

## **LISTENING TO OUR FOUNDER IN THE YEAR OF THE BIBLE**

Dear Superiors, Masters of formation groups, Directors of sales and book-centres, and all confreres of the Province,

Here are some inspiring thoughts and practical suggestions from Blessed James Alberione which are very relevant and useful in the Year of the Bible, and in fact, every year.

Bl. James Alberione considered the Bible as “the book of God and the book of humanity, the book of light and comfort.” According to him,

“The Bible is a long hymn of praise to God;  
A hymn of creation, a hymn of redemption,  
A hymn of the mission of man on earth. The Bible is the book that reconciles the past  
With the present and the future. It has been, even if not known,  
The educator of humanity for centuries” (*Carissimi in san Paolo*, 669-670).

“The Bible is the food of fervent souls and of those who want to grow in sanctity” (*Haec meditare* – I, 282).

The Bible “is the letter of God to human beings, inviting them to heaven and teaching them the way thereto” (*Denec formetur Christus in vobis*, 138).

“Take the Bible and read it; there you will find living waters that will quench your thirst; there you will find the way to love your celestial Spouse above all things; there you will find even the conversations you should hold with Him. In one word, your soul will find the way to complete satisfaction” (*Leggete le sacre Scritture*, 90).

“What a precious and meritorious thing it is to propagate the Gospel, the catechism, and all books that lead people to bow down before Jesus the Truth (13 Feb, 1959)!

“The Bible is the book that we have to give, whether it is through film or print, through radio or records, through filmstrips or other forms” (*Thoughts*, 77).

“The primary object of the apostolate, therefore, is the Bible (*Apostolato stampa*, 142).  
“*The Gospel for every family* should be the principal aim of the apostolate of the press” (*Ibid*, 120).

In his editorial in the bulletin of the cooperators, November 1923, Fr Alberione pointed out ways to realize the goal of the Gospel in every family at the nominal price of 1 lira per copy:

1. Preaching on the Gospel and keeping a collection box at the end of the church.
2. Through associations of men and women where they exist.
3. Giving the Gospel as prize to children who are outstanding in catechism.
4. Offering the Gospel as gift for Christmas and New Year.

5. Proposing to the directors of factories and workshops that they offer the Gospel as a gift to the employees.
6. Finding a generous person who will pay for a copy of the Gospel for a poor family or someone who would not pay.
7. Making use of the opportunities offered by the 40 hours adoration, spiritual retreats, etc. to distribute the Gospel.
8. Making use of the sales stores, libraries etc., to distribute the Gospel.

What Fr Alberione says about the Gospel, we can apply to the Bible, and distribute the Bible at a much reduced price.

To these we can add the following:

- a) Collecting funds from well-to do and generous persons for subsidizing the Bible.
- b) Conducting Bible Sundays or Bible weeks with various Biblical cultural programmes and subsidized sale of the Bible.
- c) Conducting Bible fairs in parishes and shrines.
- d) Bringing out a special, low priced edition of the Bible.
- e) Take initiatives to publish the Bible/ New Testament in one or two Indian vernaculars in which it is needed.
- f) Seek the cooperation of Bishops and Parish Priests in these endeavours.
- g) Above all, let us pray fervently that our spiritual life may be nourished more and more on the Word of God, and that we may succeed in widely diffusing the Bible.

All persons concerned are earnestly requested to consider these points seriously and do what is possible and practical in each place, so that we can celebrate this year of the Bible in a meaningful and fruitful way. Not very thing is possible everywhere, but certainly something is possible in every place.

May the Divine Master, the Incarnate Word, enlighten us and may Blessed James Alberione intercede for us.

Yours fraternally in the Divine Master,  
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