermento Phariseorum*" (Mk 8:15), beware of the leaven of the Pharisees.

Jesus *corrects*: just as he corrected Peter after his fault and when he wanted that Jesus did not meet death, just as he corrected James and John when they wanted to pray for fire on the city of Samaria, and in a hundred of other circumstances."<sup>295</sup>

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<sup>295</sup> F. CHIESA, *Gesù Maestro*, op. cit., pp. 213-215.

DFst 58-63 **188** Finally in this reading, Francesco Chiesa speaks about Grace as the most important means of education utilized by Jesus and he underlines the importance of prayer and of the sacraments.

DFst 37-38 **189** After speaking about the qualities of Jesus Master, Francesco Chiesa deals with the subject of the Master's teaching: "In the last readings, we took into consideration the qualities of the Divine Master. It is time that we move on to consider the subject of his teaching. What could this subject be? The well-known rule stands here: *In omnibus rebus respice finem*. For what purpose did Jesus come in our midst? In order to show us the way to salvation. *Propter nostram salutem descendit de coelis et incarnatus est*. It was therefore logical that Jesus should teach mankind all the truths *necessary* for salvation. Now, these concern the whole person, which is intelligence, sentiment and will. The Master's teaching comes precisely to satisfy the needs of these faculties. He teaches *knowledge* for the mind, *morals* for the will and an *art* for healing and strengthening the heart." <sup>296</sup>

DFst 43-45 **190** It is not possible to present here the teaching of the entire book *Gesù Maestro*. However, to study more deeply the *Donec formetur Christus in vobis*, it matters that one bears in mind also the other readings that make up the book.

Francesco Chiesa presents yet another trinomial of readings on the subject of Jesus' teaching, which follows closely the scheme truth, way, life: he speaks of knowledge, of morals <sup>297</sup> and of the means for salvation.

Then follow five readings on the means of teaching of Jesus: his living word as true word, easy and effective; the institution of the Apostles and of the disciples; the institution of the Church; the Gospel, the Master's presence. The second part concludes with a reading on the effects of Jesus' teaching.

<sup>296</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 220.

<sup>297</sup> "We take here the meaning of *morals* in its broad sense, inasmuch as it refers to the will; it includes then both morals properly called, either *ascetical* and *mystical*. We shall now see how the teaching of the Divine Master extends over all these three parts" (F. CHIESA, *Gesù Maestro*, op. cit., p. 235).

The third part of the book is dedicated to our duties relative to the teaching of the Divine Master: attending to sacred preaching; reading of the Gospel; the duty of accepting the teaching of Jesus; duties of living the teaching or, as one reads in the contents, the example of Jesus; cooperation with Jesus through oral teaching; cooperation with Jesus by means of the press (to train writers, print books, spread the books).<sup>298</sup>

**191** The book *Ego sum Vita* finds its place as an aid for deepening the gift, which is lived in the Casa, of the constant union with Christ present in the Word and in the Eucharist: “The Gospel is the word of God. Jesus, Verbum or Word of the Father, is present in the Gospel, as word that teaches, and in the Eucharist as food that nourishes. The Gospel and the Eucharist are two different manners of the presence of Jesus, as light and warmth are the two manifestations of the sun. Very suitably, in the Congress of the Gospel, which was held in Alba on 30 June 1927, the book of the Gospel was placed, between two candles. In the Pious Society of St. Paul, amidst the big printing halls, the book of the Gospel stands, in front of which shines a lamp, like one before the altar of the Most Blessed Sacrament. Then, on the altar of

DFst  
52-54  
74-78

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<sup>298</sup> “We observe, however, that, speaking of the Press, we ought not limit ourselves only to the printed *Gospel*. The doctrine of Jesus Master is contained in the Gospel, but not all of it. We recall the words with which the Gospel of St. John ends: ‘*There are also many other things that Jesus did, but if they were to be described individually, I do not think the whole world will contain the books that would be written*’ (Jn 21:25). We can consider as doctrine of Jesus not only the *Letters of the Apostles* and the other books of the New Testament, but the entire Bible. Not only that. At the entrance hall of the *Pia Società S. Paolo* in Alba, where precisely the Apostles of the Good Press are trained, over a picture the figure of the sun is depicted, casting around itself its light with so many rays. At the center is the book of the Gospel: the rays around represented the other good books, periodicals, sheets that are printed and diffused. Parish bulletins, the *Giornalino*, etc. In fact, every good book that diffuses the gospel spirit can be called a ray of light of the Gospel. Just as the sun’s light forms all the fifteen thousand colors of the iris, similarly the Gospel casts its rays on the entire good press. Now if we observe how in practice the *Good Press* is achieved, we shall come to know well the manner of cooperation. For the Good Press three fundamental things are wanted: 1) to form people; 2) to print books; 3) to diffuse them. Here is a most vast area of cooperation” (F. CHIESA, *Gesù Maestro*, op. cit., pp. 417-419).

the Church, the Eucharist and the Gospel are continually together, day and night, exposed for adoration amidst burning candles. Tertullian already said that we must have the same respect to the least words of the Gospel, as we have for the fragments of the Eucharistic Host. Now, in the Gospel, Jesus says of himself: I am the life: *Ego sum vita*. This word contains such a deep meaning that the whole time of our life would not be enough to fathom it. Especially in our time, when the exigencies of life are meant to be elevated to be the supreme criterion of morality, how useful and fitting it is to fix our eyes more intimately on the essential and supreme and divine life of Jesus! He is not just life, he is the life. If we arrive at living this life in the degree to which we are meant, it is enough; nothing more is required.”<sup>299</sup>

DFst 55      **192** Can. Chiesa himself presents the parts and the content of the book: “The book may be considered divided into three parts. The first speaks of the life in general; the second explains that Jesus Christ wants to be our supernatural life; and presents how He is our life, in what it consists, its effects, its means and fruits. Finally, the third part teaches how each of us can live the life of Jesus Christ.”<sup>300</sup>

DFst 11-12 46-47      **193** More than going through the pages of *Ego sum Vita*,<sup>301</sup> indicating the contact points with DF, it seems important for us to emphasize that Can. Chiesa’s book presents, at the same time, the environment, the thrust and the fruits proposed by the *Donec formetur Christus in vobis*.

Hence, we limit ourselves to recall that Francesco Chiesa indicates as aim of the development of one’s life the goal drawn by Gal 4:19: “When Jesus can freely breathe in us, when the *pulse* of his heart regularly beats in us, and we are regularly nourished by the *Bread of life*, would that everything stays! What remains is that Jesus not only lives in us but even

<sup>299</sup> F. CHIESA, *Ego sum Vita*, op. cit., pp. V-VI.

<sup>300</sup> *Ibid.*, p. VI.

<sup>301</sup> In her notes of Tuesday, 29 November 1927, Maestra Thecla Merlo notes: “What does it mean: *Ego sum Vita* (Book)” (cf. *Quaderno no. 4*, unpublished, p. 107). Maestra Teresa Raballo notes: “The last book of the printed collection is entitled: *Ego sum Vita*” (A. T. RABALLO, *Quaderno no. 19*, unpublished, Tuesday, 29 November 1927, p. 60).

grows and develops day by day, until his complete formation: *donec formetur Christus in nobis*. Oh, happy are those who can have such a fortune! Now this is not a privilege only of some souls. We are all called to that, because all of us must become saints: *hæc est voluntas Dei, sanctificatio vestra*".<sup>302</sup>

**194** Thanks to the three books of Can. Chiesa, which are *Gesù Cristo Re*, *Gesù Maestro*, and *Ego sum Vita*, we can have a truly broad view for understanding the many affirmations of the book *Donec formetur Christus in vobis*. DFst 9-13 104-106

In its manuscript version, this book dates back to at least 1927, with the beginning of the "Course of meditations and extended exercises to orient our life" held by Fr. Alberione for the adult members of the Casa, from 11 October 1927 to 23 May 1928.

**195** The meditations generally had a frequency of three times a week; and notes of them are carefully contained in notebooks B2.5 and B2.6 of Maestra Thecla Merlo and in notebooks no. 18, 19 and 20 of Maestra Teresa Raballo. Following up these notes, one can notice that they substantially reproduce, even if at times in a different order, the chapters of DF, contained in the handwritten notebook of Fr. Alberione, divided essentially into three parts: Way of Purification, of Illumination and of Union.<sup>303</sup> DFst 9-13 17.37 67 104-106

**196** It may be asked whether the handwritten notebook of DF is not prior to 1927. Perhaps the adequate elements to confirm this hypothesis are still wanting. What is fundamental is to consider it not as casual notes, but as the fruit of a long itinerary lived by Fr. Alberione in his intimate experience and in his ministry. DFst 9-13 104-106

**197** Surely, an important frame of reference of DF is that of the Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises*, but re-read by Fr. Alberione in his own point of view. With this frame, Fr. Alberione loved to consider the novitiate as Spiritual Exercises prolonged, not closed, but undertaken in day-to-day DFst 9-13 17.37 67 104-106

<sup>302</sup> F. CHIESA, *Ego sum Vita*, op. cit., p. 331.

<sup>303</sup> Cf. A. F. DA SILVA, *Tavola sinottica dei documenti relativi al testo di Donec formetur Christus in vobis*, 35 pp. (unpublished).

life.<sup>304</sup> What is prescribed in the *Rules* of the Pia Società S. Paolo, approved in 1927, is proof to this. Article 10 regarding the novitiate states: “The novitiate is the time in which the three great ways have to be undertaken: purification, illumination and union, after the book of Exercises by St. Ignatius, as a long and calm course of Spiritual Exercises and hence the practices of piety of the Servant of Mary aside from those of the Disciple, are the hour of adoration and spiritual reading (or instruction) on the course of Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius with the comments of the more respected authors”.<sup>305</sup>

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104-106

**198** Concretely, the “Course of Extended Spiritual Exercises” conducted by Fr. Alberione, was intended to be an immediate preparation for the diocesan approval of the female branch of the Casa, since the approval of the male branch took place on 12 March 1927.<sup>306</sup>

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<sup>304</sup> “The Exercises are a period of time wherein the novice prepares herself to become a true religious. The novitiate is a time wherein the soul is oriented towards the Lord” (T. MERLO, *Quaderno B2.5*, unpublished, Tuesday, 11 October 1927, p. 3).

<sup>305</sup> Cf. *Regole*, Pia Società San Paolo, 1927. During the same year 1927, was published the book *Corso di Esercizi Spirituali per otto giorni secondo il metodo di S. Ignazio*, compiled for the special use of religious and priests by Fr. Luigi Pincelli S.J., 2 vols., Pia Società San Paolo, Alba, 1927. On the following year was published the book of L. BELLECIO, *Gli Esercizi Spirituali secondo il metodo di S. Ignazio di Lojola*, translated and in some places compiled by Fr. Antonio Bresciani, Pia Società San Paolo, Alba, 1928; cf. A. F. DA SILVA, *Il cammino degli Esercizi Spirituali nel pensiero di Don Giacomo Alberione*, Centro di Spiritualità Paolina, Casa Divin Maestro, Ariccia, 1981, pp. 33ff.

<sup>306</sup> There is no news from the notes taken by Sr. Scolastica Rivata regarding this “Course of Extended Spiritual Exercises.” In her unpublished notebook of 1928 are found notes of themes very similar to those taught by Fr. Alberione for the formation of the female branch of the Casa and contained in lapidary form in the DF. For example, the notes of the “Ritiro. Maestre. 4-28” contain references to the press apostolate, similar to the affirmations contained in the instruction held on 16 April 1928, during the Course of Extended Exercises. One can perceive the particular attention to what was more pertinent to the life of the Pious Disciples: “Jesus has truly done with me as he did with the Apostles; they were poor fishermen, and I am a poor country girl! What did they know of his mission? So do I with the Press Apostolate... I must love the others who are in other institutes as brothers and sisters, but consider that with our Apostolate, we embrace all of them as well, as if the other things necessary for doing good for the glory of God and the welfare of neighbor, this our new apostolate remains to be a new manner for completing, including even others

**199** Having obtained the approval of the Daughters of St. Paul, Fr. Alberione intensified formation to the religious life. Well kept are notes of a complete course on the religious life taught by Fr. Alberione starting from 28 October 1929.<sup>307</sup> These notes are helpful for the broadening of the discourse on the states of life, the vows, the religious vocation, etc., presented by DF, pp. 83ff.<sup>308</sup> DFst 83-92

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and to do things together. It is not that it is new in its kind because it dates back to the times of Our Lord Jesus Christ, but new in its manner. Few have come to understand the true meaning of the Press Apostolate, and we are those fortunate souls that God has chosen for this very delicate mission. With prayer and with the press. With prayer to obtain the grace that the press may do good and that he who performs it may have light and grace to perform it with holiness and to obtain a large diffusion, and many fruits of goodness. I am ignorant that I do not know anything and less than nothing, I am more incapable than any other, I was chosen to do this great deed" (SUOR SCOLASTICA, *Quaderno 1928*, unplubished).

<sup>307</sup> Cf. Manuscript notebook of Sr. Giuseppina Ambrosio, Instructions I-XX + 1 Monthly retreat on the Religious State (unpublished, currently kept at the Centro di Spiritualità Paolina).

<sup>308</sup> Particularly interesting is Instruction XVIII, on *Jesus Master Way, Truth and Life*. Here is a broad quote: "A great grace that we must ask the Divine Master is this: That we may always be faithful to our vocation, seeing to it that our press is always pastoral, that is, that it be written with pastoral, parochial spirit, with the truths that save. You shall truly love the Divine Master when you shall give pastoral press, not luxurious but all simple and clear, because Jesus said, 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life' and we must let this press reach all and save souls, to let the light of the Gospel reach all families. This is the first homage that I suggest you make to Jesus Master... Jesus Master Way, Truth and Life is our path; for as long as we remain in it, we shall be well, we shall be blessed, our apostolate shall be blessed. Keep yourself then on this road, do not escape from it, do not look for unoccupied roads, tell Jesus Master Way Truth and Life, have mercy on us, be our path, enlighten us, guide us to Yourself, please keep us close to You. – Our respects to Jesus Master – In the second place, aside from the Gospel, there is the study of the Catechism. *Truth* – The first part of Catechism is the Creed, *dogma*, and you shall honor Jesus Truth. *Way* – The second part, that is, the precepts, the commandments and the virtues, that is, *morals* – it brings honor to Jesus Way. *Life* – The third part includes the sacraments, the Mass, prayers, or *worship* in honor of Jesus Life. 'I am the true Life'." In the conclusion of the following Instruction, Fr. Alberione affirms: "The religious life is the Way, the Truth and the Life lived in the most perfect manner. It is a must that during the time of novitiate, you must show you are ascending to the religious life, to the vows, and that you already practice them with eagerness and fervor" (G. AMBROSIO, *Quaderno 1929*, unpublished).



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**200** During these years the work of formation of the Casa assumes an ever more profound resonance inasmuch as the members of the male and female branches found themselves involved in a work that grew with stupefying rhythm.<sup>309</sup>

At the middle of January 1926, the House of Rome, composed of male and female branches, was founded and soon, news began being published, in the UCAS, on the “two families” in Rome. In 1927, the “Vigna San Paolo” was acquired from the Benedictines. Here were found together on the first months of 1929, the Paulines, the Daughters of St. Paul and the Pious Disciples of the Divine Master. It was precisely in the publication of the news of the land acquisition that the name Pauline Family<sup>310</sup> was used, perhaps for the first time in the UCBS.

Meanwhile, foundations in other Italian cities follow one another: Turin (FSP: 1926), Salerno (FSP: 5 November 1928); Bari (FSP: 15 November 1928), Verona (FSP: 15 November 1928), Sanfré (PD: 10 December 1928), Cagliari (FSP: 5 February 1929).

The UCBS publishes the photographs of the buildings and of groups of persons of the House of Alba<sup>311</sup> and, in the commemorative issue of the thirteen years of foundation, it presents “A limited view of the Apostolate of the Good Press in Alba,” or a photograph wherein 9 important points are marked: 1. The construction site of the new church of St. Paul, 2. The St. Paul chapel, 3. The Casa San Paolo, 4. The Casa Divina Provvidenza, 5. The Casa Regina degli Apostoli,

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<sup>309</sup> Among the many initiatives, it’s good to remember the start of the excavations for the building of the church of Jesus Master in Borgo Piave, Alba, on 14 March 1927.

<sup>310</sup> “Two news items... In *Capital Letters*... Are those that the Signor Teologo communicated to the Pauline Family on the evening of that assault that we mentioned elsewhere, that is, at the eve of his feast. – But why news in capital letters? – Because all the others, in comparison, are in small letters. Here are the two news items: 1<sup>st</sup> *The conclusion of the contract for the building of the Paper Mill*; 2<sup>nd</sup> *The acquisition of a piece of land for the new quarters of the House of Rome*. And without any further addition, it is easy to understand that for the Casa the news means two events of maximum importance. Friends can easily imagine how these two news items were received by the boys” (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year X, no. 8, 20 August 1927, p. 12).

<sup>311</sup> *Ibid.*, year X, no. 3, 20 March 1927, pp. I-XVI.

6. The Casa San Giuseppe, 7. The Casa Divin Maestro, 8. The furnace for brick-making, 9. The big courtyards.<sup>312</sup>

**201** While attention is externally directed to the building of the Church of St. Paul, which grows speedily, new initiatives<sup>313</sup> and spiritual contents, are also introduced.

**202** The Feast of the Divine Master, celebrated in the Parishes for the spread of the Gospel,<sup>314</sup> assumes its features closely attuned with the Gospel Congresses, to the point that, after the Congress of Bologna (1925)<sup>315</sup> and the Congress of Milan (1926),<sup>316</sup> the third Gospel Congress is held in Alba, in 1927,<sup>317</sup> at the Pious Society of St. Paul, which had prepared for the occasion a big Exposition-Book Fair.<sup>318</sup>

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<sup>312</sup> *Ibid.*, year X, no. 9, 20 September 1927, pp. 8-9.

<sup>313</sup> "Duly approved by the Royal Procurator General of Turin, a new publication has been added to the numerous family of confreres who see the light under the aegis of St. Paul. "*La Famiglia Cristiana*" is a great weekly publication of 12 pages, a real treasure for Christian families, and it is especially destined to those dioceses that are without a Catholic weekly magazine or hardly manage to keep it alive. We wish the new preacher of the Gospel of Christ a vast diffusion and an abundant harvest of good" (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year X, no. 9, 20 September 1927, p. 14). This periodical stopped publication after some months. "*La Famiglia Cristiana*" is reborn in 1931.

<sup>314</sup> "Master was the title with which Jesus Christ preferred to be called. Satan, with the bad press, dethroned Jesus Christ from the minds and through them from the hearts, the desires and in works. The feast of the Divine Master wants to place Jesus Christ through the Gospel back in throne and through them in man and in life; to establish the Kingdom of Jesus Christ in the minds by winning them over through the powerful word of the Gospel; the other presses have less power on man" (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year IX, no. 1, 20 January 1926, p. 11). The article moves on revealing nine reasons for the promotion of the feast.

<sup>315</sup> Cf. *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VIII, no. 10, 20 September 1925, pp. 12-13.

<sup>316</sup> *Ibid.*, year IX, no. 11, 20 November 1926, pp. 8-9.

<sup>317</sup> The Congress opened on 30 June "with the Pope's blessing, with the participation of some twenty Cardinals, Archbishops and Bishops and with the most genuine approval of the clergy and of the Catholic laity of the Piedmontese dioceses... Amid a volley of applause, the Pope's telegram was read: 'The Holy Father, pleased with the opportune activity Pious Society of St. Paul Press Apostolate sends heartfelt sought blessings to the associates and participants of the Gospel Congress. Cardinal Gasparri.'" (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year X, no. 7, 20 July 1927, pp. 2-5).

<sup>318</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

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**203** Teachings on St. Paul are intensified and deepened and it is recommended that the month of June be dedicated to him<sup>319</sup> the expression “Pauline spirit”<sup>320</sup> is made popular and the week of devotions is introduced<sup>321</sup> and the summit is

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<sup>319</sup> “The month of June closes with the feast of St. Paul: those who have consecrated the month of January to the Sacred Heart, may give the whole of June to St. Paul: those who honor the Heart of Jesus in June, let them be introduced by St. Paul to the love of the Sacred Heart. St. Paul is the prisoner of Jesus; he is the Apostle of love of Jesus Christ; he is consumed by charity for Jesus Christ: he is the life of Jesus Christ. The devotion to St. Paul is a sign of predilection of God: the devotion to St. Paul lists us in the book of life. Saints are that great before God, and that strong help for us the more they approach and copy the Divine Master way, truth and life. Way as model; truth with teachings; life with the grace that they communicate to us by praying for us. St. Paul is way: the Holy Spirit makes him write three times these words: ‘be imitators of me as I imitate Jesus Christ.’ St. Paul is truth: he is the Teacher and the doctor, he so possesses and communicates the Gospel which he calls ‘my Gospel’ and ‘he generates in the Gospel.’ St. Paul is life: because his life is identified with that of Jesus Christ: ‘I live now not I, it is Jesus Christ who lives in me’.” (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VIII, no. 7, 15 June 1925, p. 1).

<sup>320</sup> *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year X, no. 8, 20 August 1927, p. 1.

<sup>321</sup> “The Casa di S. Paolo has its special protectors who inspire the institution and who, with ceaseless assistance, make it prosper; and towards them it nourishes and practices particular devotions each day, and more solemnly and together at the start of every month. The first week of the month has hence taken the name of Week of Devotions that always comprises an event of certain regularity... And here is a brief reference to the various devotions. The Casa wants to be characterized: with the spirit and life of St. Paul: it has taken its name from him, Society of St. Paul, the first house, the Chapel; and so shall also be the name of the Church under construction. Thus is dedicated to St. Paul the first Monday of the month. In the second place, the press apostolate is distinguished, but never separated from the apostolate of prayer: resolve is made to save souls and does not leave them until they enter heaven. In purgatory, there are those who suffer due to bad press, and the Casa cannot but be involved with them. Hence the first Tuesday is consecrated to the Souls in Purgatory. The press apostolate needs material means, and there is no better Provider of these than he who was chosen to provide for the Holy Family, St. Joseph. The press apostolate is a universal apostolate, and it is good that it should rely on the *Protector of the Universal Church*. The evil press is that which sows unbelief, hatred for the Church that has given value to religious practices, the sacraments... etc., and is the cause that so many persons approach death unprepared and indisposed. It is the task of the apostles of the good press to make reparation for these ills by letting the mediation of the *Protector of the dying* stand in between. The students are all enrolled

reached in the presentation of Pauline spirituality of the Casa through the publication, for many months in UCAS, of the images, with the respective explanations, of the stained glass windows of the new Church.<sup>322</sup>

in the Sacred Crusade for the dying, and on the first Wednesday of the month, they honor and pray especially to St. Joseph for that purpose. The first Thursday is dedicated to the Guardian Angel. Every book, every good Periodical is an Angel that leaves the printing press as an inspirer of good sentiments, a proponent of strong proposals, sower of chosen seeds that bring eternal fruits. Many of the Bulletins, in fact, are named 'Angel' and bear as symbol an Angel. And truly they accomplish that work of prolonged, silent, sweetly insinuating presence, without pretensions as the good guardian angel. He who writes, too, has nothing but an anonymous and imperceptible communication with the person who reads while the angels of whom he writes and of whom he reads can, with extreme ease, be in communication and to prepare the proper soil on one hand and an appropriate seedling on another. The press apostolate is nothing but the continuation of the Evangelization started by the Divine Master: it is the execution of the command: '*Go to all the earth, preach the Gospel to every creature...*' The Divine Master is the inspirer, and he who gives growth, who gives life to the seed and makes it sprout; he who sustains and guides the gospel sower. To him the first Friday is consecrated with the reparatory Communion, the Communion of the nine Fridays, and the explanation of the intention of the apostolate of prayer. Saturday is dedicated to Mary. The Apostles were entrusted to this Mother and they owe her the fruitfulness of their apostolate. Mary is Queen of the Apostles, and also is the Queen of the Good Press inasmuch as all the sacred writers have consecrated to her the most beautiful pages! The sweetest expressions, like literature, also the profane, and the related arts created for her the most beautiful masterworks. Perfect devotion is explained according to blessed Grignon de Montfort" (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year X, no. 8, 20 August 1927, pp. 10-11).

<sup>322</sup> "*The stained glass windows of the Church of St. Paul - Alba*. The windows must be proportioned by style, richness, piety, with the rest of the Church. And thus a special study was done with particular attention and there, stained glass windows, frames, figures are turning up very beautifully. There are 22 windows above, of which: 1. Four in the form of shell with glass of fourteen square meters. They shall have stained glasses illustrating: the letter of St. Paul to the Romans, the conversion of St. Paul, the martyrdom of St. Paul, the glory of St. Paul. 2. Four in oval helixes, of about eight square meters; they open in the pier of the central vault. They shall have illustrated glasses representing the evangelists with their respective symbols, that is: St. Matthew with the Angel; St. Mark with the lion; St. Luke with the ox; St. John with the eagle. 3. Twelve windows of baroque rectangular form, opened above the transepts of the Church, of two dimensions, that is, a part is 6 square meters and another is 4 square meters. They shall have stained glass, too, and the twelve apostles shall find place there. 4. Two other win-

DFst 204 The feast of St. Paul becomes an occasion for the  
63-64 people of Alba to meet and of larger participation of the Co-  
95-96 operators of the Good Press in the Convention. On the occa-  
sion, drama presentations are held for several days, like the  
“Dramma di Cristo” (1925 and 1926),<sup>323</sup> “San Francesco  
d’Assisi ‘L’araldo del Gran Re’ ” (1926),<sup>324</sup> “Maria di Mag-  
dala” and “Il Figliuol Prodigo” (1927).<sup>325</sup>

DFst 205 In 1928, the feast of St. Paul is celebrated at the end  
63-64 of October because of the blessing of the Church of St. Paul;  
95-96 and an entire week of solemn celebrations is planned from 28  
October to 4 November. At the same period, nine deacons are

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dows, oval, shell form, of eight square meters open above the entrance arm of the Church. The illustrated stained glasses represent the two disciples of St. Paul: St. Titus and Timothy. St. Timothy at the act of being ordained Priest by St. Paul; St. Titus at the moment he expires in spirit, ‘plenus dierum ac meritum’. In this manner the young men who shall be apostles of the Gospel through the Press shall have one day, continually before their eyes, the examples of the Apostle par excellence, St. Paul; and of the twelve other Apostles, chosen by the Lord, and of the Evangelists who left us this inexhaustible treasure of the Gospel. Of St. Paul we are reminded of conversion of the heart; of the masterpiece of his writings, the epistle to the Romans; his labors for the Gospel, specifically his martyrdom; his crown of justice, that is, the eternal glory among those who followed him, St. Luke, St. Titus, St. Timothy, St. Thecla, etc., etc. And thus the windows shall be as if a continuing story, preaching and encouragement to the Clerics to follow, after the example of their heavenly protector, the way in which God calls them. And so that the life of the apostolate may always be considered in its principle of grace and of mission given by the Church, behold St. Timothy who receives the sacred ordination from St. Paul. And so that it may be considered in its true end, behold St. Titus who leaves the earth surrounded by the disciples and already goes to the eternal reward of heaven. The most illustrious examples of virtue and zeal were left by the apostles, directly chosen by Our Lord Jesus Christ and given authority, powers, special gifts by him. Hence, their presence shall be a continuing lesson. May the Evangelists obtain for us then the grace of better understanding, and living, and publishing the Gospel to every creature. Work becomes worthy for as long as humanly speaking it could be said so. The style and the right attunement with the church, the colors, are distributed with richness and proportion; the figures are alive, speaking; the position of each one has its own meaning” (*Unione Cooperatori Apostolato Stampa*, year XI, no. 8, 31 August 1928, p. II).

<sup>323</sup> *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year VIII, no. 8, 20 July 1925, pp. 17-18.

<sup>324</sup> *Ibid.*, year IX, no. 6, 15 June 1926, pp. 2-3.

<sup>325</sup> *Ibid.*, year X, no. 6, 15 June 1927, pp. 1-3.

ordained, 51 young students and a good number of young girls put on the religious habit. Every day celebrations, meant for the people's participation, are held and a course of Spiritual Exercises of three days is proposed for the youth.<sup>326</sup>

<sup>326</sup> Alongside a narration of the celebrations of the blessing of the Church of St. Paul, a short article informs on the Spiritual Exercises for the young and, among other things, it says: "The Spiritual Exercises lead not only to a good Confession, but more easily, to a good *choice* of state in life, and in a sincere and lasting conversion to God through Christian life. At 'St. Paul' this year, various courses of Spiritual Exercises for the youth outsiders were held: aside from the usual persons inside. Three courses for the daughters, wherein 210 young persons became fervent in Christian and pious life; and a course for young men, for which in a most edifying manner 60 young men waited. Many young men insisted that they too may have such a fortune; many daughters are waiting that their turn may also come; now men and women have also asked. It is hoped that everyone will be satisfied. From here, however, everyone will see what an advantage it would be if there might be something more suitable and permanent" (*Unione Cooperatori Apostolato Stampa*, year XI, no. 11, November 1928, p. 2). Sensitive to the pastoral of the Spiritual Exercises, at the start of 1930, Fr. Alberione makes the first steps for the construction of a House for Spiritual Exercises. Cf. A. F. DA SILVA, *Cristo Via, Verità e Vita centro della vita, dell'opera e del pensiero di don G. Alberione*, in AA.VV., *L'eredità cristocentrica di don Alberione*, op. cit., pp. 282-283.

One can notice that this initiative of Fr. Alberione responded to what the encyclical *Mens nostra* of Pius XI augured regarding "the importance and usefulness of promoting the Spiritual Exercises." In order to see the attunement of the DF with this encyclical it is perhaps enough to quote the following passage: "In the difficult times wherein we live, wherein the true sense of Christ, the supernatural spirit, essence of our holy religion, suffers many obstacles and impediments, with the spread of naturalism that tends to make the ideals of the faith languish and to weaken the ardor of Christian charity, it is salutary as ever to take away man from that 'fascination of vanity' that 'obscures what is good' (Wis 4:12) and bring him to that blessed solitude, where, in a heavenly teaching, the soul learns the true value of human existence placed precisely in God's service, the salutary horror for sin, the holy fear of God, the vanity of earthly things in the contemplation of Him who is 'way and truth and life' (Jn 14:6), learns to take off the 'old man' (Eph 4:22) and to deny himself in the exercise of humility, of obedience, of mortification in order that he may put on Christ, till he reaches that 'perfect man' and to that 'measure of the fullness of age of Christ' (Eph 4:13) of which the apostle speaks, even until he can say with him 'I live now not I but Christ lives in me' (Gal 2:20): sublime ascensions and divine transformation that the soul accomplishes under the action of grace invoked in the most frequent and fervent prayer, drawn in the most devote participation to the most holy Mysteries" (*La Civiltà Cattolica*, year 81 [1930], vol. I, quad. 1909, 28 December 1929, pp. 10-11).

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**206** In all these initiatives, one could notice the closeness of the Pauline apostolate being born with the ecclesial community and, from the simple “Centers of diffusion of good books and religious articles”, propagated in the preceding years, steps are made to move vigorously for the creation of basic nuclei of the apostolate of the press through the formation of “Parish sections of the *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*”<sup>327</sup> in order to effectively achieve the goal proposed by the *Rules* of the Pious Society of St. Paul: “The Press Apostolate is the illustration, defense, spread of the Catholic Doctrine: that is applied to the international, public, domestic, life thereby turn to Christians individuals, families, the school, the laws, the nations.”<sup>328</sup>

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**207** Together with the concrete initiatives<sup>329</sup> and, aside from the traditional articles, in the bulletin that now bears

<sup>327</sup> *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year X, no. 1, 20 January 1927, pp. 4-6.

<sup>328</sup> *Regole*, Pia Società San Paolo, 1927, Prima Parte, La Pia Società S. Paolo, art. III. In the month of April 1927, the bulletin of the UCBS dedicates various pages to the Parish Sections. Before presenting the Statute, Fr. Alberione addresses the Cooperators: “The Pious Society of St. Paul works in the Press Apostolate that is, it directs its activity to the spread of the truth and Christian life through leaflets, periodicals, books, libraries, bulletins, etc., etc. It is dedicated to the spread, popularization, defense of the word of God through the Press: as the Priests with preaching. Hence, it tends to form priest-writers and religious workers; to write, to print, to diffuse; to form teachers-writers and women religious workers; to spread the persuasion that we need to be attached to Jesus Master who manifests to us in tradition and in preaching just as in the Scripture and in the Press-Apostolate. Currently, the Pious Society of St. Paul has almost five hundred young men, a number that is increasing every year. It is a group that educates with two hundred Daughters who are dedicated to the Press-Apostolate. In parishes, however, it tends to form the Sections of Cooperators: these take the place of the Press Apostolate and makes the works of the Society of St. Paul live, with its spirit and with its direction. Thus they become most effective help to the most reverend Parish Priests and to souls; while with their prayers, work, and offerings they support the initiatives of the Center... The Press Apostolate is today the ordinary means of instruction for the Parish Priest as to St. Paul his letters, as the Sacred Scriptures stand beside preaching” (*Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year X, no. 4, 20 April 1927, p. 5).

<sup>329</sup> For example, the publication of the “*Bibbia per delle Famiglie*” is announced: The Bible turned into breviary of the people, a book of holy devotion addressed to families and to schools, so that it may be an inexhaustible source of instruction, of education and of holy works for parents

the new name of *Unione Cooperatori Apostolato Stampa* (=UCAS), a real theorization of the press apostolate is now begun, with the handling of themes in the manner of demonstrations of scholastic thesis.<sup>330</sup> These themes would be again taken up and expanded in the book *Apostolato Stampa*, summarized in one of the parts of DF.

**208** Also the devotion to Mary Queen of the Apostles is deepened, with references, for example to the Encyclical “*Adiutricem*,” of Leo XIII,<sup>331</sup> and it is made popular through the publication of the book of Timoteo Giaccardo,<sup>332</sup> taken up in various installments in the bulletin of UCAS, beginning from the issue of April 1929.<sup>333</sup>

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More than anyone else, Giaccardo had assimilated the Pauline charism and this book attests to this thanks to the perfect integration and continual reference to the spirituality and apostolate of the Casa.<sup>334</sup>

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and children, for teachers and students. “Inasmuch as it is for the people, the translation is of the Vulgate, according to the desires of the Church; and the notes are either of the Fathers or of the Doctors, or of already approved ecclesiastical writers. Important: the “*Bibbia delle Famiglie*” shall also be available in illustrated weekly installments” (*Unione Cooperatori Apostolato Stampa*, year XI, no. 2, 15 February 1928, p. 27).

<sup>330</sup> For example: “God wants the Press-Apostolate” (*Unione Cooperatori Apostolato Stampa*, year XI, no. 6, 30 June 1928, pp. 8-9); “*God himself directly designates the purpose of the Press-Apostolate, or its teaching mission*” (*Unione Cooperatori Apostolato Stampa*, year XI, no. 7, 31 July 1928, pp. 7-9).

<sup>331</sup> Cf. *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa*, year X, no. 2, 20 February 1927, pp. 4-5.

<sup>332</sup> T. GIACCARDO, *Regina degli Apostoli, le ragioni del titolo, i benefici del titolo, il culto del titolo*, Pia Società S. Paolo, Roma, Alba, Torino, 1928. In a letter to Giaccardo, published as a presentation of the book, Fr. Alberione writes: “The doctrine, the thoughts, the sentiments and the respects that are exposed herein are not new things for us: together, we have meditated on them, studied and practiced them. But to see them today proposed in an orderly manner, fixed on pages addressed also for others is something useful, meritorious and certainly pleasing to Mary” (G. Alberione, Alba, 19 March 1928).

<sup>333</sup> Cf. *Unione Cooperatori Apostolato Stampa*, year XII, no. 4, 16 April 1929, pp. 6-7.

<sup>334</sup> Giaccardo dedicates a chapter to “Mary Queen of the Press,” composed of an introduction and three points: the kingdom of the press, the kingdom of Mary in the press and the apostolate of the press under the governance of Mary. At the end of the chapter, an example follows wherein the



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**209** During the last months of 1928, while intense work is being done for the approval of the female branch, Fr. Alberione brings to perfection also the physiognomy of the male branch.

From the *Regole*, approved in 1927, the Pious Society of St. Paul appears in fact to be composed of Priests, addressed with the title *Maestri*, and lay coadjutors, addressed with the title *Signori*. Those under formation were addressed *Discepoli*. From some testimony,<sup>335</sup> it appears that in October 1928, Alberione proposed to the lay coadjutors, till then always introduced as *Operai* (workers), the name *Disciples of the Divine Master*.<sup>336</sup>

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vocation of Fr. Alberione, that of Giaccardo himself and the development of the Casa are told. It seems proper to quote some of the passages of the article here: "...we, sons of St. Paul, little ministers of the apostolate of the press, we who proceed from the will of the Holy Father, with whom by religious bond we are bound for the defense and the spread of the Church with the means of the Press. The apostolate of the press takes the features of books, of periodicals, it is the living word of God, living and savior, just as the preaching, that comes in articulated sound, is the living word of the living and saving God. The apostolate of the press is the defense, the explanation, the spread, the application and the popularization of the Gospel... I. THE KINGDOM OF THE PRESS. In the power of this kingdom shines the regal crown of Mary... Every new area of human activity and of Christian zeal, destined to the expansion of the heavenly Father's kingdom, is by the gift of God, subject to the reign of the Most Holy Virgin and recognizes Mary Most Holy as its Queen. The phenomenon of the press today is perhaps the principal manifestation in the field of human activity: it is one of the most principal means of zeal. The most marvelous progresses, the most amazing discoveries, of these last years have been made in the field of the press and at the service of the press. The greater part of the intellectual activity of men is dedicated to the press. The newspaper is the hunger of today, the thirst of today, the breath of today: the newspaper stirs ideas, leads the will, forms consciences, dominates public opinion. The newspaper, the press is called with a most expressive term, the King of the times. And of this most important kingdom, of this most noble and most effective work of zeal, Mary is and must be the Queen; Mary cares for the press, and the press and the men of the press recognize it" (T. GIACCARDO, *Regina degli Apostoli*, op. cit., pp. 197-199).

<sup>335</sup> Cf. the dossier "1928. I primi Fratelli Discepoli di Gesù Divin Maestro", by Bro Maggiorino S. Caldellara, submitted by the author to the Center of Pauline Spirituality.

<sup>336</sup> This novelty is not yet shown in the December issue of the UCAS, in a news item on Mr. Giovanni Marengo, assistant to the workers. "He is a good Pauline who now is out of the Casa in order to fulfill his duty towards the motherland. He was with us for ten days and he came purposely for the spiritual exercises. We found him well and we gladly see him again: his stu-

In the correspondence of Fr. Alberione with Giaccardo, we find some exchange of ideas in view of a model of the habit for the “Pii Discepoli,” until the event was announced: “You can do two meditations: the most serious, most numerous, most thought of, most shameless and solemnly committed sins are those of the bad press; the Pii Discepoli are souls that with mortification, prayer, humble work, the vows, clothes of death (dark) are destined to Reparation. They shall have a black habit after the manner of the habit of the lay Jesuits with the symbol of the Gospel and the Crucifix. The ceremony of the conferring of the habit we shall hold on the day of St. Paul.”<sup>337</sup>

The bulletin of the *Unione Cooperatori Apostolato Stampa* presents a chronicle of the solemn celebrations of the feast of St. Paul in 1929 and furnishes also some interesting bits of information on the Disciples of the Divine Master in the intentions of the Founder: “The feasts of St. Paul. These were held during the week from 29 June to 7 July. Exclusively religious feasts, of much prayer, thanks and blessings.” After speaking about the ordination of six new priests on 29 June and of the professions of the Daughters of St. Paul on 1 July and of the Pious Disciples the next day, it continues: “The conferring of the religious habit to the *Disciples* (young workers) on Wednesday, 3 July, turned out to be most moving. In prayer and in silence, with the constant exercise of the hidden virtues, they prepared for a long time for this fortunate day. Before the conferring of the habit, the Signor Teologo explained the meaning of the ceremony. The Disciples of the Divine Master are the lay religious of the Pious Society of St. Paul. “They, the Signor Teologo was saying, are most dear to us because, although *last in the execution, they were first in the*

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dent workers, of whom he took good care and with whom he shared the same sentiments, celebrated much for him. A few months more, and then he shall always be with us” (*Unione Cooperatori Apostolato Stampa*, year XI, no. 12, December 1928, p. 5). Instead, in the May 1929 issue, it is affirmed: “Also the Disciples, in their courtyard, raised a small pillar on which they placed a beautiful statute of the Immaculate Mary” (*Unione Cooperatori Apostolato Stampa*, year XII, no. 5, 16 May 1929, p. 6).

<sup>337</sup> G. ALBERIONE, *Alba* 29/05/1929 (cf. Corrispondenza Don Alberione - T. Giaccardo, unpublished, kept at the Archivio Storico Generale della Famiglia Paolina, in the General House SSP).

*intention.* In fact, already since 1909, the first idea of our institution was to gather a group of souls that would be dedicated in a special manner for the reparation of the sins of bad press. And behold that today, after so many prayers and sacrifices, the Lord grants us the grace of the first group of seven young men to put on the uniform that would point to them death to the world and consecrated to the Lord in order to make reparation for the numberless sins that are committed especially with the bad press. And they shall make reparation in a special manner through a mortified and pious life, through the continuous exercise of the hidden virtues, employing their energies on the Press-Apostolate. The principal devotions are: devote assistance to the Holy Mass, and the Exercise of the Via Crucis.” To them comes the wish for a most fruitful apostolate that is most rich in merits; and to the Divine Master, the prayer that his Disciples may be *so many* and *in the manner* that He wants them.”<sup>338</sup>

DFst  
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**210** Regarding this reparatory mission a particular comfort from the encyclical of Pius XI *Miserentissimus Redemptor*, on Reparation, published on 10 May 1928<sup>339</sup> isn't certainly wanting. It was taken up by Fr. Alberione, few days later, in the “Extended Spiritual Exercises”<sup>340</sup> and commented on by Francesco Chiesa, profoundly and broadly, in a book prepared during the following months.<sup>341</sup>

This encyclical came to become a part of that broad channel of references to Christ Redeemer by Fr. Alberione, and constitutes an immediate reference for the reading of the chapter “Jesus Redeemer” of the DF (pp. 55-56) in view of the Casa.

DFst  
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**211** After the first conferring of the religious habit of the Disciples, in an article on “L’ora delle vocazioni” (The

<sup>338</sup> *Unione Cooperatori Apostolato Stampa*, year XII, no. 7, 16 July 1929, p. 2.

<sup>339</sup> PIO XI, *Lettera enciclica della riparazione che tutti debbono al Cuore Sacratissimo di Gesù*, cf. *La Civiltà Cattolica*, year 79, vol. II, quad. 1871, 23 May 1928, pp. 385ff.

<sup>340</sup> Cf. *Quaderno no. 6*, unpublished, Friday, 18 May 1928, p. 177.

<sup>341</sup> F. CHIESA, *Riparazione!*, Comment on the encyclical letter “Miserentissimus Redemptor” in a month of Instructions with examples, L.I.C.E., Lega Italiana Cattolica Editrice, Torino, 1930. Let it be noted that the Preface of the author bears the date, “Alba, Feast of the Epiphany, 1929”.

hour of vocations), the bulletin of UCAS introduces the Casa in a new manner, describing the purpose, the means and the spirit of the male branch, made up of two classes (Students and Lay Coadjutors-Disciples), and of the female branch made up of two sections (the Daughters or the Sisters of St. Paul and the Pious Disciples).<sup>342</sup>

**212** The September 1929 issue of UCAS continues its vocation pastoral<sup>343</sup> and furnishes a statistics table of the

DFst  
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<sup>342</sup> “Many are the religious institutes of the Church: old and recent, all of them venerable and rich with fruits for souls. In a very special manner, an institute that is dedicated to the divine and necessary Press-Apostolate is convenient. The Press-Apostolate is in its substance ancient as the Bible; today, however, it has assumed a new form, an effectiveness and a new need, considering the new social conditions today and the new inventions. For such an apostolate two institutes have been approved as two religious congregations, according to the norms of sacred canons. They are distinct in their Direction and Administration, akin to each other for the commonness of end, for the commonness of many means, for the commonness of spirit. They are: *THE PIA SOCIETÀ S. PAOLO* (male branch), *THE PIA SOCIETÀ DELLE FIGLIE DI SAN PAOLO* (female branch). – *End.* Both are resolved to preach with the *Press*, in the manner that preaching is done with words the Christian truths; in view of sanctifying its own Members; attracting souls to the school of the Divine Master in order to lead them to Heaven. *Means.* Common life, the religious vows, practices of piety, daily Apostolate, the practice of virtues, etc., are the means for the members’ own sanctification. For the spread of Christian doctrine, the Members shall attend to: a) writing periodicals, pamphlets, books, broadsheets, with the spirit of communicating, commenting, spreading the Holy Gospels and its teachings; b) to print, that is accomplish the typographical work of typesetting, printing, gathering and binding, etc; c) to spread and diffuse with various book initiatives, parish bulletins, biblical works, weeklies, etc. *SPIRIT.* It is the command of the Divine Master that his teaching be taught to every creature according to how it is watched over and taught by the Catholic Church, infallible Teacher of the truth. Preaching has to be done in simplicity and as the entire manifestation of Jesus Master Way, Truth, and Life according to the example and under the protection of the Apostle Paul, vessel of election and doctor of the Gentiles. The Lord, the Sacred Writers, the Apostles, the Holy Fathers, the Doctors, the Church, are the teachers, the models of this Apostolate exercised singularly because *this is eternal life, that those who know You, (Father), know Him whom you have sent*” (*Unione Cooperatori Apostolati Stampa*, year XII, no. 8, 16 August 1929, p. 1).

<sup>343</sup> Among the news items of the Casa of Alba, is about the return of Sig. Giovanni from military service and of his reception of the religious habit among the Reparator-Disciples: “During these days our young Signor Giovanni has come back from military service. After a week of Spiritual Exercises, he received the Religious Habit of the Family “Reparator-

students of the Pious Society of St. Paul (including the female branch), that now numbered a total of 900 names, coming from 32 Italian provinces.<sup>344</sup>

DFst 88      **213** In the month of October the vocation of the Disciples of the Divine Master begins to get introduced,<sup>345</sup> in the

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Disciples". While we thank the Lord for keeping him good also amidst all the dangers of military life, let us extend to him the wish of an ever more fruitful apostolate" (*Unione Cooperatori Apostolato Stampa*, year XII, no. 9, 16 September 1929, p. 12).

<sup>344</sup> *Unione Cooperatori Apostolato Stampa*, year XII, no. 9, 16 September 1929, p. 5. Cf. This *Introduction*, no. 166.

<sup>345</sup> "In the Pious Society of St. Paul, the Disciples of the Divine Master are the *lay religious* who dedicate themselves to the Apostolate of the Press. Their scope is dual: 1) To make reparation for the numerous sins caused by bad press, through a pious life, with the exercise of Christian virtues, with the sanctification of self. 2) The theoretical-practical study of printing work of typesetting, of printing, of binding, of the paper, of inks, of diffusion, etc. They follow Jesus Master by practicing the two most important devotions: devote assistance to the Holy Mass (two Holy Masses every day) and the exercise of the Way of the Cross twice a week (Tuesday and Friday) aside from the daily Visit to the Most Blessed Sacrament. They spend all their energies, always cheerful and happy, by being employed in the most varied kinds of work: they must possess a complete set of theoretical and practical knowledge of everything that concerns printing work; not only that, but in the Casa where it is not enough just to typeset or print but also to prepare the ink for printing, metal cast the characters for typesetting, produce paper, etc. Hence, it's beautiful to see them move from the typesetting department to the printing hall, from the typesetter to the ink-maker, from the mechanical department to paper making, to the practice of diffusing printed books. And they perform all these variegated work with much care and dedication; motivated by the only thought of gaining for themselves merits, and many merits for Heaven; to save many, very many souls. The Disciples of the Divine Master are increasing and may no one of those called ever leave but that all may generously correspond. We recommend to all our dearest Cooperators and in a special manner to the Most Reverend Parish Priests the work for vocations to the Press-Apostolate among the Disciples of the Divine Master. Often in the *Catholic Male Youth Circles* are known young men and even older ones who are much inclined to piety; it would be an act of charity to lead them to the religious life where their merits would be multiplied! Innocent small ones, spotless ones are met; it would be a great act of charity to suggest to them a religious house where they could be saved from many dangers and where they would develop the divine seed of vocation. At times young men are met who are alone or somehow an excess in the family: if they possessed too that foundation of piety and docility wherein a special hope of religious vocation could be cultivated, there is an occasion for a good deed that God presents to us" (*Unione Cooperatori Apostolato Stampa*, year XII, no. 10, 16 October 1929, pp. 2-3).

UCAS and the physiognomy of the Casa is completed, a physiognomy that would be kept unchanged for some years and it would form the framework to whom the formation proposal of DF would be addressed.

**214** Fr. Alberione, however, wants to count on a complete philosophical and theological elaboration according to the spirit of the Casa. This task could not but be entrusted to Francesco Chiesa, with whom he has deepened every research and project in this almost thirty years of exchange of communication.

**215** A step forward in this direction was made with the editing of the *Introduzione all'Ascetica (Introduction to Ascetics)*,<sup>346</sup> as Study Manual, in view of "making the general principles known and of showing the connection of Ascetics with Theology."<sup>347</sup>

**216** Repeatedly Francesco Chiesa points to Gal 4:19 as the occupation of the entire spiritual life: "The duty of grace in us is expressed in varied ways: it is said that it consists in extending in us the kingdom of perfection, of sanctification, of virtue, of divine love, or of the Holy Spirit, or of the kingdom of Jesus in us, *donec formetur Christus in vobis*. All this shall take place at the establishment in us of the kingdom of the Christian virtues."<sup>348</sup>

DFst  
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**217** In a letter, dated 4 November 1928, Fr. Alberione announces to Giaccardo: "I have been thinking that Can. Chiesa could do for us a Theology."<sup>349</sup> He takes up the matter on 10 January 1929: "Canon Chiesa shall begin the Theology towards Easter, God willing."<sup>350</sup> In September, he brings the good news: "Can. Chiesa's Theology is under the

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<sup>346</sup> F. CHIESA, *Introduzione all'Ascetica*, Pia Società San Paolo, Alba-Roma, 1929.

<sup>347</sup> F. CHIESA, *Prefazione*, in *Introduzione all'Ascetica*, op. cit., p. VII.

<sup>348</sup> F. CHIESA, *Introduzione all'Ascetica*, op. cit., p. 166.

<sup>349</sup> G. ALBERIONE, *Alba 04/11/1928* (cf. Corrispondenza Don Alberione - T. Giaccardo, unpublished, conserved at the Archivio Storico Generale della Famiglia Paolina, in the SSP General House).

<sup>350</sup> G. ALBERIONE, *Alba 10/01/1929* (cf. Corrispondenza Don Alberione - T. Giaccardo, unpublished, conserved at the Archivio Storico Generale della Famiglia Paolina, in the SSP General House).

examination of our Bishop”.<sup>351</sup> Finally, in a letter wherein he ignores the date, he requests: “After having read some lessons of Can. Chiesa during Visit, he desires that you tell him if you think that the fruit corresponds to the expenditure of time, energy and money”.<sup>352</sup>

These letters bear witness to the interest for the *Lessons of Theology* of Chiesa that contained, for Fr. Alberione, the theological reference for the Pauline spirit of his religious family.

In reality this Theology Course, in four books, constitutes the frame of reference within which Fr. Alberione completed the final draft of the DF, especially what concerns the Theology of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Considering that it is not possible to present here the close relationship between the *Lessons of Theology* and DF,<sup>353</sup> we shall limit ourselves, going over the text, to make references to the more significant points of contact.

DFst  
70-71

**218** The intense research work of Francesco Chiesa finds a further development: he applies to the formation of the clergy the theological vision espoused in the *Lessons of Theology*. From it he draws the book: *Per l'unità nella formazione del Clero [For the unity of the formation of the clergy]*.<sup>354</sup>

Formation is seen as a work of integration of the whole person. It is significant how this also is the objective of Pius XI, while referring explicitly to the Pauline text “donec formetur Christus in vobis”, assigns to Christian education in

<sup>351</sup> G. ALBERIONE, *Alba 11/09/1929* (cf. Corrispondenza Don Alberione - T. Giaccardo, unpublished, conserved at the Archivio Storico Generale della Famiglia Paolina, in the SSP General House).

<sup>352</sup> G. ALBERIONE, [1929?] (cf. Corrispondenza Don Alberione - T. Giaccardo, unpublished, conserved at the Archivio Storico Generale della Famiglia Paolina, in the SSP General House).

<sup>353</sup> Cf. A. F. DA SILVA, *Il cammino degli Esercizi Spirituali nel pensiero di Don Giacomo Alberione*, op. cit., pp. 72ff; A. F. DA SILVA, *Cristo Via, Verità e Vita centro della vita, dell'opera e del pensiero di don G. Alberione*, in AA.VV., *L'eredità cristocentrica di don Alberione*, op. cit., pp. 263ff.; A. F. DA SILVA, *Gv 14,6: eredità carismatica per la Famiglia Paolina*, in “*Spezzate il pane della Parola*”, Dossier for the Pauline Bible Year 1991-1992, Rome, SSP General House, January 1991, Pro manuscripto, pp. 52ff.

<sup>354</sup> F. CHIESA, *Per l'unità nella formazione del Clero*, Pia Società San Paolo, Alba-Roma, 1932.

the encyclical letter *Divini illius Magistri* of 31 December 1929: “The proper and immediate end of Christian education is to cooperate with divine grace and to form the true and perfect Christian, that is, Christ himself in those regenerated with Baptism, according to the living expression of the Apostle, ‘My children, I labor in giving birth to you until Christ is formed in you.’ Inasmuch as the true Christian has to live the supernatural life of Christ: ‘Christ is your life’ and manifests it in our flesh. Hence, Christian education includes the whole arc of human life, perceptible and spiritual, intellectual and moral, individual, domestic and social, not to mangle it in whatever manner, but to raise it, to regulate it and to perfect it according to the examples and the doctrine of Christ” (*La Civiltà Cattolica*, year 81, vol. I, quad. 1911, 25 January 1930, pp. 225-226).

Along such line, the Church considers five ways of unification, acceding to what one chooses: the path of history, of psychology, of reason, of faith or of the love of God.

Arriving at the second to the last of these steps, the Church affirms that the unification of faith, or theological synthesis, is not enough, but the unification in love, or mystical synthesis, is necessary: “Faith, however, strictly taken, alone, does not yet touch the ultimate sublimities of spiritual life. *Nunc manent fides, spes, charitas*, so the Apostle says, *maior autem horum est charitas*. Charity that divinizes the will, which is the queen of all human faculties, and also is the virtue in which the human soul reaches the most sublime peaks of its elevation. One can believe without loving... Instead in love there is a synthesis in which, indeed, all forms of unification takes place.”<sup>355</sup>

**219** Fr. Alberione fully shares the theological vision of Canon Chiesa<sup>356</sup> and, for his religious family, he indi-

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<sup>355</sup> F. CHIESA, *Per l'unità nella formazione del Clero*, op. cit., pp. 130-131.

<sup>356</sup> Consider the consonance of the mind of Alberione with the following passage from F. Chiesa: “Now what is said of the Priest? Is he not an other Christ? *Sacerdos alter Christus*. And if it is so, should not the training for the Priesthood be done by the Cleric in the Seminary be a continuing study of copying in himself the examples of Christ, *donec formetur Christus in vobis?* (Gal 4:19). It is true that the purpose of the



cates as goal of formation work the unification in Christ, according to the shared indication of Paul: “Filioli mei, quos iterum parturio, donec formetur Christus in vobis” (Gal 4:19).

DFst 220 At the beginning of the Thirties, that which in  
52-53 the future would be called Pauline Family found itself in  
85 a stage of continuous expansion in its activities,<sup>357</sup> in the  
93-95 number of persons<sup>358</sup> and in the foundation of new

Priesthood is to continue the mission of Christ in the midst of mankind. *Sicut misit me Pater, et ego mitto vos* (Jn 20:21). Hence, the Priest himself can exercise the mission, inasmuch as he is united with Christ, his mandate-giver and model. Like the metal wire that is capable of bringing to us the power that gives life to a motor, inasmuch as it is attached to the source of electric energy; — and as, according to the beautiful simile of Our Lord Jesus Christ himself, a *branch can bear fruit inasmuch as it is attached to the vine*, — so is the Priest. This cannot bring to souls Christ’s redemption if not inasmuch as he is united with Christ, made one with Him: *Sine me, nihil potestis facere* (Jn 15:5). Now which Cleric prepares himself more effectively to be an other Christ and hence bear more abundant fruits in the mystical vineyard of Christ? Certainly, it is he who with greater diligence attends to unifying in himself the elements of Jesus’ mission, that are *way, truth, and life*; or that which is done, in imitation to Jesus, *way* of the faithful through examples; *truth* with learning of the true doctrine of Jesus in order to teach it in due time; and *life*, through frequent reception of the Sacraments in order to be able to administer them to the faithful. Mind and heart, teaching and life, study and virtues, theology and conduct, theory and practice, everything must be only one thing in him: Cleric, so it is said, who is *entirely a single unit*, without contradictions and reservations” (F. CHIESA, *Per l’unità nella formazione del Clero*, op. cit., pp. 52-53).

<sup>357</sup> For example, the photographs of the Disciples working in the paper mill are published (cf. *Unione Cooperatori Apostolato Stampa*, year XIII, 17 July 1930, p. 5). In August 1931, the new Italian translation of the Bible is announced (cf. *Unione Cooperatori Apostolato Stampa*, year XIV, no. 8, 17 August 1931, p. 14). In its February 1932 issue of UCAS, Fr. Alberione dedicates a page to the solemn announcement of the project of publishing, each in four volumes, different editions of the Bible: Latin-Italian Bible; Latin-French; Latin-English; Latin-Spanish (cf. *Unione Cooperatori Apostolato Stampa*, year XV, no. 2, February 1932, p. 10).

<sup>358</sup> The December 1929 issue of the UCAS publishes in a calendar for the year 1930, 12 photographs presenting the various groups of the Casa, in Alba (cf. *Unione Cooperatori Apostolato Stampa*, year XII, no. 12, 17 December 1929, pp. 4-15). The issue of July 1930 publishes the photographs of the solemn procession of the Corpus Domini (cf. *Unione Cooperatori Apostolato Stampa*, year XIII, no. 14, 17 July 1930, pp. 10-11).

houses<sup>359</sup> In 1931, in fact, its spread in other continents also began.<sup>360</sup>

Hence a “ratio formations” was becoming indispensable, that which, more than a treatise, would contain the charism of a testimony, capable of eliciting greater vitality, inasmuch as it is born from life.

Fr. Alberione, then, decides to complete the drafting of his formation proposal and he entitles it “*Donec formetur Christus in vobis.*”<sup>361</sup>

The *Donec formetur* can be considered, therefore, as the book that encloses in itself many other books, with the purpose of achieving a single end: to interpret that inexhaustible document which is the life lived by Fr. Alberione and by the first generations of Paulines, totally dedicated to correspond to the call to holiness.

Because of this, it cannot be read simply as a collection of bare *notes*, but has to be considered, just as it is rightly so, the book of Pauline holiness.

*Rome, 31 December 2000.*

ANTONIO F. DA SILVA

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<sup>359</sup> Aside from the foundations already cited, here is a list of the new houses opened. In 1929: Brescia (FSP: 8 August), Udine (FSP: 17 September), Genova (FSP: 25 November), Palermo (FSP: 28 November). In 1930: Novara (FSP: 10 May), Treviso (FSP: 27 June), Ancona (FSP: 10 July), Bologna (FSP: 20 July), Sanfré (SSP: 15 September), Napoli-Capodimonte (FSP: 8 October). In 1931 the foundations in Italy were about ten.

<sup>360</sup> In 1931, the departures of some Paulines for Brazil, Argentina and United States took place as well as of the Daughters of St. Paul and the Pious Disciples for Brazil and Argentina.

<sup>361</sup> In the February issue of UCAS, among the news from the Mother House in Alba, it is affirmed: “The month of January – It is dedicated by the Casa to Jesus Master and the Primo Maestro at the hour of adoration done on day 3 told us that in the month of January we ought to obtain the grace of growing, of going forward and of progressing, *donec formetur Christus in vobis*. The month is consecrated for the youth of Jesus in order to obtain the grace of imitating him in his private life. The Primo Maestro explained to us as follows: to grow for us means to be more saintly, to be wiser, to acquire greater spirit of piety and not only to increase days in life. We are the disciples and as such we must imitate the master who told us, *quemadmodum ego feci ita et vos faciatis*” (*Unione Cooperatori Apostolato Stampa*, year XV, no. 2, February 1932, p. 3).

# PRESENTATION

The *Introduction* with which this book opens is intended to facilitate the approach to DF placing it in close relationship with the life, the thought of Fr. Alberione, and with the development of the evolving Pauline Family.

This *Presentation* is now intended to synthetically outline the general *structure* of DF, and to offer some considerations on the *content* of each of its parts.

## 1. Structure of the *Donec formetur Christus in vobis*

Both in the manuscript and the printed edition Fr. Alberione makes use of the terms “part” or “period” to indicate the structure of the DF, but always related to the three ways: of Purification, of Illumination, of Union.

In fact, anticipating the content of the Way of Purification, he affirms: “In the first *part*, I shall consider...” (DFst 15). At the end of this part, instead, he writes: “Conclusion of the first *period*, which is the meditation on the Theology of the Heavenly Father” (DFst 36). To indicate the fruit of the Way of Illumination, he asserts: “This *period* must bring to us Jesus Christ” (DFst 37). Then, He concludes the same Way of Illumination by presenting the *Doctrine of St. Paul*, with the subtitle “Conclusion of the II Part” (DFst 63). In the general *Conclusion*, finally, both the Way of Purification and the Way of Illumination are designated as “parts” (DFst 99).

The *Contents* of the DF bears, all in capital letters, the following titles: Preamble, Way of Purification, Way of Illumination, Way of Union, Means of Grace, Press Apostolate, Useful Notions.

Thus the question arises: what is the work’s structure, or, how many parts make up the DF?

In reply, the analysis of the three points of the *Conclusions* (DFst 99-100), with which Fr. Alberione summarizes the course presented in the work, is decisive.

Although in the third point of these *Conclusions* the word “part” is not explicitly found, if the implicit references to the whole book were kept present, it clearly emerges that the parts of the DF are three: Theology of the Father-Way of Pu-

rification; Theology of the Son-Way of Illumination and Theology of the Spirit-Way of Union.

If the passage from the first to the second part does not require special clarifications, the second and the third and the articulation between them appear more complex.

It is affirmed that the second part has as its purpose the “vivit vero in me Christus” (“Christ lives in me”) (Gal 2:20) and its fruit also is indicated: “Fruit of the second part choices: vocation; or manner of following it up; or a particular point” (DFst 99). This same thought is expressed in the Preamble: “*For the future*: to conclude: with conscious and efficacious renewal of the baptismal vows; or with the choice of state of life; or with the special manner of our salvation and sanctification” (DFst 10).

Only a profound knowledge of the itinerary of the *Ignatian Exercises* allows the interpretation of this theme of choices as fruit of the Way of Illumination,<sup>1</sup> inasmuch as at the base of the three ways of the DF is found the dynamics of the four Weeks of the Exercises: Way of Purification – 1<sup>st</sup> Week; Way of Illumination – 2<sup>nd</sup> Week and 3<sup>rd</sup> Week; Way of Union – 4<sup>th</sup> Week.<sup>2</sup>

For Fr. Alberione, to set up the spiritual work following the “mystical method” proposed by Krieg (cf. DFin 50), or according to the Ways of Purification, Illumination and Union, has, for its purpose, to bind closely together the speculative element, the vital one and the practical dimension.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. A. F. DA SILVA, *Il cammino degli Esercizi Spirituali nel pensiero di Don Giacomo Alberione*, Centro di Spiritualità Paolina, Casa Divin Maestro, Ariccia, 1981, pp. 54-63; A. F. DA SILVA, *Cristo Via, Verità e Vita centro della vita, dell'opera e del pensiero di don G. Alberione*, in AA.VV., *L'eredità cristocentrica di don Alberione*, Edizioni Paoline, Cini-sello Balsamo (Milano) 1989, pp. 263-271; P. SCHIAVONE, *Gesù Maestro Via, Verità, Vita e gli Esercizi Ignaziani*, in *Ibid.*, pp. 340-381.

<sup>2</sup> Fr. Alberione begins his ministry as Spiritual Director of the Alba Seminary by dealing with the subject matter in his meditations. During the first meditation to the Seminarians, he already affirms: “We shall do the Spiritual Exercises at large – the way of purification (to hate sin) – way of illumination (virtues in J. C.) – way of union (the rewards)” (G. ALBERIONE, *LV02*, 27 October 1908, p. 1). In the following day, he concludes the theme of meditation by presenting the dynamics of the four Weeks of the Exercises making use of the expressions of the traditional formula: “Deformata reformare - reformata conformare - conformata confirmare - confirmata transformare” (G. ALBERIONE, *LV02*, 28 October 1908, p. 1).

To present the structure of DF, then, it is necessary to consider that the three parts of this work are not juxtaposed, but are the expression of that labor of synthesis and unification so dear to Fr. Alberione to the point of making him think of an *encyclopedia* project on the Divine Master inspired after the exemplarism of Ernest Dubois.<sup>3</sup>

Let us note, in fact, that aside from the dynamics of the four Weeks of the Exercises, Fr. Alberione has elaborated his thought by setting it up also according to that tertiary and circular process, proper to the divine exemplarism, according to which the first part is considered as the beginning, or the foun-

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<sup>3</sup> It is good to recall that the final draft of the DF took place at the same time with the publication of the *Lezioni di Teologia* by Francesco Chiesa. Such *Lezioni* are inspired in a special way after the divine exemplarism of Ernest Dubois, a fundamental point of reference for understanding the Trinitarian horizon of the entire teaching of Fr. Alberione.

For example, read what Dubois writes to explain his concept of *encyclopedia*: “Furthermore, inasmuch as the first efficient, exemplary and final Cause is the beginning, the means and the end of all its effect, it is necessary that these effects start from it, go ahead according to or about it, and go back to it, and let them be led to the end *in a circular manner*. In fact, every movement that goes back to its beginning without going back to it in a straight line, but uniformly goes ahead around the same means, or center, is a circular motion, that advances inasmuch as it goes back or approaches its beginning, and ends when the circle closes by reaching the same beginning.

“Now, the Divine Trinity is the first Principle, Means and exemplary Cause and final End of the progressive motion of all created things, that are brought to end by imitating in various modes its only Form and by approaching more or less its similarity, and they find beatitude in its own true perfection.

“Hence the doctrine that teaches this divine movement of things is necessarily *encyclopedic*, inasmuch as it is arranged in the manner of beginning, means and end by God according to or around God, and towards God. This is the genuine Encyclopedia (ἐν κύκλῳ παιδεία), or the study in circle, that can be more exactly illustrated with geometric circles, as we have shown in the Appendix of Book II, where we have dealt with the trine order of perfection of all things.

“Hence, the pseudo-philosophers of the XVIII century have erroneously honored with the term Encyclopedia the material and unformed volume of all that can be known that they have gathered without any other order than the succession of the letters of the alphabet, and without any relationship with the exemplar and central Perfection of the divine Form, according to which all things have been formed, and those deformed are reformed and transformed” (E. DUBOIS, *De Exemplarismo divino, seu doctrina de trino Ordine esemplari et de trino rerum omnium ordine exemplato*, in-4°, Cuggiani, t. I, 1899, p. XI).

dation or efficient cause; the second as the means or exemplary cause; and the third as the conclusion or final cause.

If the three ways are seen as unified by a dynamic process, some of the affirmations of the DF may be reconsidered in order to make a further step in the interpretation of its structure.

At the end of the *Preamble*, Fr. Alberione affirms: "Thus shall be formed the righteous man (Purification), Jesus Christ shall change him to Christian (Illumination) in order to become Priest, Religious, Saint through the work of the Holy Spirit (Union)" (DFst 16).

This thought is further developed and clarified in this last passage: "Thereby, the three degrees of humility: a) the first depends on the fact that everything was received from God in the natural order (Theology of the Father); b) the second on the fact that we are, rather, sinners and every human suffering is inadequate to make amends for the least sin, required was the blood of Jesus Christ, of infinite value (Theology of the Son); c) since a new, priestly, religious life ought to be created, there is a continuing need of the Holy Spirit (Theology of the Holy Spirit)" (DFst 28).

From these passages, it appears that if the election of the state of life is an experience located within the Way of Illumination, its realization in the "new, priestly, religious, Christian life" takes place as an expression of the Way of Union.

In this manner, one notices the close relationship between the Way of Illumination and the Way of Union, so that more than as stages clearly defined, one after the other, they are to be considered as concomitant dimensions of a process, for certain aspects, indispensable.

This link between the Way of Illumination and the Way of Union is clearly expressed in the *content* of the DF, inasmuch as the beginning of the considerations regard the Theology of the Holy Spirit, or of grace, is found in the chapters dedicated to the meditation on Jesus Way (DFst 55ff). And we can find the basis of this transposition in the affirmations on the works that are attributed to the Holy Spirit: "a) The Son has proposed his divine truths: the Holy Spirit keeps them, makes them understood and used. b) The Son has obtained the grace, by purchasing it back: the Holy Spirit applies it to us in sanctification, by communicating it to each" (DFst 68).

To these affirmations, it is also good to add what is said regarding actual grace: “Actual grace *adiuvat* (helps) to accomplish those acts above nature: of true penance, of faith, hope, charity, of Christian life in the precepts above the natural law” (DFst 61).

From what we have considered till now, one could see the motive for which, in DF, the theological virtues and the states of life are dealt with in the Way of Union. But before drawing the entire structure of DF, we still need to analyze the placement of the chapters regarding the Church, the Sacraments and the Press Apostolate.

To clarify these points, aside from the dynamics of the Weeks of the Ignatian Exercises and of the tertiary process inspired after exemplarism, we have to take into consideration also the development of the History of Salvation constant in the theological vision of Fr. Alberione: “God wants to be glorified as *Bonus (Good)*, especially: and yet what he did is the divine diffusion of good in order to show him: a) in the creation of things invisible, of things material, of man; b) in the elevation to the supernatural order, in bearing with man, in promising to prepare the Savior’s times; c) in the incarnation, life, death of the Savior: with doctrine, examples, reparation, Church, Sacraments; d) with the effusion of the Holy Spirit in general in the world, the Church; in particular in every soul” (DFst 61-62).

In this description of the economy of salvation, which includes creation, the elevation to the supernatural order, incarnation, redemption, sanctification, we can underline how the Church and the Sacraments have been instituted by Christ and confer graces to the effusions of the Holy Spirit, according to the most efficacious affirmation regarding the Sacraments: “They are born of Calvary, they work through the Holy Spirit” (DFst 73).

The reason with which the Church and the Sacraments fall into the Theology of the Holy Spirit or the Way of Union appears clear then.

The third point of the *Conclusions* allows us, finally, to identify the place wherein the text on the *Press Apostolate* is inserted: “In three ways one walks with Jesus Christ: in the way of the commandments: Christian life; in the way of the

evangelical counsels: religious life; in the way of zeal, life of apostolate... Hence our study is double: that Jesus Christ be formed in us. Cooperation with special resolutions and prayer with the abundance of practices” (DFst 100).

The text takes up again and completes the considerations on the states of life with the purpose of indicating the features of the Pauline life always within the sphere of the Theology of the Holy Spirit or the Way of Union.

A point of crucial importance is to clarify the meaning of the affirmation: “Hence our study is double: that Jesus Christ be formed in us.” This text is not referred to the statement that follows after: “Cooperation with special resolutions and prayer with the abundance of practices.” Instead, it refers to the three ways with which “one walks with Jesus Christ”: Christian life, religious life, life of apostolate. It is for this that Fr. Alberione, after the part “Means of grace,” including the way of the commandments and of the evangelical counsels, introduces the *way of zeal*, through the part dedicated to the *Press Apostolate*.

Finally, let it be noted that in the itinerary drawn in the DF everything converges towards the Way of Union: “Everything is accomplished in the Holy Spirit: just as how the life of Jesus Christ is, thus the life of the Church, that is, the supernatural life of souls is communicated, developed, perfected, consummated in the Holy Spirit” (DFst 100).

Aside from the considerations made till now, in order to draw some conclusions regarding the structure of DF, it is still necessary to distinguish between the structure of the *work*, structure of the *text*, and the structure of the *spiritual journey*.

By the structure of the *work*, we mean the division into parts and chapters. We can say that the DF is composed of five parts: *Way of Purification*, *Way of Illumination*, *Way of Union*, *Means of Grace*, *Press Apostolate*. To these parts are to be added the *Preamble* and the *Useful Notions*. Every part, also the *Preamble* and the *Useful Notions* are subdivided in turn into short chapters.

By the structure of the *text*, we mean the division of the chapters into paragraphs (generally numbered one to three) and in paragraphs.



As regards the structure and the dynamics of the *spiritual journey* of the DF, it is clearly composed of three stages: Way of Purification, Way of Illumination and Way of Union, that have to be considered as the source, the means and the end of the spiritual journey presented therein.

The Way of Union, however, in its turn shows three further articulation that represents its foundation, the means and the end. Fr. Alberione, in fact, has preferred to include in a first block short references to the Theology of the Holy Spirit regarding the Church, and the theological virtues. The second and third blocks mirror the demands of the “dual study” referred to earlier. Thus, in the second block, from the title *Means of Grace*, he has reunited the theme regarding Christian life and religious life. The third block presents the way that was particularly close to the Founder’s heart, that is, the way of zeal or, for the Pauline men and women, the *Press Apostolate*.

Based on all the considerations made, we can now affirm that the election, fruit of the second part, assumes its true feature in the third part, or stage, as sanctity of life (evangelical counsels) and as apostolic mission (Press Apostolate). One can also affirm that the spiritual journey (Way of Purification, of Illumination, of Union) constitutes the fountain or the foundation; the religious life, the application; and the apostolic mission, (press apostolate), the fruit of the Pauline formation.

## 2. Contents of the *Donec formetur Christus in vobis*

The clarifications on the structure of DF, on the levels of work, text and dynamics of the spiritual journey, allow us to be more aware in entering into the *content* of the individual parts of the work.

### a) *Preamble*

The analysis of the first page of the *Quaderno manoscritto* (*Manuscript notebook*) of DF (= DFms) allows us to notice a belabored draft of the start of the Preamble as well as to see that the references to the novitiate are additions made in the last stage of drafting. From the Introduction, however, we know that Fr. Alberione considered the itinerary of the Exer-

cises as the point of reference either for yearly cycles of daily meditations as well as for the period of novitiate.

The Preamble of the DFst has, in some ways, a function similar to that of the *Annotations* of the booklet of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius and, bearing in mind the coordinates of Pauline life, it draws the framework wherein one can undertake the journey of the Exercises: the initial quotations, in Latin, open as if as gates, the Trinitarian sphere wherein the person doing the exercises is invited to union with the withdrawn life of Jesus Christ, gathered in the cenacle of the Holy Spirit, with Mary, Queen of the Apostles, admitted to the experience of St. Paul in the desert. He is called to correspond, as a disciple of Christ, Way, Truth and Life, to the sanctifying action of the Holy Spirit, or, it is grace (“On one hand... grace”) that seeks a reply (“On the other... cooperation”) in an all-embracing cooperation through exercises performed in detail even to the point of “holy excesses,” until the accomplishment of conformation with Christ, that is, until Christ is formed in us.

Five *barrier reefs* are presented. While these mark the possible obstacles, they put in focus the true dispositions for making the Exercises.

Then three frames of reference for the experience of the Spiritual exercises are presented. The point of departure is the *need* to discover one’s own vocation or to constantly renew the choice of one’s state of life (“Need”). The *style* to be kept is that of Jesus of Nazareth (“The School of Nazareth”) and, in his School, the person doing the exercise lives the three stages of the journey. The *finishing line* is the realization of God’s project (“The Key of Life”) that grafts in time the life that shall cross the threshold of eternity.

## b) *Way of Purification*

It is absolutely necessary that we consider that the global theological vision of the whole of DF, and in a special way of the three ways, is expressed systematically in the *Lezioni di Teologia (Lessons in Theology)* by Francesco Chiesa<sup>4</sup> that

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Testimonianza di Mons. Natale Bussi*, in AA.VV., *L’eredità cristocentrica di don Alberione*, op. cit., pp. 397-410.

consider *creation* as work referred by attribution to God the Father; *redemption*, as work attributed to the Son; *sanctification* as work attributed to the Holy Spirit.

Fr. Alberione presents the Way of Purification in 18 chapters, plus a conclusion.

The first chapter presents a meditation on being human before God: “Who is God?... Who am I?”. Two meditations on God the Father as Creator and Provider follow. After these meditations, the exerciser is invited to conduct a review of his adherence to God and to his will.

Starting from the fifth meditation, the exerciser considers the creation of man and of all things and he is called to place himself in perfect attunement with God’s project in the use of all the goods received by him,<sup>5</sup> in view of time and of eternity. After a long series of exercises, he arrives at the transforming moment of reconciliation. A meditation follows, summarizing the journey drawn by the Father who has sent his Son as Master and concludes with the prospect of continuing the journey towards holiness that consists in “incarnating God in us.”

### c) *Way of Illumination*

The DFst presents the Way of Illumination in 26 chapters, generally homogeneous although some are longer than the others and have a special structure, thanks to the recourse to asterisks for separating paragraphs.

In the first chapter, the exerciser finds himself before Christ and, in order to answer to the question, “Am I saved?” he recurs to the Gospel parables. We have here a clear similarity with the Ignatian journey which, in the second week, proposes the parable of the Kingdom. Rather, this similarity is extended to the whole of this part or period inasmuch as the DFst presents the meditation of the mysteries of the life of Christ, Way, Truth and Life, starting from the Incarnation.

Particularly significant is the prayer *To the Divine Master*, inspired after the Pauline “I thrust forward,” or, after the

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. DFst 23. It concerns the decision to offer to God one’s self, inspired after the *Principle and foundation* of the *Ignatian Exercises*, interpreted the Pauline manner.

ceaseless search for a continuing growth. This prayer can be considered as corresponding to the prayer of offering of the second week of the Exercises of St. Ignatius, inspired after the Ignatian dynamic principle of “ever more” and “ever greater” (“magis” or “ad maiorem”).<sup>6</sup>

The development of the Way of Illumination follows the itinerary indicated in the opening, after the title of the prayer “Master, your life draws the way for me, your doctrine confirms and sheds light to my steps; your grace sustains and supports me in the journey to heaven” (DFst 39).

In fact, the chapters concerning Jesus Way propose the contemplation of the mysteries of the life of Christ (“your life draws the way for me”): birth, private life, entrance to the public life. Christ is considered as Way to the young and model for discerning and accomplishing God’s will.

The chapters dedicated to the contemplation of Jesus Truth (“your doctrine confirms and sheds light to my steps”) present Him as the Master and propose the adherence to Him through the growth in *Sacred Science*, the study of the *Sacred Scripture* and attachment to *Tradition*.

Finally, the chapters dedicated to Jesus Life, after the contemplation of the “kingly way of the Holy Cross,” presents Jesus as the communicator of the Spirit and of Grace (“your grace sustains and supports me in the journey to heaven”), through the paschal mystery, the mystery of death and resurrection and of Pentecost. Special attention is put on the commitment to correspond to grace through prayer and to let one’s mind, heart and will be transformed by work of the medicinal grace. The stage concludes with a summary look at the history of salvation, understood as the “*Diffusion of the divine Goodness*,” and with a synthesis of the spiritual journey under the light of St. Paul’s teachings.

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<sup>6</sup> “Eternal Lord of all things, to you I make my offering, with your favor and help, before your infinite goodness, and before your glorious Mother and all the saints of the heavenly court: I want and I desire and it is my firm resolve, in greater service and praise to you, to imitate you in bearing all the injustices and every humiliation and every sort of poverty, actual or spiritual, whatever your most holy majesty wants to choose for me and to receive me for such a state of life” (IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA, *Spiritual Exercises*, no. 98).

#### d) *Way of Union*

In the examination of the structure of the DFst it has been noted that the Way of Union, from the point of view of the dynamics of the spiritual journey, includes also the parts regarding the *Means of Grace* and the *Press Apostolate*.

On the level of the work's structure, the part that bears the title of *Way of Union* includes, as it has been pointed out, some references to the theology of the Holy Spirit, the meditations on the Church, and on the theological virtues.

From the point of view of the experience of the Exercises, it is good to emphasize that these meditations are destined to characterize life in the Spirit as gift and strong commitment to communion and participation, expressions of the "sentire cum Ecclesia". This stretch of the journey can be summarized as life in Christ and in the Church: *in Christ*, Truth, Way, Life, and *in the Church*, that is Truth, Way, Life. Thereby the adherence to the Church requires: "a) faith in her doctrines; b) obedience to her laws; c) love for what she loves and what matters to her" (DFst 68).

#### e) *Means of Grace*

The content of this part reflects the evident centrality of the Eucharist, understood as Mass, Communion and Visit. The exerciser is brought to live the sacramental life and the life of prayer, by nourishing himself with Christ Truth, Way, Life. And Christian life formed by this new resolution, or "Way-truth-life method" can mark with its imprint every state in life, especially the Pauline life, called to be for the world, through the evangelical counsels and the Press Apostolate, a manifestation of Christ Master Way, Truth and Life.

#### f) *Press Apostolate*

It is necessary to consider the content of this part, on the *Press Apostolate*, under the light of the *Introduction* of this edition, and from the point of view of the articles published contemporaneously with the DFst, in the periodicals of the Casa and eventually collected in the book *Apostolato Stampa*.<sup>7</sup>

The analysis of the aforementioned book allows one to see

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<sup>7</sup> G. ALBERIONE, *Apostolato Stampa*, Pia Società San Paolo, Alba, 1933.

clearly the relationship of this fifth part with the other parts of the DFst, and also to integrate its content, especially as regards the aspects of Christ Way, Truth and Life and the Pauline religious consecration that characterize “to thirst for souls with St. Paul”<sup>8</sup> and for his attachment to Mary, Mother, Teacher and Queen of the Press Apostolate.

g) *Useful Notions*

Starting with the *Theological Virtues* these *Useful Notions* deal with life in the Spirit and with the *Norms for the Spiritual Exercises and for the Novitiate*.

Fr. Alberione’s considerations on life in the Spirit follow a precise and well structured vision of the action of grace. Charity, spread in the hearts by the work of the Holy Spirit, forms three diffusions: brings light with the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, warms with the seven gifts of the twelve fruits of the Spirit and transforms with the eight beatitudes.<sup>9</sup>

The “norms for the spiritual Exercises,” indicated as valid also for the Novitiate, show the Alberione vision of the Spiritual Exercises, and they let us understand that in his interpretation, such Exercises, so that they may bring about “immense” abundance of “grace and light” (DFst 106), are to be guided preferably in a personalized form.

ANTONIO F. DA SILVA

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<sup>8</sup> G. ALBERIONE, *Apostolato Stampa*, op. cit., pp. 32-33.

<sup>9</sup> “The Theological virtues of faith, of hope and of love, insofar as HABITS, are a way and a determination of sanctifying grace; and inasmuch as ACTS, they are species of the actual graces of illustration, of affection and of inspiration.

“The grace is further explicitated in the SEVEN GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, which can be considered as the seven natural virtues ennobled by grace, or supernaturalized, that is, directed to the acquisition of eternal life.

“The gifts of the Holy Spirit together with the Theological virtues produce certain marvelous effects that are called FRUITS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. They, according to the Apostle Paul are TWELVE, and they correspond to the demands of the ordering of the human soul in itself and in relation to things outside itself, or over, or under or on its sides.

“Finally the grace has a marvelous explicitation in the EIGHT EVANGELICAL BEATITUDES, that are as if acts with which the false beatitudes of the world are contended with and so that one could enjoy even in this world a certain happiness, prelude to the perfect happiness of the future life” (F. CHIESA, *Introduzione all’Ascetica*, Alba-Roma, 1929, pp. 163-164).

G. D. P. H.<sup>1</sup>

# **DONEC FORMETUR** **CHRISTUS IN VOBIS**

*Filii mei, quos iterum  
parturio, donec for-  
metur Christus in vo-  
bis. (Gal. IV, 19)*<sup>2</sup>

**MEDITAZIONI  
DEL PRIMO MAESTRO<sup>3</sup>**

**A L B A - 1932 - R O M A**  
**PIA SOCIETA' SAN PAOLO**

<sup>1</sup> “Gloria Deo, Pax Hominibus – Glory to God, Peace to men”.

<sup>2</sup> “My children, for whom I am again in labor until Christ be formed in you” (Gal 4:19).

<sup>3</sup> In a copy of the 1932 printed booklet, Fr. Alberione corrected by his own hand this expression with “Appunti di meditazioni ed istruzioni del P. Maestro” (Notes of meditation and instructions of the Primo Maestro). On the meaning of the term “appunti” - “notes” cf. DFin 4 and DFin 220.

**V.o Se ne permette la stampa.** <sup>4</sup>

***Alba, 11 Febbraio 1932***

***Ab. Molino Vic. Gen.***

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<sup>4</sup> Seen and approved for printing.

*Alba, 11 February 1932*

*Ab. Molino Vic. Gen.*



*Anima Christi, sanctifica me.*  
*Corpus Christi, salva me.*  
*Sanguis Christi, inebria me.*  
*Aqua lateris Christi, lava me.*  
*Passio Christi, conforta me.*  
*O bone Jesu, exaudi me.*  
*Intra vulnera tua absconde me.*  
*Ne permittas me separari a te.*  
*Ab hoste maligno defende me.*  
*In hora mortis meæ, voca me,*  
*Et iube me venire ad te,*  
*Ut cum Sanctis tuis laudem te*  
*In sæcula sæculorum. Amen.*

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<sup>1</sup> Soul of Christ, make me holy.  
 Body of Christ, be my salvation.  
 Blood of Christ, let me drink your wine.  
 Water flowing from the side of Christ, wash me clean.  
 Passion of Christ, strengthen me.  
 Kind Jesus, hear my prayer;  
 hide me within your wounds  
 and keep me close to you.  
 Defend me from the evil enemy.  
 Call me at my death  
 to the fellowship of your saints,  
 that I may sing your praise with them  
 through all eternity. Amen.

This prayer is usually placed at the start of the booklet *Spiritual Exercises* by St. Ignatius. For its history, see *Enciclopedia Cattolica*, I, 1341f.

*O Via, Vita, Veritas, o Jesu!*

*Lucens per omnes semitas, o Jesu!*

*Te sequemur, trahe nos / Credulos ac servulos.*

*Te collaudamus / In Te speramus / Amamus Te / Dulcissime, o Jesu!*

*In verbo tuo stabimus, o Jesu!*

*Crucis pugnā pugnabimus, o Jesu!*

*Dediti Ecclesiae / Veritati regiae.*

*Te collaudamus / In Te speramus / Amamus Te / Dulcissime, o Jesu!*

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<sup>1</sup> Our Way, our Truth, our Life divine – O Jesus, our Lord!

On ev'ry path as Light you shine – O Master adored!

Lead us so we shall fulfill,

Through our faith and works, your will.

We praise and bless you, / Our hope confess you!

In love we sing, / Eternal King, / O Master adored!

Your word we'll keep with all our might – O Jesus, our Lord!

The battle of the cross we'll fight – O master adored!

Docile to your Church we'll be,

By your truths led joyously.

We praise and bless you, / Our hope confess you!

In love we sing, / Eternal King, O Master adored!

Not much information on the origin of this hymn is available. In a *Recueil de motets*, edited by Edmond Gabriel, Paris, 1913, p. 23, found in a library in Piedmont, *O Via, Vita, Veritas* is attributed to a certain Benz. We, however, have the testimony of Fr. Paolino Mrcellino Gilli on the adoption of the hymn in the Society of St. Paul: "Perhaps I can tell you when the famous orientation to Christ, Way, Truth and Life began... The spark, as I remember, broke out one beautiful Sunday towards the end of 1922 or the start of 1923... Well, on Sundays after lunch we used to go for walks, then go to study for an hour and another hour of catechism class; at four o'clock there used to be the singing of the Vespers. That time, we were just coming back from the walk, rather, we were still along Piazza Savona, when someone came to tell us to go back in a hurry because there was something new to learn. In effect, that day we did not have study period or class of catechism, but a lesson in music: Fr. Robaldo spent the afternoon to teach us the hymn, 'O Via, Vita, Veritas.' Where they might have found it I do not know; but we learned it and from then on it became the hymn of every moment; and not only the hymn: I can say that, from that moment, everything was brought towards that direction: the visit, prayers, spiritual work, personal formation (mind, will, heart), etc. Everything was measured up on Christ, Way, Truth and Life (Interview by don Giovanni Roatta with Fr. Paolo Marcellino Gilli, in *Camminiamo anche noi in novità di vita*, no. 21, March 1976, pp. 20-21. Cf. G. ROATTA, in *L'eredità cristocentrica di don Alberione*, op. cit., p. 195).

ORATIO SANCTI AUGUSTINI<sup>1</sup>  
qua petitur intima Jesu Christi  
cognitio ac sequela

7

*Domine Jesu, noverim me, noverim Te  
Nec aliquid cupiam nisi Te.  
Oderim me, et amem Te.  
Omnia agam propter Te.  
Humiliem me, exaltem Te.  
Nihil cogitem nisi Te.  
Mortificem me, et vivam in Te.  
Quæcumque eveniant, accipiam a Te.  
Persequar me, sequar Te,  
Semperque optem sequi Te.  
Fugiam me, confugiam ad Te,  
Ut merear defendi a Te.  
Timeam mihi, timeam Te.  
Ut sim inter electos a Te.  
Diffidam mihi, fidam in Te.  
Obedire velim propter Te.  
Ad nihil afficiar, nisi ad Te,*

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<sup>1</sup> PRAYER OF ST. AUGUSTINE

wherein are asked intimate knoweldge and the following of Jesus Christ.

Lord Jesus, would that I know me, that I know you,  
nothing else may I desire but you.  
You may hate me but let me love you.  
Let me do everything for you.  
Humiliate me, but let me exalt you.  
Let me not think of anything else but you.  
Mortify me but let me live in you.  
All that happens let me receive from you.  
Persecute me, but let me follow you,  
and desire ever to follow you.  
Flee from me, but let me take refuge in you,  
so I may deserve to be defended by you.  
Fear for me, but let me fear you,  
that I may be among those chosen by you.  
Distrust me, but let me put my trust in you.  
Would that I may want to obey for your sake.  
To nothing let me be attached but to you,

*Et pauper sim propter Te.  
Aspice me, [ut diligam Te,  
Voca me,] ut videam Te,<sup>2</sup>  
Et in æternum fruam Te. Amen.*

(Indulgence of fifty days each time).<sup>3</sup>

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and let me be poor for you.  
Watch over me that I may love you.  
Call me that I may see you,  
and in eternity enjoy you. Amen.

The exact Latin text of this prayer can be seen in *Enchiridion Indulgentiarum*, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1952, no. 88.

<sup>2</sup> In the printed text the words between square parentheses are skipped.

<sup>3</sup> The prayer is not listed among those with indulgences.

“*Vivit in me Christus.*”<sup>1</sup>

“*Conceptus est de Spiritu Sancto.*”<sup>2</sup>

“*Si quis diligit me, ad eum veniemus.*”<sup>3</sup>

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137-143  
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## The Exercises and the Novitiate<sup>4</sup>

The norms and principles that are given for the Spiritual Exercises are by and large convenient for the Novitiate as well.

The Spiritual Exercises and the Novitiate are *Exercises* of virtues, of pious practices, of divine thoughts,<sup>5</sup> in order to let the old man<sup>6</sup> die and make Jesus Christ<sup>7</sup> live in us.

<sup>1</sup> “Christ lives in me” (Gal 2:20). - Many *Notes* of the present edition are derived from the edition of the DF by Andrea Damino, Roma 1985.

<sup>2</sup> Words from the Apostles’ Creed: “By the power of the Holy Spirit He was born of the Virgin Mary, and became man.”

<sup>3</sup> “If one loves me... we shall come to him.” The complete text: “Si quis diligit me sermonem meum servabit et Pater meus diligit eum et ad eum veniemus – Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and make our dwelling with him” (Jn 14:23). Take note of the Trinitarian character of these three quotes.

<sup>4</sup> Fr. Alberione establishes an equality between the Novitiate and the Spiritual Exercises, but the examination of the handwritten Notebook, that is the basis of *Donec Formetur* (DFms), reveals how the references to the Novitiate consist in short adjustments done later and they are found only at the *Preamble* and in the *Norms for the Spiritual Exercises and for the Novitiate* (DFst 104).

<sup>5</sup> Also at this point on a copy of the printed booklet, Fr. Alberione has added a correction: he substituted “*pensieri divini*” (divine thoughts) with the word “*considerazioni*” (considerations). - Let it be noted that, in spite of the correction, the Founder intended precisely exercises of “divine thoughts,” as it would appear in the following paragraph where the expression was not changed.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Eph 4:20-24; Col 3:9-10.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Gal 2:20. - We can see the primary objective of the exercises together with the proposal of Fr. Alberione in these quotations from St. Paul. It is necessary that man should gradually free himself from the bonds that stop his adherence to the Lord, and work for the better to let Christ live in oneself: to let Christ live... until He *is formed* in the whole person (cf. Gal 4:19).

Thus the mind, the will, the heart purified; we need to exercise the mind in those divine thoughts, in that piety and in those virtues with which we intend to continue our life and enter into eternity.

10 Necessary, in order to align life<sup>8</sup> directly with eternity, is some space of time; for freeing oneself from created | things,<sup>9</sup> and to familiarize oneself with heaven, an intermission between Life and Eternity.

In union with the withdrawn life of Jesus Christ; in the Cenacle of the Holy Spirit with Mary Most Holy; with the life of St. Paul in the desert; doing two things: 1. purification of the past; 2. provisions for the future.

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*For the past:* purification from sin, from affection, from bad root, from punishment, from relics, from the principal defects, from habits.

*For the future:* to conclude: with the conscious and effective renewal of the baptismal vows; or with the choice of the state in life; or with the special mode of our salvation and sanctification.<sup>10</sup>

*Before starting:* a Mass of penance, a Way of the Cross, a day of mortification; preparation of everything: spiritual guide, schedule, environment, internal and external mortification, definition of the goal: Rosary before the Holy Tabernacle.

Before the novitiate a true and genuine Exercises of eight days is made, Exercises that are like the introduction, or the summary to be developed and achieved in the Novitiate itself.

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. the title of the Spiritual Exercises according to St. Ignatius: "Spiritual exercises for winning over oneself and direct one's life without letting it be determined by some disordinate affection (ST. IGNATIUS, *Spiritual Exercises*, no. 21).

<sup>9</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, no. 20.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, nos. 1 and 135ff.

DFin  
41.193

The sanctifying action of the soul lies in our transformation into God “ut homo fieret Deus”<sup>11</sup> through the food Jesus Christ: by nourishing ourselves each day with Jesus Christ way, truth, life. This food from God given to Man: the eating and assimilation of this food is necessary. God has set the table: “compelle intrare”.<sup>12</sup>

11

*On one hand* then, grace: Eucharist, the Gospel (Mass, Communion, Visit); *on another*: cooperation, meditation, examination of conscience, confession, spiritual direction. “Non ego autem, sed gratia Dei mecum,”<sup>13</sup> “Co-operatores enim Dei sumus.”<sup>14</sup>

*Needed*: The examination of conscience done methodically three times a day.

The Communion and visit inspired after the three ends, “Induat te Dominus novum hominem”.<sup>15</sup>

Meditation with the exercises of memory, intelligence, will.

The exercise of mortification thereby training the will to become indifferent to created things; health or sickness, praise or humiliation, wealth or poverty,<sup>16</sup> etc. “Christus non sibi placuit.”<sup>17</sup> Mortification of the intelligence, of memory, of the will of | imagination, of the heart, of external senses. This in detail: thereby these holy excesses and frequent repetition may soon produce

12

<sup>11</sup> The complete statement, quoted other times by Fr. Alberione is: “Factus est Deus homo, ut homo fieret Deus – God made himself man in order that man might become God” (IRENAEUS, *Adv. hær.* III, 19,1).

<sup>12</sup> Lk 14:23: “Make people come.”

<sup>13</sup> 1Cor 15:10: “But by the grace of God I am what I am.”

<sup>14</sup> 1Cor 3:9. The biblical statement is: “Dei enim sumus adiutores – For we are God’s co-workers.”

<sup>15</sup> “May the Lord clothe you with the new man.” Words used in the right of conferring of the religious habit and they allude to Eph 4:24: “And put on the new self.”

<sup>16</sup> Cf. ST. IGNATIUS, *Spiritual Exercises*, no. 23. Cf. DFst 23.

<sup>17</sup> Rom 15:3: “For Christ did not please himself...”

the habit and the death of the old man. “Exuat te Dominus veterem hominem.”<sup>18</sup>

Thus through mortification, one keeps the way Jesus Christ; with the Gospel and meditation, one lives the truth Jesus Christ; with Communion, Visit, Mass, one will have the life Jesus Christ. “Donec formetur Christus in vobis.”<sup>19</sup>

DFin  
219

## For the Novice

The day must include:

1. A meditation of one hour; two Holy Masses with ease for Holy Communion; an hour of Visit to the Most Blessed Sacrament.
2. Three examinations of conscience.
3. Little study and manual work.

\* \* \*

*I Barrier reef:* discouragement. It is generosity that assures the fruit.

*II Barrier reef:* to want to hear and read much. Needed is the exercise of the intelligence, of the will, of examination.

- 13 *III Barrier reef:* The idle trust in God of him who feels a bit fervent: needed instead is much mortification and to begin practicing and living the resolutions that one wants to do for the rest of his life.

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<sup>18</sup> “May the Lord strip you of the old man.” Words that are used in the rite of conferring of the religious clothing. They allude to Eph 4:22: “You should put away the old self of your former way of life.”

<sup>19</sup> Gal 4:19: “Until Christ be formed in you.”



DFin  
32.83

*IV Barrier reef:* the proud trust in ourselves: needed instead are more reflection and prayer: mental and oral and not other pious exercises. Graces are obtained through prayer. Read: *il gran mezzo della preghiera* of St. Alphonsus.<sup>20</sup>

*V Barrier reef:* many souls enter the Exercises unprepared, lukewarm: they are those who, already at the start, do not intend to reach amendment and uprooting of certain weaknesses, vices, habits in life. Perhaps they have all the rest; but not what should count most before God and leave the soul free to run along the path of sanctification.

DFin  
16.48

## Need

The orientation of life towards Heaven is necessary for him who has gone out of the road, for him who does not travel well yet and also for him who walks fast, and for him who has to choose his state in life. Deviations | are easy considering the distraction of the world, of passions, of the demon. Formation is needed thereby we may live in Jesus Christ: donec formetur Christus in vobis,<sup>21</sup> and for a greater reason when one must be also *mould* for others “forma factus gregis ex animo” (I Petri V, 3).<sup>22</sup>

14

Let prayer affect also the sentiment thereby we are excited to confusion.

If the soul finds itself in desolation or in aridity, it shall more broadly do reading and prayer, so that it finds itself well nourished and tasting something. Meanwhile let the soul be humble and serenely wait for divine Mercy.

<sup>20</sup> ST. ALPHONSUS M. DE' LIGUORI, *Del gran mezzo della preghiera*. Per conseguire la salute eterna e tutte le grazie che desideriamo. (*Regarding the great means of prayer*. In order to achieve eternal salvation and all the graces that we desire).

<sup>21</sup> Gal 4:19: “Until Christ be formed in you.”

<sup>22</sup> 1Pt 5:3: “Be an example to the flock”. In the Vulgate the text is in the plural. “Forma facti gregis ex animo – Be examples to the flock.”

## The School of Nazareth

DFin  
21.51  
137-143

*"Donec formetur Christus in vobis."*  
(Ad Gal. IV, 19).

Formation has to be modelled after the Divine Master: thirty years of private life.

Hence, it requires:

1. *Flight*: withdrawal from the world which is a school opposed to that of the Divine Master: trial period, novitiate, temporary profession: solitude and the company of Saints are sought after.
- 15    2. *Internal mortification* of memory, imagination, pride, heart, etc.; *external*: touch, hearing, eyes, taste, smell, following of schedule, program.
3. *Prayer*: "Sine me nihil potestis facere,"<sup>23</sup> hence presence at the Holy Sacraments, devotion to Our Lady, to St. Paul, visit, examination of conscience. The words of St. Paul have a special clearness: "Neque volentis, neque currentis, sed miserentis est Dei" (ad Rom. IX, 16).<sup>24</sup> We need to get into the kingdom of Mercy and place ourselves under such governance and dominion.
4. *Studium perfectionis*: that is, *to want* to succeed in the divine knowledge, in the perfection of the will, in the holiness of life.

DFin  
80

\* \* \*

In the first part, I shall especially take into consideration:

*God my Creator.*

*God my provident Governor.*

*God my loftiest end.*

<sup>23</sup> Jn 15:5: "Without me you can do nothing."

<sup>24</sup> Rom 9:16: "So it depends not upon a person's will or exertion, but upon God, who shows mercy."

From this shall follow especially: humility of heart; docility to the divine will; observance of the commandments; the practice of natural virtues; resolution: *I want to be saved*.

A first sacramental confession.

Thus shall be formed the righteous man (Purification), Jesus Christ shall transform him to a Christian (Illumination) in order that he may become Priest, Religious, Saint, through the work of the Holy Spirit (Union). 16

DFin  
123.172

### **The key of life**<sup>25</sup>

1. In its essence, life is: a preparation for eternity; free preparation, neglected by many: preparation for eternity; supernatural preparation. We prepare our *own* eternity: “*ibit homo in domo æternitatis suæ.*”<sup>26</sup>

Preparation:

2. Of the *mind*, inasmuch as Paradise is vision; of the *will*, inasmuch as paradise is the confirmation of the supreme good, God; of the *heart* inasmuch as heaven is joy; of the *body* destined for resurrection and for the glorious gifts and for the satisfaction of its right desires.

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<sup>25</sup> For the concepts expressed in this chapter, Fr. Alberione draws inspiration from the book *La chiave della vita* (*The key of life*) by Can. Francesco Chiesa, who in the second to the last page of the book condenses these concepts as follows: “It is an inarguable principle that the present life is a preparation for the future. Hence it is necessary that man, in his various parts, should train himself in a manner that he acts by the future life, that he exerts the effort of living, as to his mind, the life of faith; as to his will, a life of obedience and resignation to the divine will; as to his heart, a life of prayer and practices in order to obtain the grace; and as to his body, a life of mortification. The present life must therefore be a life of faith, of obedience, of prayer, and of mortification” (*La chiave della vita*, Alba-Roma, Pia Società San Paolo, 1927, p. 257).

<sup>26</sup> Eccl 12:5: “L’uomo se ne va nella [sua] dimora eterna. – Man goes to his lasting home.” In the CEI version is wanting the adjective *his* on which here weight is intended to be placed.

3. The preparation of the mind is done with faith; the preparation of the will is done by observing the Commandments and in general with doing the divine Will; the preparation of the heart, with grace and the increase of it; preparation of the body, with keeping it subject to reason and faith, and mortifying it with regards to what is illicit.

## Glory to the Father

*“Domine, noverim me, noverim Te,  
Nec aliquid cupiam nisi Te.”<sup>1</sup>  
“Hæc est vita æterna, ut cognoscant  
te et quem misisti.”<sup>2</sup>*

*Who is God?* The necessary being. “Ego sum qui sum”<sup>3</sup> “Tu solus Dominus”:<sup>4</sup> pure spirit: supreme greatness: for knowledge, science, power, eternity, omnipotence, glory, most perfect. No need for anyone, happiest by himself... “My God and my all.”<sup>5</sup>

*Consequence:* a) Admiration: consideration - first part of the visit. b) Perennial, total, praise ab omni creatura (from every creature). c) *Perfect* love “as infinite good, above all things.”<sup>6</sup>

In union with the Three Persons and with the Angels “sanctus...,<sup>7</sup> laudate...,<sup>8</sup> benedicite...”<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> “Lord Jesus, would that I know me, that I know you” (see DFst 7).

<sup>2</sup> Jn 17:3. The complete sentence is: “Hæc est autem vita æterna: ut cognoscant te solum Deum verum et quem misisti Iesum Christum – Now this is eternal life, that they should know you, the only true God, and the one whom you sent, Jesus Christ.”

<sup>3</sup> Ex 3:14: “I am who am.” Cf. page of DFms, *Attachment no. 1*, p. 274.

<sup>4</sup> “You alone are Lord.” Phrase from “Gloria in excelsis Deo”.

<sup>5</sup> Phrase allusive to the words pronounced by the Apostle Thomas: “My Lord and my God” (Jn 20:28).

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Act of love.

<sup>7</sup> Is 6:3: “Et clamabant alter ad alterum et dicebant sanctus sanctus sanctus Dominus exercituum; plena est omnis terra gloria eius – ‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts!’ They cried one to the other. ‘All the earth is filled with his glory’.”

<sup>8</sup> Ps 150:1: “Laudate Dominum in sanctis eius, laudate eum in firmamento virtutis eius – Praise God in his holy sanctuary; give praise in the mighty dome of heaven. Give praise for his mighty deeds.”

<sup>9</sup> Ps 103(102):20: “Benedicite Domino angeli eius, potentes virtute, facientes verbum illius ad audiendam vocem sermonum eius – Bless the

- 18 *Who am I?* A most contingent being: “you are he who is not.”<sup>10</sup> You are nothing, as soul and body, on your own you are nothing, as to being and doing, on your own: most imperfect.

*Consequences:* Humble truth: as to knowledge, power, life, existence: I am nothing.

Life in the right place: in the beginning and end - Respect, honor.

Humility of heart: general fruit.

## God Creator

DFin  
20.54

*He creates the universe:* Supreme dignity and divine power. *The spirits:* beautiful, numerous, destined for a lofty goal. *Material things:* their quantity, variety, order.

What am I among all beings, among the possibilities, among the more perfect, those that take place?

*Creates man:* Crown of visible beings. Image and divine likeness as to soul: “lutum”<sup>11</sup> as regards the body. Capable of being like God, like the beast, like the demon.

The gifts: integrity, grace, knowledge, immortality.

- 19 *The original sin:* Indication of man’s supreme weakness: cause of spiritual ruin:

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Lord, all you angels, mighty in strength and attentive, obedient to every command.”

<sup>10</sup> In the biography of St. Catherine of Siena written by B. Raimondo da Capua (book I, chap. 10), one reads that the Lord appearing to the saint told her: “You know, beloved daughter, who you are and who I am?... *You are she who is not:* instead I, am *He who am.*”

<sup>11</sup> Jb 10:9: “Memento quæso quod sicut lutum feceris me et in pulverem reduces me – Oh, remember that you fashioned me from clay? Will you then bring me down to dust again?”

ignorance, subject to temptations and concupiscence,  
to death and pains;  
to sin;  
explanation of the evils in the world.  
Humility of heart: general fruit.

DFin  
20.55  
69.73  
77.78  
81.82  
91

## God Governor<sup>12</sup>

*“Universa quæ condidit Deus,  
providentia sua tuetur et gubernat  
attingens a fine usque ad finem fortiter  
et disponens omnia suaviter.”*<sup>13</sup>

### *With His law*

a) *eternal*: that necessarily has a purpose; order, direction of every action and movement: “ab æterno ordinata sum.”<sup>14</sup> most wise is each of his orders.

To which I must conform: taking as *supreme law and maximum act of love* the will of God (v. Dresselio “Eliotropo” [Eliotropio]).<sup>15</sup>

b) *natural*: “inasmuch as the eternal law is written in the conscience and mind of every person and thus it becomes natural.” It is for every man easy, unchangeable, necessary.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. page of DFms, *Attachment no. 2*, p. 275.

<sup>13</sup> The statement comes from Vatican Council I (See DENZINGER-SCHÖNMETZER, *Enchiridion Symbolorum*, ed. XXXIV, 1967, no. 3003) and contains small variations: “Universa vero, quæ condidit, Deus providentia sua tuetur atque gubernat, *attingens a fine usque ad finem fortiter et disponens omnia suaviter*”. It could be translated with: “God with his providence takes care of all things that he created and governs them by *extending himself from end to end mightily and governs all things well*.” The part in Italic comes from Wis 8:1.

<sup>14</sup> Prv 8:23: “From of old I was poured forth.”

<sup>15</sup> P. GEREMIA DRESSSELIO, S.I., *La conformità alla volontà di Dio (Heliotropium)*, Alba, Pia Società San Paolo, in 32°, 432 p. The Latin term *heliotropium* means “sunflower”. In his little book of 1627 the German ascetic Dresselius teaches that the fastest way to holiness is to keep one’s eyes fixed on the Eternal Sun in order to do its divine will.

- 20 c) Long examination of conscience on the *commandments* (of natural law, if the circumstance of the sabbath is excepted).

*In order to live as just men: special end of the first part of the Spiritual Exercises.*

## Examination - Instruction

DFin  
43

*The Will of God* is the great sun to which the soul, like the sunflower, has to be always turned.

The will of God: in superiors; in events; in one's inner self. "Doce me facere voluntatem tuam, quia Deus meus es tu" (Ps. 142).<sup>16</sup>

*Commandments.* Here one needs to go through all the commandments to find out how they were observed.

In order to become: Christians, religious, priests, one needs to be human first.

*Natural virtues:* justice, prudence, temperance, fortitude.

Humility of heart: general fruit.

## 21 Our end

DFin  
29.43

*"Momentum a quo pendet  
æternitas."*<sup>17</sup>

1. Yesterday we did not exist: but we were created by God: "Ipse nos fecit et non ipsi nos."<sup>18</sup>

Whereby we may give glory to him on earth.

<sup>16</sup> Ps 143(142):10: "Teach me to do your will, for you are my God."

<sup>17</sup> "The moment (instant, time) on which eternity depends." St. Jerome in his Letters has a similar statement: "A moment lost is the price of eternity."

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Ps 100(99):3: "Know that the Lord is God, our maker to whom we belong." Fr. Alberione, however, wants to underline that "He has made us and we did not make ourselves."



Glorifying him, we would be participants of his happiness in heaven.

2. Today we are! But suspended between two eternities.

Let us choose what we want.

We build it up ourselves.

That of not working for heaven means getting lost. “Homo æternitatis sum”.<sup>19</sup>

3. Because of this, he has given us two order of means: *natural*, that is, intelligence, will, memory, and the external senses, with life, material, social, familial goods; and the *supernatural* means that are faith and the grace wherby we believe and work worthily in view of our supernatural end.

DFin  
29.30  
36.43  
52

## End of creatures

1. To be at the service of man in the service to God on earth in order to obtain eternal beatitude | in praise of God. There are three orders of created things: physical (earth, plants, mass, animals, elements, etc.), that produce physical progress; moral (intelligence, heart, family, social living together, various roles in society); spiritual (sacraments, priesthood, religious life, etc.).

22

2. The use of them makes life good and eternity happy; the abuse of them is eternal ruin. The use of time, of houses, of clothes, of food, etc.; the use of the family, of intelligence, of the heart, of its passions, of

<sup>19</sup> “I am a man of eternity.” It has not been possible to identify the author of this sentence. Cafasso used to say: “First thing then is I am a man of eternity. St. Augustine calls the Christians, beginners, because they are candidates for eternity. *Tirones æternitatis christiani, æternitatis candidati*. Tertullian named the Christian as man made not for this but for the future world: *Christianus est homo non huius sed futuri sæculi*” (G. CAFASSO, *Meditazioni per Esercizi Spirituali al Clero*, a cura di G. Allamano, Tipografia Fratelli Canonica, Torino, 1892, p. 164).

social relations, etc.; the use of the sacraments, of reading and of the Scripture, of the teacher, of the confessor, etc. The abuse of money, of pleasure of the senses, of the inclination for honor; the abuse of the mind, of passions, of freedom, of the family, of social position, etc.; the abuse of the Real Presence, of the occasions for merit, of religious instruction, of grace, etc.

- 23 3. Creatures given to us for what is good can all become *occasions* of abuses especially after the original sin: because of the revolt of things brought by this sin and the revolt of the senses against reason, of this against God, of time against eternity. Because of this we must journey after the example of Jesus Christ, who made the most right *use* of them, | he taught us on this with the word; he earned the *grace* for us.

\* \* \*

1. To be *superiors*<sup>20</sup> not servants of them, through reason, through faith, through grace; according to the will of God.

DFin  
23.73  
81  
137-143

To be *indifferent* to them when they are *indifferent* by their nature: honor, health, ingenuity, life, occupations, etc. St. Paul: scio et humiliari, scio et abundare; et satiari et esurire; et abundare et penuriam pati.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> The concepts regarding the use of creatures come from the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius: "Principle and foundation" – "Man has been created in order to praise, to revere and to serve God, Our Lord, and, through this, save his soul; and the other things on the face of the earth have been created for man and in order to help him achieve the end for which he was created. Thereby, it follows that man must use them inasmuch as they help him towards his end; and so much he abstains from them as much as they are an obstacle to him towards this end. Hence it is necessary to make ourselves indifferent to all created things, for as long as it is granted to the freedom of our free will, and it is not prohibited by it; in such a way that we do not want, on our part, health rather than sickness, wealth rather than poverty, honor rather than dishonor, long life rather than short, and so in all the rest; desiring and choosing only what better leads us to the end for which we were created" (no. 23).

<sup>21</sup> The complete sentence is: "Scio et humiliari, scio et abundare ubique et in omnibus institutus sum: et satiari, et esurire, et abundare, et penuriam

2. Abstain ourselves: from what blocks us: *abstine*, that is, mortification when there are dangers. On our part, let us always prefer poverty, humiliation, humble place. Let us direct: mind, will, memory, external senses.

3. Take what is useful to us: *sustine* and better than one can and possibly more when it contributes to the service to God:

- a) the virtues and gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- b) the means of sanctification: sacraments, Masses, examinations of conscience, visits, meditations, prayer.
- c) schedule, duties of state, life in common.

DFin  
29.43  
123

## Man's true property

24

1. Paradise is our all and only *destiny*: ours because God has created us for it and Our Lord Jesus Christ has reopened for us paradise lost. It is not our end to acquire wealth, honor, pleasures. The whole of creation has the nature of *means* and it has been given us to use; but it shall be taken away and he who looks for it shall be in trouble. Vanitas vanitatum...<sup>22</sup> Inquietum...<sup>23</sup> Instead, Paradise... Simile est regnum cœlorum... inventa una pretiosa... dedit *omnia* et comparavit *eam*.<sup>24</sup>

Simile est thesauro in agro... vendidit *omnia* et *emit* eum.<sup>25</sup>

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pati" (Phil 4:12). The complete translation is: "I know indeed how to live in humble circumstances; I know also how to live with abundance. In every circumstance and in all things I have learned the secret of being well fed and of going hungry, of living in abundance and of being in need."

<sup>22</sup> Eccl 1:2: "Vanity of vanities"

<sup>23</sup> The complete sentence is: "Quia fecisti nos ad te et inquietum est cor nostrum, donec requiescat in te – Because you have made us for yourself, and our heart is restless unless it finds rest in you" (ST. AUGUSTINE, *Confessions*, I, 1).

<sup>24</sup> Mt 13:45f: "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant searching for fine pearls. When he finds a pearl of great price, he goes and sells all that he has and buys it."

<sup>25</sup> Mt 13:44: "The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure buried in a field... goes and sells all that he has and buys that field."

2. It totally satisfies: it is beatific vision, love, joy; thus the mind, the will, the heart shall be satisfied; with accidental enjoyments, also the sensitive part: the *body* glorious, sinlessness, exemption from ills. It shall be *proportionate* to the merits: that is to the love of God and love for souls; it is the only thing *ours* and eternal.

25 3. The thought of Heaven must: detach us from earth and make us use everything as means; make us fervent because “unusquisque mercedem accipiet secundum...”,<sup>26</sup> | prepare for ourselves the desire for heaven, *cupio dissolvi*,<sup>27</sup> and let this desire become the king of desires, producing the fruit of thirst for merits, for perfection, for souls.

## End of God

DFin  
43.81

1. Final end: glory to God. God essentially loves himself by loving the perfection that is in himself and all he created for himself and for his own glory, “*universa propter semetipsum operatus est Deus.*”<sup>28</sup> He is to achieve this through man and by man, on earth with praise and docility of mind and of heart to God; in eternity with perfect knowledge, praise, love of God; that is, through man’s happiness. Thus we have the supreme end and the subordinate end.

2. The more this is achieved, the more perfect is knowledge and love of God. Knowledge of God goes

<sup>26</sup> 1Cor 3:8. The complete sentence is: “Unusquisque autem propriam mercedem accipiet secundum suum laborem – Each will receive wages in proportion to his labor.”

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Phil 1:23. The complete sentence is: “Desiderium habens dissolvi et esse cum Christo – I long to depart this life and be with Christ.”

<sup>28</sup> Prv 16:4: “The Lord has made everything for his own ends.”

from ignorance, from error to thinking like God in Jesus Christ. It is the state of those souls who are always united with God and in him see, judge and arrange everything. Religious instruction, good reading, but more, the infusion of faith, | hope and the knowledge of God work in this state. 26

Bring to perfection knowledge of God; then avoid sin, and also fear serviliter servilis,<sup>29</sup> transform it to filial. Then climb the different steps of the love of God: sadness of sin; benevolence and desire for the Glory of God; pleasure for divine glory and perfection; to live of love of God.

3. One steps up from ignorance, from human knowledge from hatred for mortal, venial sin, from self love: until the knowledge of God, to the pure love of God, a little each day.

Be perfected with the love of Jesus: quis vos separabit a charitate Christi?<sup>30</sup> Nothing! The stairway is Mary who takes grace from God in order to give it to us; from us she takes away self love and puts in its place the love of God.

## DFin **Happiness** 43

1. The heart, the soul long for happiness: complete, that entirely satisfies man, eternal.

2. Now this does not lie:<sup>31</sup> in riches, | in honor, in pleasure, in moral and intellectual goods. In fact, they are finite, temporal. 27

<sup>29</sup> "Purely servile"

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Rom 8:35: "...to separate you from the love of God?" The exact text is "to separate us..."

<sup>31</sup> In the original Italian an obsolete term is used.

3. Foolish is he who disordinately goes after temporal goods: he shall not be satisfied in life; shall be desolate in death; fearful about eternity.

Desire for them inasmuch as they are means for heaven: rather fear them with prudence lest they become snares of perdition.

### **Truth, foundation, order, justice or degrees of humility**

DFin  
20.82  
123  
137-143

1. How is the divine design to share his happiness and to receive praise for it undertaken? Through creation, wherein everything is made from nothing: *we are nothing!* We received everything from God.

*We are sinners.* Here is the proof of man and his fall, destruction of the divine plan. Aside from original sin there also is the actual; because of this we are less than nothing.

28 *We are in extreme need,* because in everything, always, we need light, grace of the Holy Spirit, because only in grace and in divine light there can be | merit, strength, Church, Priesthood, religious state.

2. Thereby: exclude totally vain complacency and vain purposes: “*solī Deo honor et gloria*”,<sup>32</sup> believe rightly; seek, enjoy suffering and humble ourselves in order to make amends with Christ for our sins; remain in state of prayer and habitual *supplications* thereby obtain grace, light, mercy from the Holy Spirit.

3. Thereby, the three degrees of humility: a) the first depends on the fact that everything was received from God in the natural order (Theology of the Father); b) the second, from the fact that we are, rather, sinners and

DFin  
31.47  
79.217

<sup>32</sup> 1Tm 1:17: “To the only God... honor and glory forever and ever.”

every human ill is inadequate to make amends for the least sin, the blood of Christ of infinite value was required for it (Theology of the Son); c) having to create a new life, priestly, religious, Christian, there is the continuous need of the Holy Spirit (Theology of the Holy Spirit).

## Previsions

*“Notum fac mihi, Domine, finem meum.”*<sup>33</sup>

1. Can I know if I will be saved? Absolutely, no; relatively, yes. Because | it can still happen that the sinner gets converted and the just is perverted. Judas and the good thief explain it: “Unus ne desperas, unus ne presumas.”<sup>34</sup> What meritorious deed has not been done will not be found; what good or evil has been done shall remain; God is faithful to him who has done good; God is merciful to the sinner.

29

2. For what reasons? Trust in ourselves, with the consequent lack of prayer, loses and damns also he who already is a saint; trust in God and the consequent prayer saves also the greater sinner.

3. The true enemy is pride that trusts in one's self; the true friend is Jesus Christ and the Cross. Jesus Christ “vita et resurrectio”<sup>35</sup> initium, instead, omnis peccati est superbia.<sup>36</sup> Long examination on pride and on faith.

<sup>33</sup> Ps 39(38):5: “Lord, let me know my end.”

<sup>34</sup> The sentence should be: “Unus ne desperas, alter ne presumas – Let one not despair; the other, not presume.”

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Jn 11:25: “Ego sum resurrectio et vita – I am the resurrection and the life.”

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Sir 10:15: “The beginning of every sin is pride”. The CEI translation in Italian sounds differently: “The beginning of pride is in fact sin.” The *Nuovissima versione* of the Bible published by Edizioni San Paolo translates the passage thus: “Because arrogance begins with sin” (verse 13). The NAB English translation is: “For pride is the reservoir of sin” (verse 13).

## The test

1. Life is a *test*. This is a fundamental and directive concept. Paradise, the supernatural state, is together mercy of God and our reward (or merces = wage). Thus was it for the Angels, thus is it for man. “I placed before you the way of life and the way of death,” “*elige vitam.*”<sup>37</sup>

30      2. *Most brief* test. Face to face with eternity, life is but a moment: *momentaneum et læve æternum gloriæ pondus...*<sup>38</sup> As it was for Judas and for the other Apostles, Cain and Abel.

3. *An only and irreparable* test. We live and die only once. Whoever overcomes the test “*pauci intrans per eam viam,*” he who does not pass it “*multi intrans per viam, quæ ducit ad perditionem.*”<sup>39</sup> Develop the right idea of life; do not let yourself be the object of the *games* of youthful fantasy, nor of the lying world, nor by the impression of things sensible: but be guided only by reason and by faith: “*beatus vir qui cum probatus fuerit accipiet coronam vitæ.*”<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Dt 30:19. The complete text, wherein the two quotes are included, is: “I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. Choose life, then, that you and your descendants may live...”

<sup>38</sup> Cf. 2Cor 4:17. The complete text is: “*Id enim quod in præsentibus est momentaneum et læve tribulationis nostræ, supra modum in sublimitate, æternum gloriæ pondus operatur in nobis*”. That is: “For this momentary light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison.” – In the New Vulgate, the Latin text is a bit different.

<sup>39</sup> Mt 7:13-14. The two Latin phrases are not literally quoted. It means: There are few who find the way that leads to life. Many are those who enter through the way that leads to perdition.

<sup>40</sup> Jas 1:12. The complete sentence is: “*Beatus vir qui suffert tentationem, quoniam cum probatus fuerit, accipiet coronam vitæ* – Blessed is the man who perseveres in temptation, for when he has been proved he will receive the crown of life...”



DFin  
81 **Death**

*"O mors, bonum est consilium tuum."*<sup>41</sup>

1. Death is the end of the test, of faithfulness "euge serve bone et fidelis"<sup>42</sup> "Beatus vir qui suffert tentationem quoniam cum *probatus* fuerit..."<sup>43</sup> The good grain... the weed...<sup>44</sup>

2. Death stirs fear with its | uncertainty: "sicut fur in nocte"<sup>45</sup> "estote parati",<sup>46</sup> certainty in it is the hope of him who lives of the love for the Lord and longs for the motherland, the vision of the Heavenly Father, the reward. 31

3. Death is the logical conclusion of life. The conclusion depends on the premises. The premises do not leave the conclusion as a matter of free choice. He who lives well shall die well; who has sowed shall reap; God is faithful! Hence: live well so to die well! What good has not been done cannot be found again. "Tempus non erit amplius".<sup>47</sup>

In the world, however, there is the thesis of God; "Ego bonus."<sup>48</sup> From here, we see God the Father's disposition while waiting to welcome the sinner. Just as

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<sup>41</sup> "O death, good is your counsel." Allusion to Sir 41:3 where the sentence is a bit different and has another meaning: "O mors, bonum est iudicium tuum homini indigenti - O death! How welcome your sentence to the weak man of failing strength."

<sup>42</sup> Mt 25:23: "Well done, my good and faithful servant."

<sup>43</sup> Jas 1:12: "Blessed is the man who perseveres in temptation, for when he has been proved he will receive the crown of life..." - In the quote, the last part of the sentence is omitted: "accipiet coronam vitæ."

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Mt 13:24-30,36-43.

<sup>45</sup> 1Thes 5:2: "Like a thief in the night."

<sup>46</sup> Mt 24:44: "So too, you also must be prepared..."

<sup>47</sup> Rev 10:6: "There shall be no more time." This is the meaning intended for this phrase. It, however, has a meaning that is quite different, that is: "There shall be no more delay."

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Mt 20:15: "An oculus tuus nequam est quia ego bonus sum? - Are you envious because I am generous?"

he has created us and redeemed us without our merit, so he welcomes in every hour those repentant, also at the last moment.

## Two deaths

1. Death of the sinner and death of the just. “*Pretiosa in conspectu Domini mors Sanctorum ejus.*”<sup>49</sup> “*Mors peccatorum pessima.*”<sup>50</sup>

32      2. This depends on the correspondence as | a whole “*substantialiter saltem*”<sup>51</sup> on the particular will of God for each one and on the careful use of natural gifts and special gifts; or else on the substantial rebellion against the divine will or on their waste and disordinate and obstinate use.

3. A long examination: on the general vocation to one of the three states;<sup>52</sup> on the special vocation in one of the three states themselves; on the gifts and most particular gifts in one’s intimate life; on the sincerity itself of the virtues.

## Time

1. It is the period of trial with succession: in opposition to the motionless state of eternity. It is a compendium

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<sup>49</sup> Ps 116(115):15: “Too costly in the eyes of the Lord is the death of his faithful.”

<sup>50</sup> Ps 34(33):22: “The sinner’s death is worst.” This is the meaning usually given to the sentence. It, however, has a different meaning: “Evil will slay the wicked” (NAB). “È ucciso l’empio dalla sua malizia – The wicked is slain by his sin” (*Nuovissima versione* Edizioni San Paolo): “*Interficiet peccatorem malitia*” (Nuova Volgata).

<sup>51</sup> “At least substantially”.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. DFst 83-85.

and contains: all the natural and supernatural graces: the true treasure of the earth and of the earth alone.

2. Long or short life can be a grace, or danger on man's part depending on his use or abuse.

Time shall be our exaltation or our condemnation: years pass and we shall be accountable to them.

It is most short in comparison with eternity; | almost 33  
an imperceptible quantity; but it establishes and dominates eternity itself.

3. Don't lose it; in doing evil, or in useless things, or in things with no merit, or anxiously. Use it in doing good, with order, with right intention.

## Judgment

With the test over, the assignment is checked.

1. Judgment is: to fall into the hands of the living God.<sup>53</sup> Terrible for the unfortunate, most consoling for the just. In life we have the freedom to act: also physically we can do evil. Given the sample of our humble submission or proud rebellion, we go back to God's hands.

2. *The examination* of life: "Ut reddet unusquisque prout gessit sive bonum sive malum."<sup>54</sup> The book says: what had to be done; conscience: what has been done. Examination of the service to God by the mind, the heart, works. "Iudicium sedit et libri aperti sunt".<sup>55</sup> Will fare well: a) he who is diligent with the examination of

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Heb 10:31: "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

<sup>54</sup> 2Cor 5:10. The exact sentence is: "Ut referat unusquisque propria corporis, prout gessit sive bonum sive malum – So that each one may receive recompense, according to what he did in the body, whether good or evil."

<sup>55</sup> Dn 7:10: "The court was convened, and the books were opened."

conscience; b) he who is most modest in life, and he who attends more to his inner self than the outer. Will fare ill he who does the opposite.

- 34      3. The right, precise, irrevocable *establishment* of our eternity. It is the sentence and the immediate execution: “Serve bone,”<sup>56</sup> “serve nequam,”<sup>57</sup> “Ignem æternum,”<sup>58</sup> “vitam æternam.”<sup>59</sup> Weed and good grain,<sup>60</sup> “elegerunt bonos, malos autem foras miserunt.”<sup>61</sup>

Sentence given according to the use of the talents:<sup>62</sup> the choice of our eternity we do ourselves in life, especially during the first, the second, the third crisis.<sup>63</sup>

**[End of the world]**<sup>64</sup>

## Confession

1. Confession is the first penance, raised to Sacrament. It has two parts: remedy and absolution of the past; medicine and principal means of conversion for the future.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Mt 25:23: “good servant.”

<sup>57</sup> Mt 18:32: “wicked servant.”

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Mt 18:8 and 25:41: “eternal fire.”

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Mt 25:46: “eternal life.”

<sup>60</sup> Cf. Mt 13:24-30, 36-43.

<sup>61</sup> Mt 13:48. The complete sentence is: “Elegerunt bonos in vasa, malos autem foras miserunt – ... (they) put what is good into buckets. What is bad they throw away.”

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Mt 25:14-30.

<sup>63</sup> To understand this expression, then repeated in DFst 44, it is useful to read the following passage of a sermon held by Fr. Alberione in 1936: “Is the Sister good? Wait ten years after her perpetual profession, because there are three crises; the first at fifteen (this you have overcome having entered religion); the second, in the Novitiate (many of you have also overcome this); the third shall come after four or five years of perpetual profession (*Santi Spirituali Esercizi, Istruzioni alle Maestre*, October 1936, Pia Società Figlie di San Paolo, Roma-Alba, p. 6).

<sup>64</sup> It is the first of a series of 12 themes that in the manuscript are found linked on this subject and that are not included in the book. They can be read in the Appendix, at the end of this volume, pp. 263-270.

2. Reconciliation is the universal mission of Jesus Christ: “*veni salvum facere quod perierat*”.<sup>65</sup> Penance is the exercise of each of us of this general ministry. Human beings are all guilty: Jesus is the Reconciler. Penance is the second table of salvation; it restores all merits; gives back the power to meditate, closes hell, opens heaven, cancels away much and even the whole of Purgatory.

3. Two dispositions are principal: sorrow for the past; prayer for the future. Then, important conditions are examination of conscience, confession, resolution and amendment. 35

DFin  
79.123

## **Man hence**

Having emerged from the hands of God in order to glorify him in eternity, man has to go through the trip of trial that is called life. The Father himself has sent his Son, Master, to show, undertake, make himself vehicle of man, thereby man shall be judged if he has made himself conform with such Son: in his mind, in his will, in his life; love being in such conformity; so that he who has loved may continue his love, reward for eternity; he who has not loved may stay away from God for all eternity.

This is so considering the world is the imperfect kingdom of God due to human ills and weeds; eternity being God's perfect kingdom also for man: eternal glorification of God. “*Faciamus hominem ad imaginem et similitudinem nostram*,”<sup>66</sup> and the scarred image of

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<sup>65</sup> Lk 19:10. The complete sentence is: “*Venit enim Filius hominis quærere et salvum facere quod perierat* – For the Son of Man has come to seek and save what was lost.”

<sup>66</sup> Gen 1:26: “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.”

- 36 man, is repaired in the Son of God, and shall overcome the first in beauty | through the Holy Spirit, by the overabundance of grace.

## Conclusion

*of the first period, that is meditation  
of the Theology of the Heavenly Father*

DFin  
81.149  
150.216

a) We come from Heaven; we go to Heaven, let us hold on the only and secure way; if we lose the way let us go to confession; if we already are on the right path, let us speed up our course.

b) In the yearly Exercises the yearly program is set; in the monthly retreats it is reviewed point by point; in the weekly confession it is repaired, it draws light, strength; in the daily examination of conscience, it is checked.

c) To make us saints, incarnate God in us; we need to put in our share: “we with God;” that is: Examination: annual, monthly, weekly, daily: Daily meditation, Direction and confession, thereby giving value to the effort.

“Donec formetur Christus in vobis.”<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Gal 4:19: “Until Christ be formed in you.”

## Glory to the Son

Am I saved?

1. There is he who is saved and there is he who is damned: parable of the ten virgins.

2. Who is saved? Whoever does what is said in the parables: of the treasure hidden in the field, of the precious pearl acquired by giving everything.

3. So that Jesus Christ is incarnated in us, we must:

a) place ourselves in the dispositions of innocence and humility of St. Joseph and of Mary;

b) produce during these days worthy fruits of penance, meditating on the life of St. John the Baptist and moving ourselves to sorrow and mortification.

## Incarnation

1. This period must bring in us Jesus Christ: Truth, Way, Life; thereby emerges | the new man. The supernatural life shall bring about eternal life: “coheredes Christi.”<sup>1</sup>

2. Jesus Christ is truth: for the intelligence: whereby follows the need to study the Christian doctrine, especially the *Gospel*.

Jesus Christ is way: for the will; thereby follows the need to imitate Jesus Christ, take care especially of the *Holy Communion*.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Rom 8:17: “Coheredes autem Christi – Joint heirs with Christ.”

Jesus Christ is life: for the heart, thereby follows the need to clothe ourselves with sanctifying and actual grace, especially with the Holy Mass.

3. From here: divide the hour of adoration into three parts: a) reading of the Gospel and Christian doctrine thereby we honor Jesus Christ Master; b) compare our life with Jesus Christ model and make the examination of conscience; c) prayer, especially that which prepares for the Holy Mass (Way of the Cross, Sorrowful Mysteries).

### 39 To the Divine Master

DFin  
46.49  
98-102  
123  
132-133  
137-143  
149.152  
165.166  
168.169  
173.176  
178.219

*Master: your life traces for me the way; your doctrine confirms and sheds light on my steps; your grace sustains and supports me in the journey to heaven. You are the perfect Master: who gives example, teaches, and comforts the disciple to follow you.*

*“Sic Deus dilexit mundum ut Filium suum unigenitum daret, ut omnis qui credit in ipsum non pereat, sed habeat vitam æternam.”<sup>2</sup>  
“A Deo Magister veniet” (Io. III, 22-36).<sup>3</sup>*

1. O Master, you have words of eternal life: to my mind, to my thoughts substitute You yourself, O You who enlighten every man and you yourself the truth: I do not want to reason out other than how you teach, nor do I want to judge other than with your judgments, neither to think other than You substantial truth, given by the Father to me: “Live in my mind, O Jesus Truth.”

<sup>2</sup> Jn 3:16: “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life.”

<sup>3</sup> The quotation is not to the letter and the text is not precise. Cf. Jn 3:2: “A Deo venisti magister – You are a teacher who has come from God.”



2. Your life is precept, *way*, the only security, infallible. From the Crib, from Nazareth, from Calvary, everything is a drawing of the divine life: of love to the Father, of infinite purity, of love for soul, to Sacrifice... Make me know it, make me place, each moment, my feet on the footprints of poverty, chastity, obedience: every other way is broad... not yours: Jesus, I ignore and detest every way not marked by You. What | You want, I want: establish your will at the place of my will.

40

3. To my heart, substitute yours: to my love for God, for neighbor, for myself, substitute yours. Let your divine life, most pure, above all nature, substitute my sinful human life. “Ego sum vita.”<sup>4</sup> Thus, in order to place You in me, I shall take all care for Communion, for the Holy Mass, for the Visit to the Most Holy Sacrament, to devotion to the Passion. And may this life manifest itself in works “ita ut vita Christi manifestetur in vobis,”<sup>5</sup> just as how it happened with St. Paul “vivit in me Christus.”<sup>6</sup> Live in me, O Jesus eternal Life, substantial life.

DFin  
24.46

## Jesus Way

51.114  
155.171  
185

1. Jesus is the *way* to glory, or ultimate end. The way to heaven was lost due to men's doing: while in search for happiness, they were following it in avarice, in pleasure, in vanity: ways that lead to eternal error. Jesus taught us to follow it in humility, in poverty, in mortification. “In him alone can we conveniently adore, thank, propitiate, pray to the Father.”

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Jn 14:6: “I am the life.”

<sup>5</sup> 2Cor 4:10: “Ut et vita Iesu in corporibus nostris manifestetur – So that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our body.” Or else, 2Cor 4:11: “Ut et vita Iesu manifestetur in carne nostra mortali – So that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh.”

<sup>6</sup> Gal 2:20: “Christ lives in me.”

- 41 2. Jesus is the way: he affirmed it: “ego sum via,<sup>7</sup> *discite a me*,<sup>8</sup> *exemplum dedi vobis*,”<sup>9</sup> etc. The Heavenly Father proclaimed it: “this is my beloved Son”<sup>10</sup> that is, he pleases me. His life was most holy that it brought to the greatest glory “propter quod Deus exaltavit illum.”<sup>11</sup> *sedet ad dexteram Patris*.”<sup>12</sup>

3. Two consequences: Jesus is model for all, easy, divine: “*sumum igitur studium nostrum sit in vita Christi meditari.*”<sup>13</sup>

\* \* \*

“*Notam fac mihi viam qua ambulem*” (Ps 142).<sup>14</sup>

Contemplation of the crib:

Became a Baby - homo factus

Circumstances of his birth:

Poverty, humility, mortification are documents for entering the school of Jesus.

\* \* \*

Jesus entrusted to Mary Most Holy and to St. Joseph:

Jesus submitted himself entirely.

He let himself be formed.

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<sup>7</sup> Cf. Jn 14:6: “I am the way.”

<sup>8</sup> Mt 12:29: “Learn from me.”

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Jn 13:15: “I have given you a model.”

<sup>10</sup> Mt 3:17.

<sup>11</sup> Phil 2:9: “Because of this, God greatly exalted him.”

<sup>12</sup> “Is seated at the right hand of the Father.” Words from the *Creed*. Cf. Heb 1:3.

<sup>13</sup> “Therefore our greatest concern has to be that of meditating on the life of Jesus Christ” (*Imitation of Christ*, book I, chap. I, no. 1). – Take note that in the Latin text, instead *in vita Christi*, we read *in vita Iesu*.

<sup>14</sup> Ps 143(142):8: “Let me know the way to follow.” Cf. page of DFms, *Attachment no. 3*, p. 276.

This is the way: esteem, love, submit oneself to Mary Most Holy.

- DFin 33      a) with prayers, with imitation, with perfect devotion;      42  
               b) make for ourselves and live in a spiritual environment: St. Joseph, the Holy Protectors, the Angels, St. Paul, the Souls in Purgatory.

\* \* \*

Private life:

Takes 30 of 33 years: hence importance 10 against one.

He grew in age, wisdom and grace.

It is a mysterious chain of obedience, of prayer, of sacrifice, of domestic virtues.

\* \* \*

Entrance to public life:

How he leaves behind everything: mother, house, occupations.

With fasting, baptism, overcoming temptations, winning over first the hearts.

He enters it by associating contemplative with active life.

\* \* \*

Public life:<sup>15</sup>

- DFin 146      *Perfect correspondence* to his vocation: to teach to the poor the Gospel, to establish the Church, etc.

*Predilection and redemption* of sinners, for the Apostles, for the little ones: “pauperes evangelizantur.”<sup>16</sup>      43

<sup>15</sup> Cf. page of DFms, *Attachment no. 4*, p. 277.

<sup>16</sup> Mt 11:5: “And the poor have the good news proclaimed to them.”

*Perfect* interior and exterior *dispositions*: the glory of God alone, continuous interior life, love for souls and for bodies, virtues of mortification, of meekness; perfect gentle fortitude, perfectly ardent prudence, perfectly charitable justice, perfectly superior temperance.

### Jesus Way for the Youth

DFin  
15.110  
155.185  
190

1. Youth is the decisive time for life; the period that has the most serious consequences for eternity; and its education, the true secret for the Church and society; the most difficult and easiest period, under different aspects.

44 2. The Master made himself young for the youth, dedicating to it 30 years of the 33 of his life: as *model* of the youth in obedience and in complete progress; as *way* with virtues and sustained sacrifices thus acquiring the graces for such age; as truth, by elevating education, exalting the young, threatening scandals: “sinite parvulos venire...”<sup>17</sup> Nisi efficiamini...<sup>18</sup> Væ mundo a scandalis...<sup>19</sup>”.

3. Regard highly the youthful years: your sight fixed on the Divine Master: invoke special assistance for the three crises;<sup>20</sup> first honor the Master, child, young man, youth.

### Jesus Way of merit

DFin  
45.58  
108.155  
171.172  
185.190

1. Jesus is model in doing the Lord’s will. The Divine Will: one kind is as if a signal; another is as if permission. To do the will of God is perfection; to do

<sup>17</sup> Mt 19:14: “Let the children come to me.”

<sup>18</sup> Mt 18:3: “Unless you turn and become like children...”

<sup>19</sup> Mt 18:7: “Woe to the world because of things that cause sin!”

<sup>20</sup> Cf. above, DFst 34, note 63.

the will of God is true Love for the Lord; to do the will of God is the most secure way.

2. Thus did Our Lord Jesus Christ: his entire life is a thesis, whose title summarizes the whole: “In capite libri scriptum est de me, ut faciam voluntatem eius qui misit me.”<sup>21</sup> That is, the life of Jesus Christ can be summarized under this title: “Life of him who *perfectly* did the will of God.” “Cibus meus est ut faciam voluntatem eius qui misit me.”<sup>22</sup> “Quæ placita sunt ei facio semper.”<sup>23</sup> “Consummatum est,”<sup>24</sup> he said while concluding his mission on the Cross.

3. Maximum principle: just as we ought | to admit a God distinct from us, so must we admit a divine will in this God that governs us because he is: Creator, Lord, End. Hence let us not have our own will, but let there be the divine will in every thing. Our will has been given to us to choose the Divine will: always, in everything, with full adherence and humility. 45

DFin  
45.58  
97.108  
155

### In purity of intentions

1. In order to be acceptable to God, works must be: “bonum ex integra causa;”<sup>25</sup> that is good in themselves, with right intention, with one in the state of grace, undertaken with perfection.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Heb 10:7 and Jn 5:30. Approximate quote. The complete sentence is: “Ecce venio; in capite libri scriptum est de me, ut faciam, Deus, voluntatem tuam – As is written of me in the scroll, behold, I come to do your will, O God.”

<sup>22</sup> Jn 4:34: “My food is to do the will of the one who sent me.”

<sup>23</sup> Jn 8:29: “I always do what is pleasing to him.”

<sup>24</sup> Jn 19:30: “It is finished.”

<sup>25</sup> Philosophical principle. “So that one thing may be good, it must be whole (or perfect) in all its parts (or components)”. “Malum ex quocumque defectu – For one thing to be bad, it’s enough that a part is missing,” and that is: that it be wanting of one part only.

Right intention is that which goes straight to God, without twists and turns: for his glory, in order to accomplish his will! The struggle is always between the I and God; the *I* that wants to be enthroned as Lucifer beside God. The I of one's own will, the I of counting on ourselves, the I that makes ourselves as the end. On the other hand, we must depend on God; count on God, aim at God.

46 2. Our Lord Jesus Christ had his gaze fixed only on the Father: not on his own glory. In fact: in his works he encountered numerous humiliations, till the humiliation of the Cross. Life opens as a thesis "Gloria in excelsis Deo,"<sup>26</sup> and closes with the bowing of his head to death. "Ego non quæro gloriam meam,"<sup>27</sup> "Pater, clarifica teipsum,"<sup>28</sup> "quæro gloriam ejus qui misit me."<sup>29</sup>

3. Right intention is assumed: a) by condemning a priori every vanity; b) explicitly addressing everything to the Lord; c) expiating for every vain intention.

\* \* \*

1. Third condition in order that an act is meritorious: state of grace. Grace means friendship, intimacy with God. There is the first grace, the second grace, the thousandth grace, that of the Virgin Mary. It is the greater treasure: the least degree of grace is more than all the material, moral, intellectual goods of the world: it belonging to a superior order. What is totally good is that of living in grace; totally evil, that of falling into disgrace before God.

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<sup>26</sup> "Glory to God in the highest" (*from the Liturgy*, cf. Lk 2:14).

<sup>27</sup> Jn 8:50: "I do not seek my own glory."

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Jn 12:28: "Pater clarifica nomen tuum – Father, glorify your name."

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Jn 5:30: "Quæro... voluntatem ejus qui misit me – I do not seek my own will but the will of the one who sent me."

2. Our Lord Jesus Christ lived in the most intimate union with God. The person of Jesus Christ is the second person of the Most Holy Trinity: and who can speak of the supernatural intimacy between the Father and the Son? Here we are face to face with a contemplation, more than a meditation. The Son who is one | with the Father: “ego et Pater unum sumus.”<sup>30</sup> He who knows the Son, knows the Father; how deep is the unity! Here the state of grace is overtaken, ennobled to an infinite degree by the Unity in the Trinity of God. 47

3. a) Grace is always endangered; hence, fear, prayer, vigilance. b) Grace can grow each day till the sublime perfection of the saints. c) The degree of grace marks the degree of eternal glory.

DFin  
45.58

108.155

## Perfection

1. The fourth condition: that the work be done well. It means, it is dutifully started, continued and ended. Also Communion, even the Mass, ought to be thus accomplished; otherwise, they are wanting. So it is with studies, apostolate, also the less important activities, all.

2. It was thus that the Divine Master worked: the Holy Gospel leaves no doubt about it: “bene omnia fecit;”<sup>31</sup> we understand that the “omnia” means: public life, individual, family; it embraces the exterior and interior; his relationships with the Father and with the Holy Spirit and with human beings. In a special manner we can contemplate how he performed the Last Supper according to all the prescriptions, | how he preached, how he behaved with Judas, how he accomplished the sacrifice on the Cross. 48

<sup>30</sup> Jn 10:30: “The Father and I are one.”

<sup>31</sup> Mk 7:37: “He has done all things well.”

3. How to *begin*: offer everything to God, accept everything from God's hand, start well, immediately, willingly; *continue*, under the gaze of God, with gentle application, with energetic constancy; *end* humbly, completing everything.

## Jesus Way

1) Jesus Christ model-way. With man having lost the way to heaven, the Father sent the Son to mark it for us, with deeds, more than with words. Coepit facere.<sup>32</sup> Divine Way, Perfect. DFin 111-112 155.171 181.185

2) We have to model ourselves after him: St. Paul says: "quos præsavit et prædestinavit conformes fieri imagini Filii sui."<sup>33</sup> The Father says: "Hic est Filius meus dilectus, in quo mihi bene complacui."<sup>34</sup> Jesus said: "Discite a me."<sup>35</sup> "Exemplum dedi vobis, ut quemadmodum ego feci, ita et vos faciatis."<sup>36</sup> His virtue was perfect.

49 3) a) to imitate a saint is good; to imitate Our Lord Jesus Christ is an obligation of all, rather, a need for us. Jesus is model for all ages, conditions, times, b) the Gospel ought | to be the first reading material, the first knowledge of all: thus no other spiritual reading is more important.

<sup>32</sup> "He started doing." Cf. Acts 1:1: "Quæ coepit Iesus facere et docere – All that Jesus did and taught."

<sup>33</sup> Rom 8:29: "For those he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son."

<sup>34</sup> Mt 17:5: "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

<sup>35</sup> Mt 11:29: "Learn from me."

<sup>36</sup> Jn 13:15. The text is: "Exemplum enim dedi vobis, ut quemadmodum ego feci vobis ita et vos faciatis – I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do."



DFin  
104.110  
156.184

## Jesus Truth

1. The divine infancy: what childhood might be and the duties towards it. The need to be little in order to have divine consolation, the wealth of graces, paradise. “Et vos debetis alter alterius lavare pedes”<sup>37</sup> (St. Therese of the Infant Jesus - Gemma Galgani - St. John of the Cross - St. John the Evangelist - St. John the Baptist).

2. The divine role of pain: a) *in its origin*: to make amends for sin, a necessary trial, co-redemption. b) *In the manner of suffering*: “per ipsum, cum ipso, in ipso.”<sup>38</sup> c) *The doctrine of grace* or transformation in Jesus Christ out of which the mystical body comes to be: “Qui manet in me... sine me...”<sup>39</sup> vivit in me Christus.”<sup>40</sup>

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98-102  
111-112  
156.173  
174.175  
184

## Jesus Truth

1. I am the truth.<sup>41</sup> That is, the truth on the nature of man and of his destiny; on the nature of God and his attributes; on the nature of religion and on our | duties. He came to explain to us the natural sciences. He, however, confirmed the truths found out by philosophy; he corrected the ancient errors; many truths he added; many he confirmed.

50

2. He said it: I am the truth.<sup>42</sup> the teaching is not mine, it is of Him who sent me.<sup>43</sup> He confirmed it: If you do not

<sup>37</sup> Jn 13:14: “You ought to wash one another’s feet.”

<sup>38</sup> “Through him, with him, in him.” Final doxology of the Mass (cf. also Rom 11:36).

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Jn 15:5: “Whoever remains in me... without me...”

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Gal 2:20: “Christ lives in me.”

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Jn 14:6.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Jn 7:16.

want to believe in me, believe in what I do:<sup>44</sup> tell John: “The blind see, the deaf hear, the dead rise again and the Gospel is preached to the poor.”<sup>45</sup> The disciples believed in him; the world: “Ad quem ibimus? verba vitæ æternæ habes”.<sup>46</sup> and the disciples call him “Master” for 28 times, with as well the Father proclaiming him so.

3. We must follow this supreme Master: because he is the *only one*: “Magister vester unus est,”<sup>47</sup> the others are Masters insofar as they conform with him; because he has the most beautiful *method of education*, because he is God; and thus we shall have the grace of doing what he teaches and we shall please the Father for the life of the *mind*. “Ex fructibus eorum cognoscetis eos”.<sup>48</sup>

## Jesus Truth

DFin  
111-112  
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- Unheard of truths, new to the world, eternal truths.<sup>49</sup>  
Meaning of each one.  
51 Correct the entire manner of thinking, feeling, life.

\* \* \*

Discourse on the mountain:

The perfections of charity and of the virtues indicated by Jesus on the old law.

The sanctification of the spirit and of the heart.

The essence of the Priesthood.

Two characters: need for salvation; need for humility.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Jn 14:11.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Lk 7:22.

<sup>46</sup> Jn 6:68: “Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.”

<sup>47</sup> Mt 23:10: “You have but one Master.”

<sup>48</sup> Mt 7:20: “So by their fruits you will know them.”

<sup>49</sup> Cf. page of DFms, *Attachment no. 5*, p. 278.

DFin

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33.50

114.156

171.175

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## Sacred Science

1. Sacred Science is the complex of truths that regard God's honor and the salvation of souls. It is the complex of doctrines that the Church, its guardian and depository, draws from the Revelation (Sacred Scriptures and Tradition) in order to communicate to us. It is God's wisdom.

2. We must set all our studiousness on it: because it is of universal need, because it is the most certain, because it perfects our mind, because it constitutes the first love of God, because it makes us foresee the occupation of heaven, because we must communicate it with the word and through writing.

3. It must be the first that all of us must seek: it must be the first criterion, according to which we shall study, judge, regulate life; it must be learned with all humility. 52

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26.33.47

111-112

114.146

147.156

159.160

165.171

180.191

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## The Sacred Scriptures

1. The Sacred Scriptures are the Bible, that is the book par excellence and this, because it gathers together, guides, goes beyond knowledge, is concerned about the destinies of man and about the Divinity, excels over other books. It is the first source from where the Church draws her teachings. It is the *Epistola Dei ad homines*<sup>50</sup> in order to invite them to heaven and to teach them the way. It includes 72 books, written in the span of 2000 years, divinely inspired; with a marvelous agreement, divided into two testaments wherein one fulfills the other.

2. It matters: as the *principal* object of study, as it has God for its author (who has read everything and not

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<sup>50</sup> The God's letter to mankind.

this?!); as the most *universal* and *necessary* science; as the model for us of books, in substance and in divine method; as that which God wants people to read, the Church proposes it, the saints prefer it.

- 53 3. Duties: summary *respect*, that which God manifested to have and which the Church practices | assiduous reading done with the spirit with which it was written: make it your guide for thought and of the heart: spread it with zeal among men.

How to read it: faith, humility, charity.

How to spread it: do it well, apply zeal.

## Tradition

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26.33  
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124-131  
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171

1. Tradition is the second source from where the Church draws the doctrine she keeps and teaches. The doctrine of the Church in part is *trādita*-handed down,<sup>51</sup> by voice, in the liturgies, in the practice of the life of the Church, in pious traditions, in devotions, in the lives of the Saints, of Doctors, of tried authors, dogmatic theologians, ascetics, moralists, in so many illustrations.

2. Tradition is to be venerated; as that which supports, explains, popularizes many *dogmatic* truths; as that which shows the practically *holy* life that is taught to us after the example of the Savior, of the Apostles, of the first Christians; as that which points out the spirit of the Church that is always one and always open for expansion, always holy, always active.

- 54 3. Practically we have: to bow our heads to the truths that form the compendium | of the teachings of the

<sup>51</sup> “Trādita”: from Latin “trādere”, which means “to transmit,” “to hand down.”

Church, even if not defined; to model our lives after the example of ancient and recent saints that the Church has raised to the altars; to live the liturgical life, learn sacred art and chant, venerate and love the devotions that are among the practices of Saints; to lean on always and to accept with the simplicity of children the institutes, the works the initiatives that already are of the practice and tradition of the Church.

### Jesus Life

DFin

67.68

82

137-143

157.186

Passion:<sup>52</sup> The kingly way of the Holy Cross:<sup>53</sup>

*In everything:* Jesus suffered: as man, as prophet, as holiness, as Savior, King, etc. Kingly way to heaven.

*The story of the Passion:* for healing every wound: pride, avarice, sensuality, etc., etc.

*The fruits* of his Passion: participation to his Passion: in the human heart, in the senses, in appetite for food, in the mind, in the hands, etc.; in the life of reparation, of sacrifice: “adimpleo in corpore meo ea quæ desunt passionum Christi”.<sup>54</sup>

### Jesus Life

DFin

47.157

186.192

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1. I am the *life*.<sup>55</sup> the supernatural life (as differentiated from the natural, vegetable, sensitive, rational, angelic life).

<sup>52</sup> Cf. page of DFms, *Attachment no. 4*, second half of p. 277.

<sup>53</sup> The expression “The kingly way of the Holy Cross” (“De regia via Sanctæ Crucis”) is the title of chap. XII of book II of the *Imitation of Christ*.

<sup>54</sup> Col 1:24. The complete sentence is: “Adimpleo ea quæ desunt passionum Christi in carne mea pro corpore eius quod est ecclesia – In my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ on behalf of his body, which is the church.”

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Jn 14:6.

The supernatural life in us is grace. Death is sin: “nomen habes quod vivas et mortuus es.”<sup>56</sup>

2. Jesus is grace “plenum gratiæ,”<sup>57</sup> and he communicates it to us in baptism, he strengthens it in confirmation, he nourishes it in us in the Eucharist, he repairs it for us in confession, he purifies it for us in the extreme unction: “veni ut vitam habeant.”<sup>58</sup> I am the vine and you are the branches; he who remains in me and I in him bears much fruit. “Sine me nihil potestis facere.”<sup>59</sup>

3. The life of Jesus is lost through sin. It has its own breath, which is prayer; its own food, which is meditation; its own ailments, that are the imperfections and defects; its resources, that is fervor; its joys, that are consolations; its own weakness, that is desolation; the development among Saints, perfect in Mary Most Holy.

## Jesus Redeemer

DFin  
23.81  
137-143  
157.186  
210

56 1. Jesus is the Redeemer: man would not have been able to enter heaven, he would not have been able | to adore, thank, ask forgiveness, beg for graces conveniently. But now he can in Jesus Christ, who is the God of mankind.

2. He adored: “non quæro gloriam meam, sed gloriam ejus qui misit me.”<sup>60</sup> He thanked: “gratias agens, gratias

<sup>56</sup> Rev 3:1: “You have the reputation of being alive, but you are dead.”

<sup>57</sup> Jn 1:14. “Full of grace.”

<sup>58</sup> Jn 10:10. “I came so that they may have life.”

<sup>59</sup> Jn 15:5: “Without me you can do nothing.”

<sup>60</sup> “I do not seek my glory but the glory of him who sent me.” Cf. Jn 5:30: “Non quæro voluntatem meam, sed voluntatem ejus qui misit me.” In Jn 8:50 we read: “Ego autem non quæro gloriam meam.” As one can see, Fr. Alberione modifies Jn 5:30 by exchanging the word “voluntatem” with “gloriam,” which is instead found in Jn 8:50.

tibi ago”<sup>61</sup> etc.; he made reparations for sins: “peccata nostra ipse tulit;”<sup>62</sup> he asked for graces “exauditus est pro sua reverentia”.<sup>63</sup> He did everything for us and we can do everything in Jesus Christ and thus render honor to God, worthily give thanks, ask pardon satisfactorily, seek graces in the name of Jesus Christ.

3. a) Do everything: in ipso et cum ipso et per ipsum.<sup>64</sup> b) In Jesus Christ we are powerful in asking, we have the right for forgiveness, we worthily honor the Lord; outside Jesus Christ we are ridiculous and inept human beings. c) In Him everything acquires supernatural power: separated from Him, however, we are the branch cut off the vine.

DFin  
157.186

## Jesus Life

### 1. He put sin to death.

The *original* sin deprived the soul of grace; this is the life of the soul. Jesus | paid for man, recovered grace, thus gave life again to the soul. Thus he recovered life for man fallen into actual sin. 57

2. Now the sin-reparation of Jesus Christ was perfect, that is: for all men of all times, for those of all places; regarding the four needs, each one in its own way: knowledge, integrity, impassability, immortality; overabundant: “copiosa apud Deum redemptio,”<sup>65</sup> “su-

<sup>61</sup> Mt 15:36: “Giving thanks.” Cf. Jn 11:41.

<sup>62</sup> Is 53:4: “Languores nostros ipse tulit – It was our infirmities that he bore.”

<sup>63</sup> Heb 5:7: “He was heard because of his reverence.”

<sup>64</sup> “In him, with him, through him.” Formula inspired after the final doxology of the canon of the Mass, but in reverse order.

<sup>65</sup> Ps 130(129):7: “For with the Lord is kindness, with him is full redemption.”

perabundavit gratia;”<sup>66</sup> infinite: inasmuch as every action of Jesus Christ is of infinite value.

3. a) This is why God bears with so many of my sins!
- b) This is why the graces of the Lord in the Church are so vast: Holy Communion, indulgences, the many conversions, absolution until seventy times seven times.

## Jesus Life

*“Abundantius habeant”*<sup>67</sup>

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17ff  
132-136  
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58

1. Grace can be first, second, thousandth: from the good thief to the level of the Most Holy Virgin there is an immense distance. In general, one can say that it depends on two elements: that is, our work and God’s grace. Our work is the material part; | grace is the soul that gives being or supernatural value to the work.

2. Our work with the conditions is required. However, whoever works in Jesus Christ is like the branch that shares in His life, that is, in grace: “hic fert fructum multum.”<sup>68</sup> The life of Jesus Christ is infinite: thus therefore merit and grace can grow indefinitely in our heart.

3. a) Will to be saints, soon saints, great saints in Jesus Christ; b) perform numerous good deeds, thereby we become like so many creatures, or persons, or plants of wheat (an immense field) to which Jesus Christ infuses soul-grace; c) what cannot be done in reality is embraced by desire: to be in the heart of all Saints; in the desires of all the angels; in the heart of Jesus Christ who immolates himself on the altars.

<sup>66</sup> Rom 5:20: “Grace overflowed the more.”

<sup>67</sup> Jn 10:10: “I came so that they may have life and have it more abundantly.”

<sup>68</sup> Jn 15:5: “He will bear much fruit.”



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## The means of Grace

115-121  
157.188

1. Prayer: “est elevatio mentis in Deo,”<sup>69</sup> in general; in particular: “petitio decentium a Deo”.<sup>70</sup>

One is vocal, another is mental, another is vital. It also is a state of soul: of him who before the Lord trustfully behaves | as subject, as poor, as ignorant, as little and as worthless.

59

2. In the economy of Providence prayer is necessary: considering that without the special divine assistance we cannot exercise certain virtues and fulfill certain duties and win over certain passions and persevere for long in doing good; and on the other hand it is only to him who prays that such help is given. Hence: he who prays is saved, he who does not pray is damned. Prayer is effective, by its being founded on divine promises, on the merits of Our Lord Jesus Christ: or it shall obtain what it asks or better as much as it asks.

3. Prayer must be done: with faith; inasmuch as it is heard after the measure of one’s faith; with perseverance, inasmuch as “oportet semper orare;”<sup>71</sup> humbly, for the humbled publican was sanctified.<sup>72</sup>

<sup>69</sup> More exactly: “in Deum” (cf. DFst 78): “It is an elevation of the mind to God.” Definition by St. John Damascene in *De Fide Orthodoxa*, I, III, c. 24; PG XCIV, 1090.

<sup>70</sup> “The request made to God for things good.” St. John Damascene, in *Ibid.* Cf. ST. THOMAS AQUINAS, *Prayer*, in *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, q. 83, art. 1.

<sup>71</sup> Lk 18:1: “The necessity for them to pray always.”

<sup>72</sup> On the need and the conditions of prayer, Fr. Alberione condenses the teaching that St. Alphonsus de’ Liguori explains in his booklet – by then much used – *Del gran mezzo della preghiera* (*On the great means of prayer*), many times reprinted in the Society of St. Paul. On the necessity of prayer, see for example chap. I, no. 1: Prayer is necessary for salvation, needed as a means; no. 2: Without prayer it is impossible to resist temptations and to practice the commandments. The entire chap. III speaks on the conditions of prayer. Cf. ST. ALPHONSUS M. DE’ LIGUORI, *Del gran mezzo della preghiera*, in *Opere ascetiche*, vol. II, pp. 3-178, Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, Roma 1982.

**The effects of Grace**

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137-143  
157.186  
188

1. Jesus Christ is the author of grace. Sanctifying grace is that which makes the soul beautiful, a daughter of God, friend of Jesus, co-heir of Jesus, heir of Heaven. Actual grace is that which gives value and strength for accomplishing virtuous acts and for fleeing from sin.  
60 Sanctifying grace can | grow each day, each moment; actual grace is obtained through prayer.

2. Actual grace is so necessary that without it the fallen man, with his own efforts, cannot do all the things necessary for his supernatural goal; he cannot do the least thing.

The Holy Spirit, however, by infusing in him the grace, makes him capable of achieving his supernatural end; rather, grace produces in man the most marvelous effects: enlightenment of the mind, holy affection in the heart, inspiration to the will. Furthermore, it works in every period and conditions of life.

3. Contemplation of Pentecost: a) through the praying Mary Most Holy; b) brings about heavenly knowledge, heroic virtue, apostolic zeal.

**Medicinal Grace**<sup>73</sup>

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104.123  
157.170  
171.188

Medicinal grace heals the defects of nature brought about by original sin.

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<sup>73</sup> Cf. F. CHIESA, *Lectiones theologiae dogmaticae recentiori mentalitati et necessitati accommodatae*, Albæ Pompejæ, Typis Piæ Societatis S. Pauli, vol. III, *Tractatus De Deo Spiritu Sancto*, MCMXXX, pp. 617-619. Cf. A. F. DA SILVA, *Gv 14,6: eredità carismatica per la Famiglia Paolina*, in “Spezzate il pane della Parola”, Roma, Casa Generalizia SSP, 1991, p. 53. Cf. page of DFms, Attachment no. 6, p. 279.

*Quoad intellectum*,<sup>74</sup> heals ignorance, lack of reflection, forgetfulness, hardness of mind, error, prejudice, perversion.

*Quoad sentimentalitatem*, heals indifference, | evil 61  
inclinations, passions, sentiments, affections.

*Quoad voluntatem*, heals lack of willpower, lightness and inconstancy, laziness, obstinacy, bad habit.

\* \* \*

Actual grace *adiuvat* (assists) in the accomplishment of deeds above nature:

of real penance,  
of faith, hope, charity,  
of Christian life beyond the natural law.

Actual grace still *raises* such acts, by adding the merits of Our Lord Jesus Christ through the infusion of the Holy Spirit in order that they may have eternal value.

Medicinal grace as regards the body:  
it extinguishes bad concupiscences,  
infuses new and holy concupiscences,  
communicates all the new tendencies, comforts, etc.,  
as is seen among saints.

DFin

69.157

168.188

## In this life

***“Spread of the divine Goodness”***<sup>75</sup>

1. God wants to be glorified as *Bonus* (Good), especially; he, however, bestowed a divine | effusion of 62

<sup>74</sup> “*Quoad intellectum...*”: *Regarding the mind... the heart... the will.*

<sup>75</sup> Cf. F. CHIESA, *De bonitate Dei*, in *Lectiones...*, op. cit., vol. II, p. 72ff. Cf. A. TANQUEREY, *Compendio di Teologia Ascetica e Mistica*, Società di S. Giovanni Evangelista, Desclée e C<sup>i</sup>, Roma-Tournai (Belg.)-Parigi, 1928<sup>4</sup>, nos. 437ff.

grace in order to show it: a) in the creation of things invisible, of the material things, of man; b) in the elevation to the supernatural order, in bearing with man, in promising and preparing the ages for the Savior; c) in the incarnation, life, death of the Savior: with doctrine, examples, reparation, Church, Sacraments: d) with the effusion of the Holy Spirit in general in the world, the Church; in particular, in every soul.

\* \* \*

2. Praise him: on earth:

Know the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit; *embrace* the truth, not the appearance of life, of destiny, of our vocation to the task of glorifying God; correspond to the divine effusion of goods.

In heaven:

And that concerns heaven, which is complete glorification, in the contemplation of the divine goodness, loving it perfectly, and enjoying in it.

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- 63 3. The struggle *is*: between the I that wants to adore itself, praising itself, loving itself, serving itself in place of God; | and God: who wants to win man over by force of love, bind him with the snares of love; communicate himself and absorb man into the Divinity out of love.

**The teaching of St. Paul**

CONCLUSION OF THE IIND PART

From passages spread in the revelation of the old and the new Testament, Paul, instructed by Jesus Christ and enlightened in every step by the Holy Spirit, formed

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187  
203-205

the body of doctrine that he called “his Gospel,”<sup>76</sup> and it is, so much dogmatically, as much as morally and liturgically, what we live; better, that the Church lives. This is so because he was the most accomplished and faithful interpreter of the Divine Master, he understood and, elaborated with strong synthesis and tight logic, he gave the whole and applied Gospel, in such a manner that the Gentile humanity found what it was unconsciously looking for. And thus:

His vision penetrated the depth of the original fall; in it he saw man become flesh; sin that imposes its law on the parts of the body and makes them produce the fruits of death; the will, almost always weak to free itself from slavery and entirely powerless to arrive at justification, is raised to the divine height. Justice in fact is not limited to the natural law or to natural virtue, but it is itself the divine holiness of Jesus Christ communicated to our souls through the Holy Spirit, thus accomplishing the conformation of our will with the divine will. And from where is this communion with eternal justice derived? From faith described by St. Paul in the letter to the Romans, as that which has a supernatural power. Faith, working through charity, unites us to Jesus Christ in whom is holiness, divine life is incarnated. It does more: it creates in us the new being, animated by the spirit of Jesus Christ. United, abandoned in Him through this life, we can do and we do what he himself has done: we die in Him in the flesh and to sin, in order to be reborn to spiritual life. Speaking more precisely: Christ alone lives, thinks, works, loves, wills, prays, suffers, dies and resurrects in us. Head of the regenerated humanity, He forms, of all the believers, a mystical body whose members are intimately bound by charity that animates the same life, where only one heart beats, the Heart of Jesus Christ.

64

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<sup>76</sup> Cf. Rom 16:24; 2Tm 2:8.

**65 Practice**DFin  
70.103  
170*As practical conclusions, I recall:*

1. Jesus is truth:<sup>77</sup> the study of the teaching of Jesus Christ; that is the sanctification of the mind, to love the Lord with one's whole mind (Gospel, religious instruction, thoughts and judgments of Jesus Christ), exclusion of everything against, though it might just be a simple learning.<sup>78</sup>

2. Jesus Christ is way:<sup>79</sup> imitation of the *life* of Jesus Christ, by sanctifying the will, that is love of God with one's whole will.

3. Jesus Christ is life:<sup>80</sup> supreme study of the divine grace: Mass, Visit, Communion, habitual union with one's whole heart.

**66** [blank page]

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<sup>77</sup> Cf. Jn 14:6.

<sup>78</sup> In the original Italian the word "apprensione" = *apprehension* instead of "apprendimento" = *learning* is used.

<sup>79</sup> Cf. Jn 14:6.

<sup>80</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*

### **Glory to the Holy Spirit**

1. He is God really: not an attribute or quality only. The Third Person of the Most Holy Trinity. Who proceeds from the Father and the Son.

2. What works are attributed to the Holy Spirit:

a) The Son has proposed his divine truths: the Holy Spirit keeps them, makes them understood and used.

b) The Son has obtained grace, by repurchasing it: the Holy Spirit applies it to us in sanctification, by communicating it to each one.

3. How to be disposed for the Holy Spirit:  
through hatred for sin;  
through the desire for grace and holiness;  
through acts of faith, hope and charity.

**[Life given by the Holy Spirit, see p. 271]**

### **The Militant Church**

1. The Church is the society instituted by Our Lord Jesus Christ of those who profess the faith and observe the law and approach the Holy Sacraments in order to reach paradise under the government of the Pastors and especially of the Supreme Pontiff. It is visible, spiritual, supernatural, perfect, monarchical, wherein everything is subject to what is spiritual.

2. The Roman Church is that: one, holy, catholic, apostolic, which, with the authority of Jesus Christ, instructs, tends, governs; indefectibly and infallibly.

3. Our duties are: a) faith in her teachings; b) obedience to her laws; c) love for what she loves and is interested in.

No one can have God as Father unless he has the Church as mother.

Only in her is there salvation.

### **The only Church**

DFin  
95.96  
109.122  
124-131

1. The Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ is his kingdom. It includes not only the militant, but also the souls in purgatory, and the triumphant church, that form the mystical body of Jesus Christ.

69      2. These three parts of the Church are intimately related with one another, attached as they are as members of the same body. The Church militant offers suffrages for the souls in purgatory and glorifies the Church triumphant; the souls in purgatory pray for the militant Church and honor the triumphant to which they aspire; the triumphant church loves, communicates, helps the souls in purgatory as well as the militant church.

3. Consequences: comfort in the struggle, seeing that we are members and how we are helped by the Communion of Saints, prayer and trust in difficulties; serene fidelity to Our Lord Jesus Christ, inasmuch as he who has legitimately struggled shall be crowned, “bonum certamen certavi,”<sup>1</sup> in spite of the devil, the world, the passions.

### **The Pope**

DFin  
109

1. The Pope is the Vicar of Our Lord Jesus Christ and in his name defines the truth that we have to be-

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<sup>1</sup> 2Tm 4:7: “I have competed well.”



lieve, establishes the laws, binds and loosens: “Ubi Petrus ibi Ecclesia.”<sup>2</sup>

2. The Pope is infallible; the Pope is the Shepherd of Shepherds; the Pope is the center of the spread of the Gospel in the world.

3. The powerful papacy: for the holiness of so many pontiffs; for being the center of | fatherhood and civilization of peoples; for the eminent qualities of intelligence and heart of many popes; because God protects, guides and defends.

70

To the Pope is owed: faith, obedience, love, cooperation.

## DFin **Faith**

84

137-143

1. Faith is the theological virtue infused by God that inclines man to firmly believe what God has revealed and what the Church proposes for belief: “Sperandarum substantia rerum, argumentum non apparentium.”<sup>3</sup>

2. It is the foundation of every justification; the positive foundation of every virtue; the principle of Christian life; the door to the sacraments. The measure of faith is the measure of the other virtues. “Iustus meus ex fide vivit.”<sup>4</sup> “Sine fide impossibile est placere Deo.”<sup>5</sup> Jesus Christ said: “Credite in Deum et in me credite.”<sup>6</sup> Faith is: not a reasoning, but a grace! It is to believe after the authority of the revealing God and on the word of the Church who communicates to us the deposit Jesus Christ has had.

<sup>2</sup> “Where Peter (the Pope) is, there is the Church.” ST. AMBROSE, *Enarratio in Psalmum XL*, no. 30; PL 14, 1134B.

<sup>3</sup> Heb 11:1: “Faith is the realization of what is hoped for and evidence of things not seen.”

<sup>4</sup> Hb 2:4. Cf. Rom 1:17 and Gal 3:11: “The just man... shall live.”

<sup>5</sup> Heb 11:6: “Without faith it is impossible to please him.”

<sup>6</sup> Jn 14:1: “You have faith in God; have faith also in me.”

- 71 3. a) Faith can be made more alive through prayer and repeated acts; b) it is necessary to keep it safe from dangers like doubtful readings, | suspect conversations, etc.; c) avoid those sins opposed to faith, which are credulousness and infidelity.

## Hope

DFin  
137-143

1. Hope is a supernatural virtue infused by God in our soul, with which we hope for Paradise and the means to arrive there. It is certainty, not a vague probability, as regards heaven as much as for the graces for getting there.

2. It is necessary by *necessity* of means and of precept; thereby, omitted also without any fault, one does not arrive in Paradise. It is *good* because it is based on the omnipotence, on the mercy, on the fidelity of God: hence always certain as much for the just as for the sinner. Prayers are precisely efficacious because they are founded on the merits of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

3. a) we have to hold it as the most gentle comfort and the strongest support in life; b) we have to ask for it insistently because it is theological and supernatural; c) avoid sins opposed to it as presumption and despair.

## Charity

DFin  
137-143  
218

- 72 1. Charity is the third theological virtue; infused by God in our soul. It forms two | flames: one directed towards God, love of God; the other directed towards neighbor, love of neighbor. It is benevolence, that is, to desire what is good. Hence, it is: rejoicing over the good that God and neighbor already possess; it is the desire for what they still do not possess.

2. Now there are three virtues: faith, hope, charity: the greatest is charity. Charity alone is eternal and heaven is the loving enjoyment of the object achieved. It is necessary in order that every good work may have merit; rather it is itself the urge for the last end. Then, one who does not love his neighbor, who is God's image, cannot love God himself. God shall measure with such measure the merit or the demerit at the final judgment. For him who is called to a special vocation, it is also a specific obligation.

3. 1. Charity is asked from the Lord; 2. it is exercised in the fervor of Communion, Visit, Mass and in the works of mercy, either spiritual or corporal; 3. it becomes more strongly lit by flight from venial sin and by delicateness of conscience.

### **The Sacraments**

1. They are perceptible signs, instituted by Our Lord Jesus Christ, that signify and confer grace. They are divided according to their effects, the need, their character, etc.

2. Among the means of sanctification, they occupy the first place.

They are for the generation, growth, reparation, nourishment of the supernatural life; they are as well for the preparation of natural and supernatural parents.

Then, each one has its own particular excellence and its own particular effects.

3. Conditions: some are external, others internal; some for the sacraments of the living, others for the sacraments of the dead, etc.

Maximum frequency is needed for some; maximum of respect for all.

They are born on Calvary, they work through the Holy Spirit.

### **74 Confession**

1. Confession: it is the great means of perfection. In the spiritual life: the Spiritual Exercises establish the general resolution; the monthly retreat, the particular resolution; the weekly confession is the week's review and the amendment. Confession has the purpose of the absolution and sanctification of the week.

2. Confession is the channel of special sanctifying grace; it is the restoration of lost energies; it is the light

for the new journey; it is the motion of the heart for the resolutions; it is the blessing and divine approval on daily work in the great undertaking of going up to God.

3. a) Choose well and make clear the weekly resolutions; b) make them object of examination, sorrow, accusation, resolution, weekly reparation; c) be constant in the progressive accounting and in the constant journeying.

DFin  
24.50

114.146

191

## Holy Communion

1. The Holy Communion: is union with Jesus Christ God and man, an uncommon union, but sacramental. It produces adherence to | Jesus Christ with the mind, heart, will. 75

2. Jesus Christ is *truth*: it is therefore useful to choose to absorb and nourish ourselves of the truths that are the bread of the soul: in such a way that we substitute our mind with that of Jesus Christ. – Jesus Christ is *way*: he is himself the perfection of every moment and step and virtue: decide then to acquire his heart for the Father, his heart for human beings, his hatred for sin, his interior humility, his poverty, purity. – Jesus Christ is *life*: that is, every grace of medicine, of work, of elevation, of holiness, common and heroic; hence, choose to be sanctified, co-penetrated by this divine reality.

3. Preparation concerns the *mind* that abhors every doctrine not in conformity with Jesus Christ and makes acts of faith and desires of faith; it concerns the *will* that detests every evil, imperfection, bad habit and makes acts of desires and resolutions of virtue; it concerns the *heart* that wants healing and sanctification and resolutions. – Hence, it is a complete preparation. Let thanksgiving be the same.

**76 The Holy Mass**

DFin  
24.38  
47.50  
114.160  
191

1) It is the renewal of the Sacrifice of the cross, in a bloodless manner, on our Altars: in order to adore, thank, make amends, pray, in Jesus Christ, through Jesus Christ, to God, our Father.

2) It has general, particular, most special fruits.

It is the center and the principal act of worship.

It is the center and principal practice of piety.

It is holy and salutary: hear it, hear it often, participate in it entirely by receiving Holy Communion in it.

3) Many are the methods for attending the Mass: the liturgical, that of the four ends, prayers in common, meditation on the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

We suggest: a) from the start to the Gospel, honor Jesus Truth, by meditating and applying the sacred doctrine, especially the Epistle and the Gospel. b) From the Gospel to the Pater, by honoring Jesus, Way to the Father, especially in the Passion and prayer. c) From the Pater to the end, honor Jesus Life of the soul, with the Communion and with the sanctifying and medicinal grace.

**77 Visit**

DFin  
24.38  
84.144  
152.153  
154.160  
191

1. The Visit to the Most Blessed Sacrament is to honor the Eucharist as the throne of grace other than the Mass and Communion. It is the antechamber of heaven; it is the breath and the preparation for the heavenly Vision. It is grace, it is light, it is comfort.

2. It has the four ends of the Mass: the Adoration of Our Lord Jesus Christ, God and man: and, in Him and through Him, the Father; it is a worthy thanksgiving; it is propitiation for sins; it is petition for all our needs.

3. Manner: a) do it really and constantly; b) in doing it gradually and with simplicity, approach the method of the four ends; c) consider it as our refuge inasmuch as it is here that Jesus Christ especially manifested himself as Way, Truth and Life.

\* \* \*

DFin  
50.81

1. Many are the methods taught, among which most often is that of the four ends, of prayers in common, etc. Among them: that which honors Jesus Master Truth, Way, Life, is particularly indicated. The hour is divided into three spaces.

2. It is important because it is pleasing to the Divine Master who seems to have taught it by telling us: "I am the truth, way, life."<sup>1</sup> It conforms with nature inasmuch as we have intelligence will, heart. It little by little brings to reality in the soul "the love of the Lord with one's whole mind, with all of one's strength, with the heart."<sup>2</sup> It helps so much the scholar to be complete; it utilizes all: study, means of grace, natural gifts. It is especially good for the Pauline.

78

3. a) *I am the truth*:<sup>3</sup> all that is known through study, religious instruction, Bible, is summarized and it refers in praise and thanksgiving to the Divine Master. b) *I am the way*:<sup>4</sup> all the evangelical virtues are meditated upon: theological, moral, etc., practiced by Jesus Christ and our life is compared to the life of Jesus Christ by means of a long examination of conscience, to conclude with sorrow and praise to Jesus Christ. c) *I am the life*:<sup>5</sup> Je-

<sup>1</sup> Jn 14:6.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Mk 12:30 and parallel.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Jn 14:6.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*

sus Christ is grace; and hence one prays for spiritual, natural needs, for his neighbor, for the whole world, without forgetting the intercession of the Most Holy Virgin, of the Angels, of the Saints.

## Prayer

DFin  
82.114  
115-121  
160

79 1. Is: “*elevatio mentis* in Deum”; or “*petitio decentium a Deo*.”<sup>6</sup> The first definition | refers especially to mental prayer; the second, to vocal prayer. it is divided into: mental, where the mind predominates; vocal, where the word predominates; vital, where deeds predominate; habitual, where there is the state or spirit of prayer.

2. It is necessary: for one to be saved. “He who prays is saved.”<sup>7</sup> Of absolute necessity; inasmuch as for adults grace is granted only when one prays (Theology).

*In fact*, each one who prayed was saved and is saved. Then, prayer is infallible as regards the effect through spiritual graces; for the material, insofar as it is useful. It is founded on divine omnipotence, on the merits of Jesus Christ, on the Lord’s promises.

3. a) It requires three conditions: humility, perseverance, trust. b) Let mental prayer be of every day and the method of St. Ignatius is best; vocal prayer is best, if it is according to the rule; vital prayer matters much because every good deed, aside from its amending and meritorious value, also has petitionary value. Best is the habitual state of prayer. c) Let one try to guess from here: will I be saved? If I pray. Will I be a saint? If I pray much.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. notes 69 and 70 to the chapter *The means of Grace* (DFst 58).

<sup>7</sup> Cf. ST. ALPHONSUS DE’ LIGUORI, *Del gran mezzo della preghiera*, heading 1, last paragraph: “He who prays, certainly is saved; he who does not pray, certainly is damned.”



DFin  
27.40  
42.44

## Spiritual Director

80

1. He is the visible angel who guides the soul in the journey to perfection. Often, he is identified with the habitual confessor. He has the tasks of the Angel for Tobit: he enlightens, watches over, supports the docile soul until the paternal house in heaven.

2. Natural reasons: to find a friend is to find a treasure: inasmuch as we find another intelligence, an experience, a strong support.

Supernatural reasons: God makes use of secondary causes also in the governance of souls. God blesses humility and docility. The example of Saints: Blessed Cottolengo, Blessed Bosco,<sup>8</sup> St. Ignatius, all the major founders and formators of souls.

3. Choice: [a)] “si doctus, si sanctus, si prudens regat nos.”<sup>9</sup> b) Open one’s conscience: making him know: the past, the present, the resolutions for the future. Furthermore, it is good that he knows: inclinations, circumstances of life, dangers, habits. c) Docility as that of Paul to Ananias, especially in the most delicate points, in making choices and orientation in life.

DFin  
32

## Virtue

81

1. The perfection of the will that ends in the inclination for what is good through a long repetition of acts is a virtue. Four are the natural virtues: prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance; three are the theological virtues: faith, hope, charity; twelve are the moral virtues.

<sup>8</sup> Now St. Joseph Benedict Cottolengo and St. John Bosco.

<sup>9</sup> “If he is holy, if he is learned, if he is prudent, let him govern us.” The complete sentence, attributed to St. Teresa of Avila, is: “Si doctus doceat, si sanctus oret, si prudens regat nos – If he is learned, let him teach; if he is holy, let him pray; if he is prudent, let him govern us.”

2. The perfection of the will is just as important as the perfection of the intelligence. Virtues are acquired through supernatural way with prayer, the Sacraments, the gifts of the Holy Spirit; through natural means, through exercise (*ex repetitis actibus*) till one reaches the point of acting *prompte, facilliter, delectabiliter*.<sup>10</sup>

3. How to acquire them: a) generally, one at a time; b) with great heart, using all the means.

### Flight from occasions

1. What is called an occasion is that which presents a danger for sinning: a person, a thing, an act, reading, a bad habit, etc. It can therefore be internal or external. Then it is *proximate*, if the fall is most probable, although it may be uncertain; *remote*, if the fall is less probable. What is proximate and what is remote are often relative to persons and circumstances.

82 2. To willingly place oneself or to spontaneously remain in the *proximate* danger of sin is never licit: it becomes dual sin, that is, against charity towards ourselves and against the virtue that can be violated. It shall be grave or light according to the gravity of the danger or the gravity of evil to which one exposes himself to commit.

For just reason, it is licit to willingly expose oneself to near danger of sin and stay there for the time needed: for as long as caution is used so that the danger becomes remote. If the danger of falling, however, constitutes a moral certainty, it is to be avoided *absolute*.

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<sup>10</sup> "Promptly, easily, pleasantly." This is an expression that is not easily traceable to a single author. Haering says: "Scholasticism underlines, in virtue, especially the firmness of disposition, the readiness and the ease in acting, all qualities that are acquired first of all through exercise and they characterize habit. However, there is nothing more absurd, than giving excessive importance to mechanical exercise and material habit" (B. HAERING, *La legge di Cristo*, Trattato di Teologia Morale, Libro I, Morcelliana, Brescia, 1961<sup>2</sup>, p. 602).

3. Each has serious or light dangers: let all the voluntary ones be avoided; let the necessary ones be made always remote through vigilance and prayer.

DFin  
18  
124-131  
199

## **The lay state**

**83**

1. Each one has a mission on earth: let him study it, accept it. It is a great failure “to do nothing,” the more serious, after the path of sin: it would be because of laziness, or pride, or dishonesty.

2. In the lay state there are many degrees and duties: work, however, is for everyone; to give children to God is a great sacrament: or apostolate, or suffering, or the substances.

\* \* \*

1. The ways on which men journey towards heaven are three: that of the commandments, the religious state, the priestly state.

The state of the commandments is the lay state. It is necessary for all: inasmuch as two are the means of salvation: faith and works.

2. The way of the commandments obliges and presses on all. Jesus Christ said: “serva mandata.”<sup>11</sup> The natural law itself contains the commandments, if the positive part of the third is excepted. Hence, the commandments oblige all, immediately, always, precisely | because they have been promulgated with the creation of man, and written in the heart. Also the Gentiles are guilty for their transgression (St. Paul).

**84**

3. a) Every person who wants to be a Christian, or a religious, or pious, has, above all, to observe the com-

<sup>11</sup> Mt 19:17: “Keep the commandments.”

mandments. The positive law is based on the natural law. Jesus Christ reproves the Pharisees who, faithful to their traditions, violate the natural law; b) examination of conscience brought in the first place on the commandments: no virtue is firm without them; c) the Code of Canon Law and every law or evangelical counsel already suppose the observance of the natural law.

**The priestly state**

DFin  
12.18  
21.35  
87.199

1. The Priestly State is the second way that lifts up from the first, which is supposed to have been already surpassed. The Priest is a *man, raised* to represent Jesus Christ, *dispenser* of the gifts of God. *Quis in natura? quis in dignitate? quis in officiis?*<sup>12</sup>

2. His greatness emerges by considering: that before God he is a minister, not servant; before Jesus Christ he has the power over his Real Body; before men, the divine faculties on the Mystical Body of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

85      3. Duties: a) there must be vocation, studiousness, holiness, zeal to ascend to it; b) to the Priest are due, help, cooperation, prayer, trust, veneration.

**The religious state**

DFin  
18.34  
35.37  
57.60  
70.83  
86.107  
124-131  
148.159  
161.199  
200.211  
212.213

1. The Religious State is a state in life where one tends to perfection through the observance of the three vows in the life in common. State: that is, it has stability; of perfection: hence all the religious families are the same in substance for their primary end, that is achieved through the vows; they are distinguished only

<sup>12</sup> “Who is so by nature, is so in dignity, or so in duties?”

for their secondary end (education, the sick, press, etc.). Life in common, this being an obligation.

2. Importance. For the Religious: more graces, more ease for holiness, more certain salvation, more peaceful death. For society: they perform great works; they are an external manifestation of the holiness of the Church, they are a holy example, are more firm as to doctrine.

3. Practice. Esteem for their state; consider its privileges and the graces; remain humble and holily desirous.

DFin  
60.66  
70.105  
106.161  
199

## Obedience

1. As a virtue it obliges everyone to subject himself to legitimate Superiors in the respective matters; as a vow it obliges the religious through a new commitment to listen in those things that directly and indirectly refer to the life of the Institute, that is, to the observance of the vows and constitutions. At times obedience obliges only the external act, often it obliges the internal act; it is best if judgment also leans to it.

2. It is the best virtue because it gives to God the choicest part of man.

It is a virtue continually practiced by the Divine Master, by the Most Holy Virgin, by the Saints.

It is a virtue that in heaven shall raise above all the obedient.

3. It must be: *blind*, that is to obey on the authority, not only according to reason; *ready*, that is to immediately act, with simplicity; *total to all* the superiors, in *all* the prescriptions, in *all* the circumstances of times, of places, of persons.

**Chastity**

DFin  
60.66  
70.106  
161.199

1. It is a virtue and a vow for the religious: which forbids every act of impurity; both external and internal. Hence, it obliges one to use all means. It is a difficult virtue inasmuch as it has many enemies; it is a delicate virtue, since grave sins can easily take place; it is an exceptional virtue for the earth.

87      2. Importance: respect for God, for Jesus Christ, for the Most Blessed Virgin and the saints. Effects: on earth, in heaven. Fruits: in us, in our neighbor.

          Meditate before the Holy Family and the Crucified.

3. Requires two means: a) prayer, especially pious frequency at the Sacraments and devotion to Mary Most Holy; b) vigilance over internal dangers (imagination, heart, thoughts), on external senses (sight, hearing, touch, taste), on dispositions for inclinations (pride, sloth), on occasions (clothing, entertainments, companions, readings, etc.).

**Poverty**

DFin  
60.66  
70.82  
106.161  
199

1. It is a virtue and a vow for the religious. Virtue, inasmuch as it involves interior as well as exterior detachment if willed by God: as a simple and public vow it is important that what the religious acquires through his work, or intuitu religionis,<sup>13</sup> or because of his being a religious; and for everything, he abdicates the right to dispose of it and use it without due permission.

2. It is the first beatitude and almost a step to all the others; it is the first virtue that Jesus Christ embraced on earth, as soon as he appeared among men; it is the

<sup>13</sup> “In view of religion or of the institute.” See *Code of Canon Law*, promulgated by Benedict XV, in 1917, can. 580.2.

bringer of | much peace and freedom; the fountain of very great merits; it frees from a thousand cares and dangers. 88

3. [a)] Everyone needs a certain degree of it b) We need to love and prefer it and not examine it as to what it strictly obliges. c) It is practiced as to clothing, food, lodging, life, death, alms, care for time and things, preference for poor things and persons.

### DFin **The vocation of the religious**

23.37  
59.60  
66.70  
132-136  
161.199  
209

1. The vocation of the religious is of special nature: “si vis perfectus esse;”<sup>14</sup> hence it includes an essential will to become a saint: and it is true for man, for woman, for the Priest; even the special conditions for the married person and for the secular are possible, for as long as they are in the position to fulfill their duties.

2. Hence it supposes: a) a greater infusion of graces from the Lord; b) a special attraction to the pious life with the intimate and strong desire for perfection; c) responsibility and a greater accounting.

3. Practice: a) some hear the divine voice and they do not correspond; b) others begin and they get tired; c) he who begins and perseveres shall have a great reward.

### DFin **Duties of the religious**

89

DFin  
60.161  
165.199

1. To assume the means of sanctification, that are: the *common* ones: ordinary virtues, frequency to the Most Holy Sacraments, assiduousness in prayer; the

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<sup>14</sup> Mt 19:21: “If you wish to be perfect.”

*general ones*: observance of poverty, chastity, obedience, that are the vows of every religious family; the *special ones*: that is, observance of the rule and the particular commitments, directions, orders, assignments, of one's own religious affiliation.

2. The religious is obliged *sub gravi* to attend to perfection. All are invited to it: he has the obligation: a) by virtue of his profession; b) because here lies the whole of the religious state and this therefore becomes a duty of state in life (as for the father, the education of children); c) for all the reasons that ought to solicit the priest and the lay person and to greater effort.

3. a) The religious who neglects all the means sins seriously; b) Superiors are held *sub gravi* to warn, to let the Spiritual Exercises be held, to take care of confessions, etc.; c) blessed is he who, embracing the *occupation* or the *profession* of perfection, now has no other thought but this: "I want to become a saint." He is like a sculptor who wants to be at the top of his art.

## 90 Means of sanctification of the religious

DFin  
39.60  
161.199

1. The general means of sanctification for the religious are: the observance of the vows and life in common. The vows are a private law imposed on one's self that assumes meaning and obligation from the canonical law and from the rules. They transform and raise all the actions of the religious into a special status and merit.

2. What matters? To the solemn vow of poverty, what matters is the abdication to the roots, that is, at the very possibility of possessing; while for the simple vow one keeps the right or the possibility of possessing: but re-



nounces the right to dispose of and to use without permission. For the vow of chastity, the religious renounces every internal or external act against chastity, also as to what is licit in marriage. For the vow of obedience, one assumes the obligation to obey superiors in what directe vel indirecte<sup>15</sup> concerns the life of the Institute, that is the vows and the constitutions.

3. All this: a) has to be done willingly; b) it is easy because the rules assure the observance, being themselves sufficient means.

DFin  
39.60

## Life in common

91

105.107  
161.165  
199

1. It is by now a constitutive part of religious life. It is the external and living expression of society: a multitude which has in common the means in view of an end, under the guidance of an authority that represents God.

2. a) It spares us from infinite dangers: that are individual caprice, solitude, inconstancy, pulverization, worldliness, etc., etc.

b) Gives infinite means: instruction, vigilance, correction, comfort, support, the strength in view of an eternal and particular end, prayers, example, etc., etc.

3. a) Bear it with patience: since it has its own burdens and sacrifices in intelligence, requiring humility of mind; sacrifices of will, requiring obedience; sacrifices of the heart, requiring mutual love. b) Loving it, with generosity and enthusiasm: it is there that one earns heaven; one receives comfort in death, suffrage for eternity. “Charitas numquam excidit.”<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> “Directe vel indirecte”: *directly or indirectly*.

<sup>16</sup> 1Cor 13:8: “Love never fails.”

## Particular rules

DFin  
60.105  
162.163  
166.199

92 1. They are the rules of life in particular, since every community has its own | special mark. They are necessary for existence; they are useful for the achievement of goals; they are the comfort in death as it was for St. John Berchmans.

2. A few times it is a serious sin to transgress them: except when it has to do or touches the matter of the vows as a principle or in despise, with grave scandal, with the danger of serious spiritual harm to one's self and to the community. These rules, however, are not a simple counsel, hence rarely are the various transgressions without sin. Then, the habitual transgression is a sinful state and has serious consequences. Habitual fidelity renders them sweet, meritorious, and raises life to a superior level.

3. They ought to be observed: a) blindly; b) promptly; c) constantly. "Odisse ut pestem dispensationem in regulis."<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> "Hate as a plague that of excusing yourself from the rules." – The statement is attributed to St. John Berchmans and it is found in the small book of Testore: *La perfezione della virtù (The perfection of virtue)*.

DFin **The Press - Program**

18-19

56.59

61.62

72.74

75.78

85.89

93ff

111-112

114-121

124-131

132-136

145.146

147.160

202

206-207

1. *To write*: it is to preach, to comment on, to popularize, to apply to life the Holy Gospel. Just as God spoke and wrote, just as Jesus Christ spoke and made others write, just as the Apostles spoke and wrote. The printed preaching is in a better position, in its principal part, to reach all.

2. *To print*: Herein technology is embraced in order to make things faster, better, independently. It is the preparation of the elements, scientific organization, typesetting, printing, binding. In this, it is not an art, not an industry, but utilizes industry; and raises art and industry to the height of apostolate.

3. *Diffusion*: let it reach everywhere, to all, according to needs. a) The nature of the needs determines the nature of the initiative. b) The aim is to reach *all*, including those who have access to the Church.

\* \* \*

1. *General theory*: a) History (Scriptures, Fathers, Doctors, Popes, Saints). b) The Apostolate of the Press. c) The state of the Press. d) The value, the dangers, the advantages. e) The Means: telephone, telegraph, radio, etc. f) How one has to write: intrinsic sources, extrinsic; style, language, the writers. g) The means of diffusion: the Cooperators, the clergy, bookstores, centers, libraries, etc.

2. *Special theory*: a) The kinds: newspaper, book, booklet, novel, poetry, parish bulletin, illustrated peri-

odical, the weekly, the daily, etc.; b) the literary genres range from liturgy to humor, to satire, etc.; c) How to write: a) the intended aim; b) the thesis; c) the approval, the correction of the proofs, the layout; d) the art of selling, accounting; e) organization.

3. *General technology*: the means, paper, types, space bars, machines, printing and binding, mail. *Special technology*: typesetter, printer, binder, stereotypist, linotypist, monotypist, zincographer.

\* \* \*

95 1. *The Press as Apostolate*, is in its *substance* a divine institution. It is God | who ordered to write; it is the Apostles who exercised it: it is the Church that practices it; it is the Fathers, the Doctors, the Saints, the Bishops who excelled in it. The divine truths reach the faithful, some through the living voice, others arrive through Writing.

2. The Apostolate of the Press has its own intrinsic or extrinsic sources. The intrinsic ones are: the Scriptures, Tradition, dogmatic and moral theology, ascetics, mysticism, pastoral, the canon law, liturgy, sacred and church history. The extrinsic are: philosophy, profane history, literature, civil legislation, experimental sciences, etc.

3. The method, in general, is that of the Scriptures and of the Gospel. In particular, it is varied according to the kind: periodical, the book, apologetics, etc.

Here comes what is gathered in the treatise on eloquence and in the books on the art of composition and in tracts of religious pedagogy.

DFin

23.61

62.74

83.110

111-112

124-131

137-143

144.151

203-205

**St. Paul**

1. *St. Paul* was *Vas electionis*<sup>1</sup> et *doctor gentium*,<sup>2</sup> vessel of election, that is, chosen where the Holy Spirit gathered by pouring all | the better gifts: an indestructible faith, a most firm hope, a most ardent charity, loftiest knowledge. *Doctor gentium* who defended, who enlightened, who won over for Our Lord Jesus Christ. His miracle was a sustained miracle in the manner, circumstances, in the conversions. *Abundantius his omnibus laboravi*.<sup>3</sup>

96

2. *What he does*: From heaven, he is most powerful as on earth he was very much a saint; he shall obtain till the end of time, knowledge, chastity, apostles; he is so in a special manner for three graces: ardor, conversions, the apostolate. In heaven, he honors God; on earth, always glory to the Church, eyes on the pontiffs, model of every work of apostolate.

DFin

80

3. *We ought*: To read him as the model of loftiest knowledge that transcends the centuries, places, questions: and as model of the Press Apostolate; *pray to him* particularly with the chaplet, with the usual invocations of the house; imitate him, in the spirit that comes described to us by St. John Chrysostom.

DFin

28.110

111-112

124-131

144.208

**Mary, Queen of the Apostles**

1. The “Regina Apostolorum”. Of her we must believe: that she was the mother of the Apostle | of the Divine Father, the Divine Word; she who became mother and

97

<sup>1</sup> Acts 9:15: “Chosen instrument.”

<sup>2</sup> 1Tm 2:7: “Teacher of the pagans (gentiles).”

<sup>3</sup> 1Cor 15:10: “I have toiled harder than all of them” (*illis*, not *his*).

teacher of every apostolate at the birth of Jesus, their head; that she was proclaimed so at the cross; that she showed herself so with the Apostles especially during Pentecost; that she was always the inspirer, the protectress of every apostolate of the word and of the pen, and the formator of Apostles of all places and times.

2. That we must have towards her: enlightened and limitless trust and love, the most cordial, expressive, tender devotion; the more common and constant practices of the Rosary, the Angelus, the three Hail Mary's, chaplet, Saturday devotion, etc.

3. That we must let her be honored: by writing about her, preaching about her, and by giving the due example.

## Conclusions

99

DFin  
115-121  
132-133  
137-143  
166

1. We have meditated: man has been created for heaven; only for heaven. Man's entire work is that of not letting his heart be won over by the goods of the present, but of making use of the goods of the present as means for heaven. All the evil lies in making the means as end. If it has already been done, we need to be converted: and finally place our hearts, our struggles, our work for heaven. Hence, the fruit of the first part is *total conversion* of life for eternity.

2. Jesus Christ is the *way* to heaven, the only way, the secure way; he is the *truth*, because he guides the mind in such a manner that it does not err, that it becomes supernatural, divine; the *life* through whom the mind shall always adhere to Jesus Christ and heart and life shall always follow the path marked by Him. The conclusion of the second part is: *live* in Jesus Christ until the "vivit vero in me Christus:"<sup>4</sup> mind, heart, life. Fruit of the second part: the choices: vocation; or the manner of following it; or a particular point.

DFin  
35

3. In three manners one journeys with Jesus Christ: 100  
along the way of the commandments: Christ life; along the way of the evangelical counsels; along the way of zeal, life of apostolate.

Everything is accomplished in the Holy Spirit: inasmuch as what the life of Jesus Christ is, so the life of the Church, that is, the supernatural life of souls is communicated, developed, perfected, consummated, in the Holy Spirit. Hence our study is double: so that in us is formed Jesus Christ. Cooperation with special resolutions and prayer with the abundance of practices.

<sup>4</sup> Gal 2:20: "Christ lives in me."

### Theological virtues

*Faith* is that theological virtue infused by God, by the power of which we believe, based on authority of the revealing God, the truths revealed by Him and that the Church gives for us to believe.

*Hope* is that theological virtue infused by God, by the power of which, with sure trust, and with the aid of God, we wait for the eternal beatitude and the means for achieving it.

*Charity* is that theological virtue by which we love God for himself and ourselves and our neighbor for God.

### The Seven Gifts

**102** *Intellect:* gift of the Holy Spirit through which our intellect is raised | to understand the eternal and supernatural truths, with the action of the Holy Spirit.

*Wisdom:* gift of the Holy Spirit through which we refer all things to God, even the least and the material ones.

*Knowledge:* gift of the Holy Spirit through which we apply a spiritual truth to particular things.

*Counsel:* gift of the Holy Spirit through which in all our actions we seek and work according to God's pleasure.

*Piety:* gift of the Holy Spirit through which we refer all our actions to God, our ultimate end.

*Fortitude:* gift of the Holy Spirit with which we fight against our passions and we exert the effort to acquire what is good.



*Fear of God:* gift of the Holy Spirit by which we temper our natural inclinations.

## **Fruits of the Holy Spirit**

### ***In us***

*Charity*, through which the spiritual edifice is perfected by loving God above all things and loving all for God.

*Joy*, is the enjoyment that comes from charity, or **103** from the knowledge that one loves God.

*Peace* is the fruit of perfect joy, or the knowledge that one possesses God, his only and supreme good.

*Patience*, that comes from knowing that one has and possesses God, the only and *eternal* good and because of this he willingly bears the difficulties of this life.

### ***Neighbors***

*Benevolence:* Recognizing God in one's neighbor, one attentively and gently treats his neighbor.

*Goodness:* With which one treats his neighbor with due regard to God, thus becoming like God who has treated and treats man with so much goodness.

*Forbearance:* With which one forgives offenses very easily.

*Meekness:* With which we repress our anger.

*Faithfulness:* With which we keep our promises.

***We in relation with what is external***

*Modesty:* Brakes all our external behavior.

*Continence:* Brakes our natural inclinations.

**104**     *Chastity:* Brakes in a special manner our senses.

**The beatitudes <sup>1</sup>**

1. *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

2. *Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land.*

3. *Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.*

4. *Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.*

5. *Blessed are the merciful: for they will be shown mercy.*

6. *Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God.*

7. *Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.*

8. *Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

**Norms for the Spiritual Exercises and the Novitiate**

DFin  
164.165  
194-198

**105**     1. The secret of success in the exercises and in the novitiate, that are <sup>2</sup> a long course of Spiritual Exercises, lies especially in its | management; that is, in the choice

<sup>1</sup> Mt 5:3-10.

<sup>2</sup> In the original Italian the verb is in the plural: “Novitiate, that are...”: stands for “novitiate, that is...”

of the persons participating in it; in the care used for establishing the use of time, for the definition of the timetable; for the means of mortification and solitude, for the persons who guide, for the practices of piety and especially for the detailed, wise, prudent, and holy direction of each soul in particular.

2. Preferably the persons should be few in number, so with their needs and the condition: it is easy to guide well on condition that they are few and to obtain the fruit for each one when one could establish well defined purpose for the Spiritual Exercises: e. g., choice of the state of life, setting one's life in order, etc. Needed are time that is free from preoccupations, proper age, convenient maximum duration for the Spiritual Exercises. The schedule be such that it engages all the strengths of the spirit and of the body for the soul, but let it not exceed energies themselves; especially beneficial is the easy and varied succession of activities: mental prayer, vocal prayer or song, reflection, readings, examination of conscience, writing, rest, etc. However, much silence is demanded "fuge, tace, quiesce".<sup>3</sup> It is suitable that the place be solitary, as much as possible.

3. The spiritual direction is done in two ways: *general*, by indicating in the notices | and talks the reflec-

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<sup>3</sup> "Flee, be silent, stay in solitude." It is probable that Fr. Alberione bore in mind what Cafasso used to say: "I shall close with the famous advice that St. Arsenius already gave to whoever wanted to be benefited in the spirit: flee, withdraw, be silent..." (G. CAFASSO, *Meditazioni per Esercizi Spirituali al Clero*, a cura di G. Allamano, Tipografia Fratelli Canonica, Torino, 1892, p. 26). Arsenius was one of the fathers of the desert, born in Rome about 354 and died in Tura (Egypt) about the year 449. In no. 2 of his "apoftegmi" or "sayings" one reads: "Having retired to a solitary life, *he still prayed with the same words* (cf. Mt 26:44), and heard a voice that told him: Arsenius, flee, be silent, stay in solitude." It is from these roots that the possibility of not sinning originates (cf. *Vita e detti dei Padri del deserto*, a cura di Luciana Mortari, Città Nuova Editrice, vol. I, 1975, p. 97).

tions, pious practices, etc., that have to be done according to the interior dispositions, the attractions of divine grace, the progress of the Spiritual Exercises, etc.; *particular*, while sensing, leading more closely every single soul, the immense abundance of grace and light that the Exercises have is applied to each one. Each one then should open up and listen frequently to the spiritual guide.

# APPENDIX

*Fr. Alberione's notebook of manuscript contained some chapters that were not included later in the printed booklet. For love of completeness, we are printing them here in the order they were arranged in the manuscript.*

*The greater part – 12 chapters – belongs to The Theology of the Father (way of purification), and they were located between the chapter Judgment and the chapter Confession (DFst 34). A chapter entitled Life given by the Holy Spirit, concerned The Theology of the Spirit (way of union), and it preceded the chapter The Militant Church (DFst 68).*

*A title, printed within square parentheses, has also been given to the chapters that did not have any title in the manuscript.*

*The three points with which every chapter is divided are marked in the manuscript with Roman numerals. For uniformity with the rest of the book, we changed them to Arabic numerals.*

DFms  
29**End of the world**

1. In the end there shall be a renewal: “erunt coeli novi et terra nova;”<sup>1</sup> “omnis creatura ingemiscit usque adhuc expectans.”<sup>2</sup> A heaven that shall be a perfect kingdom, a rearranged earth. A body that shall have the gifts of the glorious body: splendor, fineness, agility, impassibility.

2. Revelation and exaltation of the Divine Providence and Justice; of the Wisdom and Mercy of Jesus Christ; of the holiness and greatness of the Apostles, of the martyrs, of the Good. Humiliation and punishments of the rebels, of the proud, of the disobedient, of the hypocrites, of the obstinates, etc.

3. Let us take: as rule of conduct to individually guide us in bodily sufferings, in the abuse of the sad, etc; rule of conduct in judging historical events, in social, civil, international relations; norm for judging of the mission of the Church. There shall be the epilogue of Creation, Redemption, Sanctification of the world.

DFms  
30**[Sin is three times evil]**

Sin is three times evil.

With respect to God:

Reckless rebellion against the Supreme Lord.

Dark ingratitude against the Supreme Goodness.

Foolish challenge against his Justice.

Cruelty like an attempt at the Divine Life and renewal of the Passion of Jesus Christ.

<sup>1</sup> “There shall be new heavens and new earth.” The sentence is not literal but according to meaning. Cf. Is 66:22 and Rev 21:1.

<sup>2</sup> Abbreviated quotation, taken from Rom 8:22: “Omnis creatura ingemiscit et parturit usque adhuc... expectans... – We know that creation itself would be set free from slavery to corruption... that all creation is groaning in labor pains even now.”

With respect to us:

For the past, it takes away merits and good habits.

For the present: deserves hell, closes heaven, detaches from grace.

For the future: fills with remorse, takes away the possibility of making merits, draws death and punishments.

With respect to neighbor:

Always impedes graces, often scandalizes.<sup>3</sup>

For the one called to the apostolate, it hurts many souls.

It is reflected in the whole of eternity.

## [Eternity]

DFms

31

1. Eternity is: *interminabilis vitæ tota simul et perfecta possessio*.<sup>4</sup> No human calculation can ever tell us what it may be. “*Vitam æternam, ignem æternum*.”<sup>5</sup>

2. For the deceased: to those *blessed*, the maximum tranquility on their lot, and for all eternity, joys that are concentrated in every instant; for the *damned* the greatest desperation and, more, the whole eternity weighs with all the torments up to the present: *tota simul*,<sup>6</sup> example of the ball of lead on smooth table.

3. It must produce in our souls: great solicitude, “*nulla nimia securitas ubi periclitatur æternitas*,”<sup>7</sup> we manufacture our eternity “*ibit homo in domum æternita-*

<sup>3</sup> There is an obsolete word in the original.

<sup>4</sup> The definition comes from the philosopher Boetius (*De Consolatione*, Prosa 6; PL 63, 858A) and was assumed by St. Thomas, *Summa Theologiæ*, 1<sup>a</sup>, q. 10, a. 1: “Eternity is the total, perfect, simultaneous possession of an interminable life.”

<sup>5</sup> See Mt 25:46: “*Ibunt... iusti... in vitam æternam* – The righteous shall go off to eternal life” and Mt 25:41: “*Discedite a me maledicti, in ignem æternum* – Depart from me you accursed, into the eternal fire.”

<sup>6</sup> “Everything at the same instant.”

<sup>7</sup> “No security is too much where eternity is endangered.” Adage used in asceticism.



tis *suae*;"<sup>8</sup> life is the preparation for eternity and the foretaste of him who, also at the expense of great sorrows, is saved; foolish is he who, laughing, gets damned.

DFms  
32

## Resolutions

1. To the meditation on the end of the world follow the *first* resolutions. Convenient time is spent on them due to their difficulty and special importance.

- a) The first is the abandonment of sin, conversion, confession with profound dispositions.
- b) The second concerns the choice of state in life (if not yet made) according to the views of God and our eternal advantages.
- c) The third is the special determination to accomplish well the will of God and to provide for eternity in the chosen, embraced special state in life.

2. Needed here a) to experience the will of God, b) to consider things under the light of eternity.

It is necessary that the external voice of wealth, honor, pleasures should be silenced; in such a way that the heart becomes indifferent to everything that is of the world, of this life, of selfishness.

3. Given these three dispositions, three are the means:

- a) humble, constant, trusting prayer;
- b) to think before the tabernacle and before the open sepulcher;
- c) to seek good advice, from a learned, pious and prudent person.

The fruit shall be as holy as these resolutions: that is, properly chosen, profoundly felt, accompanied by divine mercy.

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<sup>8</sup> Eccl 12:5: "Man goes to his lasting home."

**[Sin is destruction]**DFms  
33

1. Sin is destruction. Among the angels, only one sin, only by thought, has ruined a large part among the *Angels*. It did not have forgiveness; will not have it. To God their greatness did not matter! These are signs of the enormity of the offense against God.

2. It has destroyed our *foreparents*. God made promises to Adam and to his children: and he gave them gifts: integrity, grace, immortality, happiness.

The sin was pride, it was deceit, it caused destruction to them, and to all their children: spiritual, intellectual, moral, public, private, infinite destruction.

3. Sin is destruction in *us*. The only, voluntary, spiritual destruction.

**[Three elements to sin]**DFms  
34

It takes three elements to sin: intelligence, will, matter. In order that sin may be grave, the awareness of the mind and the consent of the will must be full; furthermore, the matter must be serious. Otherwise, sin is venial.

One must equally be far from scrupulosity which is a false conviction and from laxity, which is recklessness, in judging sin.

**[What is sin in particular]**DFms  
35

1. In particular, sin is: a voluntary transgression of God's law. Voluntary and that is: it proceeds from the intelligence and will. Transgression... includes rebellion against God, Creator and Lord and as such it is supreme pride; a rebellion against God the most loving Re-

deemer and as such a supreme ingratitude; against God Judge and hence a supreme foolishness.

2. Sin is the real disaster because, from the past, it takes away merits, good habits, education; for the present, because it takes away grace, closes heaven, opens hell; for the future, as it attracts other disgraces, crosses, remorse, death; all created things become enemy, disposes for falling again, makes one live at the edge of hell.

3. Sin must be shunned with hatred: the greatest hatred! Better death; universal, especially however that for which we are disposed; supernatural in motives and in principle; effective, that is, it makes us use means, flight from dangers and assiduous prayer.

## DFms **Mercy** 36

1. With Adam's fall, God reveals, at a distance, the Repairer; for the fallen sinner, there is confession, mercy.

To bring mercy to man is the reason of the incarnation: it is foreshadowed in the sought-after drama of the lost sheep, the prodigal son.

2. Why did he leave the father's house? He was junior! Desire for freedom.

How was he engulfed by evil? – Far from the father-by living “luxuriose”<sup>9</sup> – he dissipated everything.

How does he return to the father? Abandoned by his friends, reduced to the extremes, he meditates, he puts his trust on his father.

How is he welcome? He was expected (*prevenuto*),<sup>10</sup> he receives as much as he had before, and even more.

<sup>9</sup> “Living dissolutely.”

<sup>10</sup> “*Prevenuto*”: that is “*preceduto*”, “*anticipato*” = “preceded”, “expected”.

3. In whatever state is the soul, let there be hope! He who was a sinner, with the overabundance of grace, can go much higher through penance.

Serious is the responsibility of him who does not take advantage of mercy.

## [Hell]

DFms  
37

1. Hell is eternal destruction, the consummation of the destruction due to sin. Destruction of the divine plan of Creation, Redemption, Sanctification. Destruction or failure in life, of all the means of our salvation “*Melius si natus non fuisset.*”<sup>11</sup> “*Nos insensati... ergo erravimus.*”<sup>12</sup>

2. In fact, hell is the privation of the vision of God, every evil deed, every torment. God is known only that much for one to suffer; thus the benefits, the graces, the happiness that he gives to the chosen ones, the mistake committed by disobeying; the will has only evil, nothing good; the heart, imagination, the senses, all, every torment: “*Locus tormentorum.*”<sup>13</sup>

Hell is proportionate to the seriousness, the obstinacy and the number of sins.

3. What should the thought of hell produce in us: a) supreme *horror*, the greatest, of sin; b) *horror* of the dangers of sin, with attachment to prayer and abnegation of the senses; c) *zeal* in stopping souls who are journeying towards hell: especially through writings.

[blank page]

DFms  
38

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Mt 26:24 and parallel quotes: “*Melius erat*”, etc.: “It would be better for that man if he had never been born.”

<sup>12</sup> Wis 5:4 and 6: “Fools that we were... we then strayed from the way of truth.”

<sup>13</sup> “Place of torments.” Cf. Lk 16:28.

DFms  
39**[The examination of conscience]**

1. The examination of conscience is an inquiry on the *state* of the soul: attitudes, graces, dangers, duties, sins, struggle, merits, victories. It is the clock of the soul. It gives us the state of health or of sickness, more than and together with individual faults.

2. It is necessary so that: there can be indispositions that excuse one from all the practices of piety, but not from the examination of conscience. So much for avoiding sin and dangers, as much as for progressing and studying the means for succeeding.

3. The examination of conscience is general and particular. The general is done every evening, every confession, with every monthly retreat, during the course of Spiritual Exercises. The particular is done in the morning as preventive, through the day and in the evening, once, well. We should make it a habit so that reflection on ourselves and on our actions, thoughts, sentiments is rooted in us. It must be preceded by prayer, followed by sorrow, resolution, penance, in the manner of a confession between the soul and the Lord.

DFms  
40 [blank page]DFms  
41**Confession**

1. Confession is general reparation. It has two aspects: the past that it erases in our evil part, that is, sin; the future for which it is the remedy par excellence and prevention of sin.

2. Confession: opens heaven, closes hell, restores lost merits by sin, the restoration (*ritorna*)<sup>14</sup> of peace of

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<sup>14</sup> “*Ritorna*”: that is “*fa ritornare*” (makes to return), “*restituisce*” (restores).

heart, gives grace, exercises man in humility, makes him prudent, gives him the sacramental grace and the better guarantee against the final judgment.

3. It must be done: with due frequency, with sorrow since it is conversion, with sincerity, with constancy. Ordinarily, in confession also one finds the better guide, so much for the beginning of spiritual life as much for its development.

### [The spiritual director]

DFms  
42

If one truly loves to make good use of the time of formation, one needs the Spiritual Director:

a) To him one must totally reveal: the past life, defects, virtues, inclinations, preferences, aptitudes, piety, attractions, gifts of the Lord, level of education, obstacles, health, circumstances of life, etc., etc.

b) Place in his hands the will with constancy, repetition of acts, removing the difficulties that block formation; and with prayer, trying to do promptly, easily, pleasantly (diletto)<sup>15</sup> what the Director shall indicate.

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<sup>15</sup> For this expression that translates the formula "*prompte, faciliter, delectabiliter*", see note 10 of DFst 81.







# ATTACHMENTS

## Attachment no. 1

*Via purgativa* Teologia del Padre *At* "Domine novimus me, novimus te  
Nec aliquis cupiam nisi te."  
"Hac est vita aeterna, ut cognoscant te et quem misisti."

Chi è Dio (in se)? L'ente negario. "Ego sum qui sum."  
"In solus Dominus." *una parola* summa grandezza: per sempre, potenza  
eternità, onnipotenza, gloria ~~omnipotenza~~ perfettissima  
Bisogna di nessuno, felicissimo in se...  
"Mihi et in omni saeculo..."

Consequenze { Assunzione: considerazione - 1. parte della verità:  
b) lode e perenne, totale, ab omni creatura ad in eo  
c) Amore perfetto e come bene infinito, egua gratia  
In unione con le beate creature e con gli Angeli;  
e sanctus, ... laudate .... benedicite ....

Chi sono io? essere contingentissimo: io ho un' anima che non è  
senza nulla, quanto ad anima e corpo, da se stessa  
senza nulla, quanto all'essere ed agire, da se stessa *impotente*  
Verità: umiltà: per sempre, potere, vita, esistenza:  
il nulla -

Consequenze { Dolore: riguardo fatto simile a noi - flumen - luc - flumen  
negli gloriosi....  
Vita nella posizione giusta: nel principio e fine  
Rispetto, onore.

L'umiltà del cuore: frutto generale.

## Attachment no. 2

13

Pro Governoratore  
universa quae conditi sunt, providentia sua, tunc et gubernat  
tingens la fine usque ad finem potest et disponens omnia iuxta  
Con la sua dogge: ~~providentia sua, tunc et gubernat~~

a) eterna: chi necessariamente ha un fine, ordine, direzione  
di ogni azione e movimento, e ad eterno ordine, e  
sapientia, e ogni sua ordinazione -

Cui deo uniformari: prendendo come legge  
suprema e massimo atto d'amore e volontà di Dio -

b) Presidio et blisphoria  
naturale e positivo la legge eterna e scritta nella  
coscienza e mente d'ogni uomo e così, firme naturale  
e per ogni uomo - facile - immutabile - necessaria.

c) Longo esame sui comandamenti (si legge  
naturale, e di cultura e circostanza del sabato) -

- Primo - istruzione -

Volontà di Dio e il gran sole

verso cui l'anima, come girasole, deve sempre star  
rivolta.

Volontà di Dio: nei superiori;

nei fatti;

nello interno.

"Deo me facere voluntatem tuam, quia Deus meus es tu."

Comandamenti - Qui occorre per passare tutti

i comandamenti per veder come osservati.

Per diventare: cristiani; religiosi; sacerdoti; occorre prima essere  
uomini.

Virtù naturali: giustizia, pietà, temperanza, fortezza.

L'umiltà del cuore: frutto generato

## Attachment no. 3

60

Pesi Via "Notum fac. ubi; viam in qua  
 ambulem" (ps. 142).  
 Contemplazione del prescizio { fatto bambino - homo paty.  
 Circostanze della nascita;  
 Perchè - umiltà - mortificazione  
 sono i documenti per entrare nella scuola S.C.C.

---

Pesi affittato a M.H. { Così si è consegnato tutto -  
 ed a S. Giuseppe { Si è lasciato formare.  
 questa è la Via: stimare - amare - consegnare  
 a M.H. a con puerizia;  
 con imitazione,  
 farci e vivere con la disozione perfetta;  
 in ambiente spirituale;  
 S. Giuseppe - i tanti protettori - gli angeli - il Dio  
 le anime purganti

---

Vita privata { Occupa 20 - in 33 - giorni di importanza secondo uno.  
 E' ascisa in età, sapienza, grazia.  
 E' una antenna misteriosa di obbedienza,  
 di preghiera, di sacrificio, di virtù  
 domestiche.

---

Ingresso { Come lascia ogni cosa: masche, casa, confessione;  
 a vita { Con il Signore, in incerta tentazione, guadagnando prima  
 pubblica { Vi entra adomand associando vita contemplativa all'attiva.

## Attachment no. 4

62

Vita  
pubblica

Perfetta corrispondenza alla vocazione: ~~non essere~~  
ai poveri, <sup>ed ai corpi</sup> e <sup>redimere</sup> il vangelo, stabilire la Chiesa, e  
Prodigiare per peccatori, per gli apostoli, per  
piccoli e per poveri evangelizzatori.

Perfette disposizioni interiori ed esteriori: sola  
la gloria di Dio, continua vita interiore,  
amore alle anime <sup>ed ai corpi</sup> e <sup>redimere</sup> tutti. Sella marti-  
ficazione, della mansuetudine, ~~continenza~~  
forze perfettamente solte, purezza  
perfettamente ardente, giustizia perfet-  
tamente caritativa, temperanza perfettamente  
superiore.

[illegible]

## Attachment no. 5

70

Gesù - verità  
 (Verità inaudite, a muovere al mondo - verità eterna  
 (No beatitudine) } Significato di ognuna.  
 Conoscere tutto il pensiero, il sentimento, la vita

Discorso montano: { Le perfezioni della carità e della virtù.  
 indicate da Gesù nella legge antica.  
 la santificazione del cuore e dello spirito.  
 la essenza del sacerdozio.  
 Due caratteri { necessità di salvarsi;  
 necessità dell'innocenza.

In generale { ~~La dottrina dell'innocenza, molto alta, la sua~~  
~~La dottrina del dolore, la sua fine.~~  
~~La dottrina della grazia, il trionfo e la vita.~~  
 « Padre, agnoscere, l'innocenza »

La beatitudine

L'istituzione dei maggi di salute (Papa, sacerdoti)

## Attachment no. 6

g<sup>ta</sup>  
 la Grazia medinale  
 sana i difetti della  
 natura operati dal  
 peccato originale.

} quoad intellectum, sana l'ignoranza, la  
 incoerenza, il dimenticare, la frangere della  
 mente, l'error, il pregiudizio, le perversioni.  
 } quoad sentimentalitatem, sana l'indifferenza,  
 la diffidenza, la cattiva inclinazione, le passioni,  
 i sentimenti, le affezioni.  
 } quoad voluntatem, sana l'abulia, la legge-  
 rza ed incostanza, l'acedia, l'ostinazione,  
 il mal alibi.

la grazia attuale  
 estimata a compiere  
 gli atti sopra la  
 natura

} di vera penitenza  
 } di fede, speranza, carità  
 } di vita cristiana / nei peccati oltre  
 } la legge naturale.

la grazia attuale  
dura ancora tali atti; aggiungendo i meriti  
 di N. S. E. C. per infusione della  
 spirito santo pochi e hanno valore  
 eterno.

La grazia medinale  
 vince il corpo

} estingue le male concupiscenze -  
 } impone le concupiscenze nuove  
 } e sante -  
 } commuove tutte le nuove tenerezze,  
 } conforti, ecc. come si vede nei santi.

## Attachment no. 7

88

La vita data dallo Spirito Santo

La vita a) che c'è la vita: naturale

{	vegetativa
	animale
	razionale
	angelica
	divina

La vita umano-divina di S.C.

La vita cristiana b) questa è creata dallo Spirito Santo:  
in S.C.: et spiritus sanctus supereminet...  
ductus a spiritu in secundum spiritum...  
in noi: nel Battesimo, Seconda vita, etc.  
natus ex aqua et spiritu sancto...  
nella massima  
nella Incarnazione, etc.

La creazione e sviluppo c) Ripetere questa vita umano-divina.  
Svilupparla.  
Regere.



# **Attachment no. 8**

## **Concordance table of the DF editions**

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- The references to the bulletin *Unione Cooperatori Buona Stampa* (UCBS, until January 1928, and then UCAS = *Unione Cooperatori Apostolato Stampa*) and to the *Diario* of Giaccardo have been limited to the minimum due to the massive use of these sources.
- The references to saints follow, as a rule, the alphabetical order of names.

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