



# *Apostles for Today*

## *Reflections and prayers - January 2013*

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### **THE NEW EVANGLISATION IN THE LIGHT OF PALLOTTINE SPIRITUALITY**

I would like to begin this contribution on the theme of the New Evangelisation in the light of Pallottine spirituality by entrusting ourselves to the intercession of Mary, thus understanding, in her footsteps, the deepest meaning of every Christian and of the whole Church:

*“The stages of Mary’s path [...] are marked by the capacity to maintain a persevering climate of recollection, to meditate on every event in the silence of her heart, before God (cf. Lk 2:19-51), and in her meditation before God also to understand the will of God and become capable of accepting it interiorly. The presence of the mother of God with the Eleven, after the Ascension, is not then a simple historical note of something past, but assumes a meaning of great value, because she shares with them what is most precious to her: the living memory of Jesus, in prayer; she shares this mission of Jesus: to preserve the memory of Jesus and in this way to preserve his presence” (Benedict XVI, General Audience of March 14<sup>th</sup> 2012).*

In the stages of our path as Union of Catholic Apostolate, God also calls us to this same very high model. Let us entrust to Mary every moment of our own lives, so that we may preserve the presence of Jesus, as did Saint Vincent Pallotti throughout his life.

With the help of the Holy Spirit, in the great number of events in this year which is so special for faith and so rich in graces because of the canonization jubilee, we are introduced more and more to knowledge of the fullness of the truth of this charism which today,

more than ever in the Church is called communion, collaboration, unity.

It is important now, in the sense of the New Evangelisation, to live the Pallottine charism with a new outlook on things, on events, on situations, on ourselves. That is, see the fullness of the charism – as is the case for every charism in the Church – reflected in the times in which we are living.

As we well know, adhering with our lives to the will of God means bringing about a dynamic conversion in ourselves, keeping our souls always fixed on the memory of the history of our communities, of our groups, as did Mary. And the first memory is the life of our holy Founder. He, at a certain point in his life, asked God: “My God, who are You and who am I? Who am I before You? What might you wish me to be before You?”

They are questions which we need to ponder throughout our lives. Each of us must ask them of ourselves, and the answer will depend on our faith and on the faith of all those who feel themselves to belong to the Church in general and, in particular, to the family of the UAC.

Our Founder also says this to us: “Seek God and you will find Him; seek Him in everything and you will find him in everything, seek Him always and you will find Him always”.

It is essential for us, called to be apostles in this time of new evangelisation, to live this ‘contemplation’: to see God above all in others, venerating His Image in them, even when it is disfigured by sin or when the gulf between the Gospel and life seems insurmountable.

The life of Saint Vincent Pallotti and all of the other events of our history, inserted into that of the development of the Union as a whole, make us realise that in order to evangelise, precisely now, ‘something more’ is asked of us with respect to our individual life.

That ‘something more’ is to be united, to be in communion. So doing and so being, we implement the testament of Jesus: “As you, Father, are in me and I in you, may they also be one in us, so that the world may believe” (cf. Jn 17:21), so greatly desired by Saint Vincent Pallotti in actions and in words: one flock under one shepherd..

But this ‘something more’, this communion, can be brought about in us by a special grace from the Father if he finds, however, a particular disposition in us. And the disposition, that is the essential condition, is this: to live among ourselves the substantial constitutive of the whole Union of Catholic Apostolate and of the Church, love: “love one another as I have loved you” (Jn 15:12). The mutual love which, together with “God so loved the world that he gave his only Son” (Jn. 3:16) is the foundation of Pallottine spirituality.

And to love one another not simply as friends or because we agree or because we work on joint projects, but love one another as Jesus has loved us, to the point of being able to give our lives for others. In the communion of mutual love, Jesus himself will then become through us the Evangeliser, the Apostle.

As Pope John Paul II affirmed in *Christifideles Laici*, ‘new evangelisation’ means therefore ‘mending the Christian fabric of [human] society... [by] remak[ing] the Christian fabric of the ecclesial community itself; it means helping the Church to continue to be present ‘in the midst of the homes of her sons and daughters’, to animate their life and direct it towards the Kingdom which is coming.

### **For personal/community reflection:**

1. “He summoned those he wanted [...]; they were to be with him and to be sent out to proclaim the message” (Mk 3:13-14). Can we to transmit the Gospel if we do not have as a basis a ‘being with’ with Jesus? What does it mean to ‘be with’ Him?

2. The Lineamenta of the Synod states: “new evangelization” ‘means to have the boldness to raise the question of God in the context of [the] problems of the world], thereby fulfilling the specific character of the Church’s mission’. How can we achieve this, starting from the roots of the Pallottine charism?

3. “Without doubt a mending of the Christian fabric of society is urgently needed in all parts of the world. But for this to come about what is needed is to first remake the Christian fabric of the ecclesial community itself” (Christifideles Laici, 34). What is the specific fabric of the Union of Catholic Apostolate?

## **Prayer:**

God the Father of mercies,  
grant that we may live this time of joy  
in a spirit of gratitude, humility and prayer,  
so that our hearts may be filled with Your grace  
which is rich in mercy and blessings.

Allow us to imitate Jesus the Apostle  
after the example of Saint Vincent Pallotti:  
reviving in us Faith,  
strengthening in us Hope,  
rekindling in us Charity,  
in order to spread them throughout the world.

In this time of spiritual and apostolic renewal  
we wish to have a profound experience of God,  
in which your Word will be a light and guide for our steps,  
the Eucharist will be food to nourish our spirit,  
so that we may be authentic missionary disciples of Christ. Amen

*(from the Prayer for the Jubilee of the Canonisation of Saint Vincent Pallotti)*

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