

CHAPTER DIRECTORY

FOREWORD

This chapter directory, despite its nature and role as an accessory code to the constitutions and general regulations, is part of the proper law of the Institute and as such has normative or indicative value.

It is approved by the General Chapter, which may add, modify or delete one or more articles with an absolute majority, in the case of secondary provisions, or with a qualified majority, in the case of provisions affecting General Regulations.

This text has been written primarily for practical purposes. In addition to collecting the norms already included in the constitutions and regulations, the Directory specifies and defines them for the proper procedure of chapters.

With regard to local chapters, only a few general norms have been included here, as the appropriate source for more specific norms is the particular directory, to be prepared by individual provinces or delegations for the celebration of their own chapters, in a similar way to what has set forth here for the General Chapter.

Rome, 1 July 2012

GENERAL NORMS

1 Chapters, at the various levels, should be considered as the primary institution through which the confreres exercise their responsibility in regard to the fraternal and apostolic life of the Institute, and provide for its government. (R 237).

The chapters should be conveniently prepared through an ample consultation among the confreres, so that the work of the members of the chapter may result more enlightened and effective.

On the occasion of the chapters, directly or through their delegates, all confreres should feel involved in an event of so great importance, and should make their contribution of prayer and participation according to the modalities required. (R 246).

2 Every chapter is presided by the relevant superior or his immediate superior.

In the case of several communities or institutes gathered together, it is presided by a confrere chosen by the group.

3 Every chapter consists of members *ex officio*, elected and invited members, according to the constitutions and regulations.

The number of elected members for general and provincial chapters must always be larger than the number of members *ex officio* combined with those who are invited. Whenever the number of elected members is less or equal, the

general or provincial superior will increase the number of elected members through a direct election. (R 238).

4 The general or provincial superiors, with the consent of their councils, can invite other confreres who are not elected to the chapters with right to vote. These should be selected in view of the issues to be discussed in the chapter, to represent the various sectors of our mission, or for other reasons they consider important.

The members invited cannot be more than three (R 240).

5 The right to participate in a general or provincial chapter *ex officio* becomes effective on the date the respective chapter is convoked.

Those participating in the chapter *ex officio* cannot also participate as delegates (R 239) and, therefore, only have the right to a single vote in ballots (c. 168).

6 With due respect to the dispositions in no. 7, all confreres who are perpetually professed on the date of the celebration of the chapters enjoy active and passive voice in view of the provincial and general chapters.

In view of the provincial chapter, the confreres who have completed their third year of temporary profession on the date of the celebration of the local chapter also enjoy active voice (R 241).

Superiors of delegations or vice-provinces shall specify the precise forms in which confreres with three years of profession on the opening date of the assembly may exercise their right to vote in the letter announcing their assembly.

7 Is deprived of active and passive voice:

a) perpetually, the member who has been deprived by common law (cc. 694; 1364);

b) until his re-entrance in the Institute:

- the exclaustrated religious (c. 687);
- the religious who is absent, if in the judgement of the competent superior his absence is not justified by health reasons, studies or apostolate to be carried out on behalf of the Institute (R 242).

8 With due respect to their freedom, those who are elected should strive to see the will of the Lord in the confidence shown by their confreres and should accept it (R 243).

9 The members of the chapters are expected to attend them. It is not only a question of exercising a right, but also of fulfilling a grave duty.

If a confrere has reasons not to participate, he should present them in writing to the competent superior to whom the decision belongs (R 244).

10 The provinces, the local communities and also the confreres, may send their suggestions and wishes to the chapters (c. 631, 3).

11 In the general regulations our communities are shaped as follows:

Houses: communities established as such with at least three confreres, one of whom exercises the ministry of authority;

Residences: communities established as such with a restricted number of confreres, depending as religious upon the superior of a neighbouring house or directly upon the provincial superior (R 342).

12 The requirements for the validity of a vote are as follows:

- the vote must always be free, secret, certain, absolute, determined (c. 172, 1) and not for oneself.

- at least two-thirds of those with the right to vote must be present (c. 166, 3);

- no-one outside of the chapter electoral college is permitted to vote (c. 169);

- the number of votes must not exceed the number of electors (c. 173, 3).

13 It is forbidden to procure votes for oneself or for others, either directly or indirectly (c. 626).

14 Only those present at the chapter may participate in elections, without prejudice to what has been established in regard to voting by letter (n. 142).

If there is an infirm confrere with the right to vote in the house where the chapter is held, the two tellers shall go to him and collect his secret vote (c. 167, 1 and 2).

15 In provincial and general chapters, two moderators and then two secretaries, responsible for the chapter proceedings are elected with absolute majorities and in separate ballots. Two tellers are then elected, in a single ballot with a relative

majority. The two most recently professed members of the chapter will act as tellers for these elections.

The elected tellers and the president shall keep the ballots they check secret.

16 In local chapters, the most recently professed and the longest professed participants act as tellers. The secretary is appointed by the president, after hearing the opinion of the chapter members. The president and the secretary sign the chapter proceedings and the minutes for the election of the delegates and substitutes to the provincial chapter.

17 Once the ballots for the elections have started, no one may enter or leave the chapter room, except for the situation specified in no. 14. The ballots for any election should not be interrupted to discuss other issues until the election is concluded.

18 The tellers transfer the ballots, uniformly folded, to an urn. They then count the ballots, after verifying with the president that they correspond to the number of voters. The president declares the elected member. The ballots are destroyed after the election or at the end of the session.

19 With regard to ballots for texts, motions or proposals, electronic voting systems may be used in chapters, provided that the secrecy of the vote is ensured and the possibility of any interference is ruled out.

For ballots concerning people, it is advisable to use forms that ensure the greatest secrecy of the votes (e.g. use of a numbered list of those eligible for election).

20 With due regard to the provisions in no. 98 concerning the election of the Superior General, when elections with separate ballots are held, these shall be by absolute majority for the first two ballots. In event of a third ballot, this shall be between the two candidates that received the greatest number of votes in the second ballot: if these are more than two, the ballot shall be between the two oldest members in terms of age. Should this ballot result in a tie, the oldest candidate in terms of age shall be considered as elected (c. 119,1°).

21 Substitutes are elected in a single ballot. Those with the most votes are the first to act as substitutes.

22 If the individuals elected or the substitutes are absent, they must be informed immediately and should give their response as soon as possible.

23 The proceedings of local or provincial chapters shall be sent to the provincial or general council respectively.

24 Some religious women from the Institute of the Daughters of St. Mary of Providence can be invited to local, provincial and general chapters, and to vice-province or delegation assemblies, with the consent of their Superior. They shall participate in the work of the chapter without the right to vote.

25 Some Guanellian cooperators, or other lay people that collaborate in our mission of charity, can be invited to local,

provincial and general chapters, and to assemblies. They shall participate in the work of the chapter without the right to vote.

26 The criteria for inviting Guanellian sisters, cooperators or lay people to chapters, their numbers and the moments or forms in which they participate shall be established by the respective Superior, with the consent of his Council.

GENERAL CHAPTER

NATURE AND TASKS

27 The general chapter is the supreme authority in the Institute, exercised according to our Constitutions. This chapter represents the entire Institute and constitutes its fundamental sign of unity and charity. The primary task of the general chapter is to guard the charism of the Founder and whatever constitutes the spiritual patrimony of the Institute with fidelity, in order to render them operative in its life and apostolate. It is the competency of this chapter to elect the superior general and his councillors, to discuss subjects of utmost importance, to issue norms that every member is expected to observe (C 113).

28 It pertains to the general chapter to examine and evaluate the reports of the general superior and the treasurer, as well as the status of the Institute in its various aspects: religious life, apostolic life, government, formation, pastoral ministry for vocations, temporal goods and their administration (R 249).

It also examines in depth the topics that the general government, in dialogue with the provinces, will suggest.

For this purpose, the general government will prepare the proper reports (R 250).

In examining the topics and problems, the members should proceed with respect yet with truthfulness, in such a way that verification, study and solutions may help to avoid whatever is harmful and to solicit positive energies for the growth of the Institute (R 247).

ANNOUNCEMENT AND CONVOCATION

29 The general chapter is announced ordinarily every six years to renew the general government, or it may be anticipated in the event of the death of the superior general or of any discontinuance from his office. An extraordinary general chapter is convoked for other grave reasons, as approved by the superior general with the collegial vote of his council and after hearing the provincial superiors (C 114).

30 For a just reason, and with the deliberative vote of his council, the superior general can advance or postpone the date for the celebration of the general chapter by six months in relation to the end the six-year period.

31 The chapter is announced by circular letter written by the superior general to all confreres of the Institute a year before it is due to take place.

If the chapter is convoked due to the resignation, removal or death of the superior general, it shall be announced by the vicar general as soon as possible, so that it can be celebrated within six months from the time of its announcement (R 296).

32 The letter of announcement should indicate the reasons for the chapter, the approximate date of its celebration, its members by right, the number of representatives from each province, vice-province and delegation dependent on the general government, and the date by which provincial chapters, and vice-province and delegation assemblies must take place, as well as the issues considered to be of most importance.

33 Four months before the celebration of the chapter, a personal letter shall be sent to the individual members with right to vote, containing the following:

- a) the official announcement of their convocation to the chapter;
- b) the venue and official date of the celebration;
- c) a full list of the chapter members and their substitutes.

The letter will also be published in the official bulletin of the Congregation.

34 The Superior General shall inform the Holy See and the bishop of the diocese where the chapter will take place of its date and venue, with a request for their special blessing.

PRE-CHAPTER COMMISSION

35 In preparation for the chapter, the general council shall appoint a pre-chapter commission and at the same time prepare whatever may be necessary and useful for the study of the issues to be submitted to the general chapter, for its methodological, technical and logistical organisation, and for its spiritual animation.

36 The pre-chapter commission has the following specific tasks:

- a) to ensure the preparation of appropriate documents for the chapter reflection (*‘instrumentum laboris’*, *‘lineamenta’*, etc.);
- b) to send the necessary documents to the chapter members at least two months before the start of the chapter;
- c) to invite the confreres, sisters and Guanellian laity to pray for the success of the Chapter and to provide some support, where possible;
- d) to propose and coordinate a period of preparation in the provinces, vice-provinces and delegations, calling upon the cooperation of every confrere and community, and particularly that of the chapter members;
- e) to prepare a timeframe for the work;
- f) to prepare everything necessary for work of the chapter to proceed smoothly, efficiently and properly (e.g.: liturgical celebration, talks by experts, etc.).

37 The committee shall be composed of a sufficient number of confreres who can make a real contribution in terms of study and research, and actively participate in the meetings, at least those of a plenary nature. It can also call upon the assistance of competent lay people for the work it is required to perform.

CHAPTER MEMBERS

38 The following participate *ex officio* in the general chapter:

- the superior general
- the general councillors
- the latest superior general emeritus
- the general treasurer and the general secretary
- the provincial superiors and the superiors of the vice-provinces
- the superior of a delegation dependent on the General Council.

The delegates from the provinces, vice-provinces and delegations dependent on the General Government shall participate by election, together with the participation by invitation of not more than three confreres invited by the Superior General, in accordance with the general regulations, who have the right of active and passive voice (C 115).

39 The provincial vicar shall replace the provincial superior in the event of his legitimate impediment. If the vicar

has already been elected as a delegate, another councillor shall participate in the chapter.

40 Once the chapter has started, no one may be absent, except for a just cause.

If, during the chapter, a member becomes permanently unable to attend the meetings, the assembly shall decide whether to convoke a substitute.

41 The chapter members and all those who take part in the work should share the same spirit and intentions.

Each one should be willing to cooperate and respect the rightful freedom of others in seeking what is considered to be of most benefit to the Congregation.

42 All chapter members have the following obligations:

a) to study the topics and issues proposed, in order to form a personal opinion;

b) to prepare their own speeches;

c) to actively participate in the work of the groups and/or commissions;

d) to observe secrecy:

when required by the chapter, by a majority vote;

when problems are discussed in the chapter that could damage or offend the dignity of the Congregation, or of a province, house or individual confrere.

CHAPTER ORGANISMS AND OFFICES

43 Some offices and organisms have been established to ensure the regular functioning of the chapter.

- a) The offices include:
 - the chapter president
 - the moderators
 - the secretaries
- b) The organisms include:
 - the council of presidency
 - the working groups
 - the chapter committees.

The president

44 The president of the chapter is the superior general. He leads the sessions until the election of the moderators, to whom he entrusts the direction of the work.

The president:

- a) opens and closes each session;
- b) intervenes whenever he deems appropriate;
- c) verifies the outcome of the ballots and elections together with the tellers;
- d) officially announces the results and the names

of

those who are elected;

- e) can break ballot ties with his own vote if the

votes

are still tied after two

ballots, pursuant to c. 119, 2;

f) chairs the council of presidency;

g) having heard the council of presidency, recognises just causes for the

absence of a chapter member and grants exemption from certain provisions of this directory in special cases;

h) is the guarantor of freedom of discussion and observance of this directory.

45 The moderator on duty substitutes the president in his absence; however, he cannot exercise the right to break ties referred to in the previous no. (no. 44 e).

The moderators

46 The two moderators elected by the assembly from among the chapter members:

a) are members of the council of presidency;

b) direct the plenary meetings in turn, moderating the discussion, giving the floor to members and those who request it, and summing up discussions;

c) ensure that all members comply with the rules of this directory;

d) can directly resolve secondary issues that arise unexpectedly;

e) can also call for brief pauses, to facilitate the outcome of the discussion.

47 During sessions in which they are on duty, they can only submit motions or proposals by entrusting them to a committee or a chapter member.

- 48** If one of them is required to intervene in the discussion as a speaker, he shall hand over his turn to the other moderator.

The secretaries

49 The secretaries are qualified and responsible witnesses to the chapter proceedings. They:

- a) can avail of assistants for secretarial duties;
- b) have the duty of preparing everything required for the organization of the chapter;
- c) are responsible for the documents provided to the chapter members.

50 They also have the following specific duties:

- a) to organise the distribution of the necessary documents;
- b) to read out the motions that have been prepared, pursuant to this directory;
- c) to draw up the minutes of the plenary sessions, which must be made available in the chapter room and approved by the assembly;
- d) to collect and organise all documents relating to the work of the chapter;
- e) to prepare the proceedings of the general chapter (resolutions, reports or summaries of reports, results of the general elections, etc.) for publication;

- f) to ensure that a summary (chapter chronicle) of the work in progress is prepared and sent periodically to the confreres;
- g) to see to the needs of invited experts and guests.

51 They can be assisted in carrying out their various duties by confreres who are not chapter members or by lay people, chosen by the superior general after hearing the opinion of the pre-chapter commission, if indicated before the celebration of the chapter, or by the council of presidency, if the decision is made during the chapter itself.

These perform their tasks under the guidance of the two chapter secretaries; they may participate in the assemblies, without the right to speak, in accordance with the provisions of the council of presidency.

The council of presidency

52 The council of presidency is composed of the chapter president, the two moderators and the two secretaries; they are not normally part of any committees, although they can make their own contribution to them.

The chairpersons of the working groups and committees participate in it whenever the council of presidency deems it appropriate for the coordination of the work or to resolve particular issues.

53 The council has the following tasks:

- a) to prepare the timetable for common activities and the daily agenda;
- b) to study working methods;
- c) to distribute the work to the groups and committees and coordinate it;
- d) to examine new proposals made by the chapter members in advance;
- e) to approve the chapter chronicle (no. 49 f);
- f) to propose chapter groups and/or committees formed in accordance with expressed preferences for the chapter's approval;
- g) to introduce advisors and experts suggested by the committees to the assembly;
- h) to take note and, if necessary, revise the form of motions and proposals prepared by the committees, ensuring that they clearly express the ideas expressed during the discussion.

Chapter groups and committees

54 The chapter working groups and committees shall be composed of an adequate number of chapter members. Advisors and experts can participate in them without right to vote.

The council of presidency shall provide practical rules for the establishment of both the working groups and the committees.

55 The working group, composed of at least five chapter members, has the task of studying the reports of the superior and the general treasurer, and examining in depth the topics and issues on which the chapter has to reflect, according to the indications of the council of presidency. Depending on the topics or issues proposed, the working groups can be modified during the chapter and can be composed of confreres from the same geographical area or involved in the same field of apostolic activity.

56 A chapter committee, composed of at least five chapter members, has the task of studying a specific topic or issue, which it will then present to the assembly, and of preparing texts that have to be approved by the chapter.

Each chapter member can express his own preference when enrolling to form part of a specific committee.

The composition of each committee shall be approved by the assembly, once the council of presidency has proposed any necessary changes to ensure that each committee is sufficiently representative of the Congregation's various cultural realities.

57 Each group or committee shall elect, by an absolute majority, a chairperson and then a secretary, who shall substitute the chairperson when absent or unable to attend, and present the outcome of the work to the assembly.

58 The committee has the specific task of collecting all documents, speeches to the assembly and contributions from the various working groups or individual confreres on the topic assigned to it, in order to provide the assembly with the

information necessary to decide on the motions or proposals that the committee has to present in the chapter. The committee should also indicate how it has voted in regard to these (see nos. 89, 90 and 91).

59 The committee chairperson may invite a chapter member who is not part of the committee to be present as an advisor.

Each chapter member has the right to be heard in regard to the topic of a committee, even if he is not part of it.

60 When coordinating the work of the group or committee, the chairperson shall follow the reflection outline or plan proposed by the council of presidency; he shall ensure that each member has the chance to express his own opinion and organise the time for the discussion of each topic or issue, so that the work proposed can be brought to a conclusion with “motions” or “proposals” regarding the various topics*.

** For the sake of uniformity, in keeping with the Congregation’s normal procedure, the term ‘motion’ should be used to indicate anything that is legally binding and will be included in the general, provincial and delegation directories; the term ‘proposal’ should be used for exhortations, invitations and recommendations.*

61 The secretary of the group or committee shall prepare a clear and concise written report.

The report should describe:

- the work done by the group or committee;
- the topics discussed;

- the ideas that emerged on each topic, with the opinions of the majority and any minority;
- in summary, the motions or proposals that the group or committee has prepared and voted on for presentation to the assembly, clearly indicating the level of consent.

62 The secretaries shall submit the proceedings and all documentation of the work carried out by the groups or committees to the chapter secretary.

The spiritual animator

63 The superior general can invite a spiritual animator, with the consent of his council.

His role is to animate the spiritual life of the chapter, fostering an atmosphere of intense spirituality and nurturing a perspective of faith in regard to the topics and issues discussed.

He shall perform this role and his various tasks in harmony with the council of presidency; he is not a chapter member and does not participate in the work of the groups or committees, although he may attend the plenary meetings as a simple auditor.

THE WORK OF THE CHAPTER

Speeches to the assembly

64 The daily agenda, established by the council of presidency, should be communicated to all at least one day beforehand.

65 Those who wish to speak during the discussion must register with the chapter presidency, within the time specified, by filling out a form indicating the precise “point” they intend to discuss. The presidency shall establish the order of the speeches, grouping them according to subject matter, and the moderator shall give the floor in this order.

66 Each speaker is given five minutes for his scheduled address and is required to write out his speech in full, or at least in outline, and submit this to the presidency.

67 Once the scheduled contributions are finished, further contributions will be made, requested in the chapter room. The moderator will give the floor to those who wish to speak, in the order of the topics discussed. For these contributions, each speaker has three minutes and shall then submit a written summary to the presidency.

68 When an issue or topic has been sufficiently discussed, any chapter member may ask for the debate to be closed. The assembly shall decide on this motion immediately, without discussion, by an absolute majority.

69 Contributions that have not been made can be given in writing to the chapter members, at the request of the person concerned. Anyone may submit proposals to the various committees.

Voting on texts, motions or proposals

70 Before the ballot, the moderator shall, if necessary, remind the assembly of the voting procedure, the majority required and the text for which they are voting.

71 It should be borne in mind that:

a) the vote is secret even in matters of procedure, if this is requested by a third of the chapters members;

b) secret ballots can also be conducted using technical

instruments or cards containing one or more questions on which the individual chapter members express their vote. In the latter case, the ballots will be collected and counted by the tellers;

c) long texts must first be approved in parts and then in their entirety;

d) a text can be modified until the approval of the chapter proceedings, i.e. until the closure of the chapter, upon proposal by the relevant committee or the council of presidency.

72 The use of *polls* is envisaged in the chapter: the president, moderator or committee spokesperson may ask the assembly for an indicative vote on specific questions or texts, whenever this seems necessary or appropriate to determine the opinion of the assembly.

73 With regard to voting *methods*, the assembly may express its opinion on final Motions and Proposals only through two types of vote:

1) *placet*: this indicates pure and simple acceptance of the text, in the version in which it is put to the vote;

2) *non placet*: this indicates pure and simple non-acceptance of the text in question.

A *juxta modum* vote is only permitted in surveys or polls, by specifying in writing the *modum* proposed as an amendment. The committee dealing with the particular topic or the council of presidency shall acknowledge the proposed amendments and submit the amended text to a new vote, if necessary.

74 A *qualified majority* (two thirds of the chapter members) is required for the approval of a text, motion or proposal:
in the case of amendments to the text of the Constitutions or the norms of the General Regulations that the Assembly considers particularly important,
when there is an intention to introduce experiments contrary to common or proper law, to be submitted for the approval of the Holy See;
to declare the chapter closed.

75 All other decisions and technical and procedural matters require an *absolute majority* (half plus one) of those present, pursuant to c. 119, 2, unless our law clearly specifies otherwise.

If a proposal receives the same number of *placet* and *non placet* votes, i.e. is neither accepted nor rejected, it shall be returned to the committee, which, after hearing the council of presidency, can present the text once again after further amendments or withdraw it.

Initial proceedings of the chapter

76 The chapter begins, on the given date and in the established venue, with a Eucharistic concelebration presided over by the superior general and offered for the success of the Chapter.

The president may suggest intentions of common interest during the chapter.

77 The chapter members shall gather together in the general assembly room at the established time. The superior assumes the presidency.

The secretary acts as temporary secretary and the two most recently professed chapter members act as tellers.

- 78** One of the tellers reads out:
- a) the letter of convocation;
 - b) any decrees or communications from the Holy See;
 - c) the official list of chapter members;
 - d) doubts expressed concerning the presence of

any

chapter members, to be resolved by the assembly.

79 If at least two third of the members with the right to vote are present, the president declares the chapter officially open.

80 The very first act is the election of the two moderators, the two secretaries and the two tellers from among the chapter members.

The election of the moderators and secretaries is by an absolute majority, with separate ballots (see no. 20).

The election of the two tellers is by a relative majority with a single ballot. For this election, each voter writes two names on his ballot. The two chapter members with the highest number of votes are elected.

81 Before addressing other issues:

- a) any modifications to this chapter directory are discussed;
- b) a draft schedule of the work is presented and approved.

Report of the Superior General and the General Treasurer

82 The chapter president, either in person or through another member, presents the general report on the congregation, previously approved by the general council, in which he highlights:

- a) the congregation's personal and disciplinary form of government;
- b) the development and current situation of the Institute and its works;
- c) anything he considers useful to do in the future.

83 After the presentation of the report, whether entirely or in part, the assembly is given a moment to request clarifications, express general feedback or suggest proposals for a closer study of the report.

84 At the president's request, the general treasurer presents the economic and administrative report for the last six years, already approved by the general council.

85 After the presentation of the economic report, the assembly is given a moment to request clarifications, express general feedback or to suggest proposals for its further study.

86 This is followed by the election of three confreres who will examine the economic report in detail and present their findings to the assembly. The vote will be carried out with a single ballot, on which the chapter members shall write the names of three confreres. The confreres with the highest number of votes shall be considered as elected.

Discussion of issues

87 After the discussion on the two reports, some issues presented by the president or the moderator are proposed for more detailed examination, either individually or in groups.

These topics should then be discussed by the committees, in order to be presented to the assembly for discussion and voting.

Matters which the president or moderator on duty view as not requiring in-depth study can be directly proposed to the chapter members for a vote.

88 The committees meet at the established time and:

a) collect all the documentation on their specific topic:

(whatever has been prepared by the pre-chapter commission, the points highlighted in the two reports,

proposals from groups or individual conferees, the motions of the provincial and local chapters and the postulates, etc.);

b) examine their topic in depth;

c) formulate and vote on motions and proposals summarising the results of their study;

d) approve a report to be presented to assembly.

89 Motions must be approved by an absolute majority in the committee and presented to the chapter members in the assembly, together with the result of the vote.

If there is a minority of at least a third of the members, it may submit its own motion or proposal, in a similar manner, which will be subjected to a vote immediately after the motion or proposal of the majority.

90 The committee spokesperson shall present the results attained, in order and briefly.

This is followed by a discussion in the assembly (see. nos. 66-68), which can conclude in an indicative vote, either on the motion or proposal presented or on proposed amendments.

91 If necessary, the committee shall revise and divide the text, which will be presented to the assembly on the following day for a final vote, first '*per partes*' and then as a whole, by casting a '*placet*' or '*non placet*' vote (nos. 72 and 73).

Only the committee spokesperson may take the floor on this occasion, for brief explanations.

92 As a general rule, decisions made in the previous general chapter are proposed once again during the chapter, to decide whether they need to be reconfirmed.

The motions approved by the Chapter become effective immediately for the following six years. They will be proposed once again in the following General Chapter and, if reconfirmed by an absolute majority, they will be permanently included in the General Regulations.

General elections

93 Before the elections of the superior general and the general councillors, a poll may be conducted, without any legal value, if the chapter considers it appropriate.

94 The chapter has the faculty, by an absolute majority of secret votes, to establish the day of the election of the superior general, which will be preceded by a Eucharistic concelebration offered for the good of the Institute.

95 The members of the chapter shall refrain from any abuse or personal preference and, with only God and the good of the Institute in mind, shall elect those individuals that they recognise in the Lord as truly worthy and suitable.

They shall avoid procuring votes for themselves or for others, either directly or indirectly (c. 626).

96 The two tellers shall give each chapter member an envelope of ballots and a list of the eligible confreres. The ballots shall display the wording: “I elect and ask for” for the vote to be valid for the election of the candidate, if there is no

impediment; in the case of an impediment, they will validate the request to the Holy See for a dispensation.

97 The superior general must be a priest, perpetually professed for at least 10 years (C 119) and at least 40 years old (R 276).

He remains in office for 6 years and may be reappointed (C 119).

98 A qualified majority of the membership present on the first two ballots is required for his election; In case such a majority is not attained, one more ballot will take place by absolute majority.

In case of a negative outcome, a fourth ballot will take place, in which the only candidates will be the two confreres who have received the highest number of votes in the third ballot, or if there are several, the two oldest confreres; should this ballot result in a tie, the older candidate by first profession will be appointed. In case of equality by profession, the older candidate by age will be appointed (C 119).

99 The electors may submit a request to the Holy See for the appointment of a superior who does not possess the legally specified requirements, if the impediment is dispensable. In this case, the provision of canon law shall be carefully observed (cc. 180-183).

100 During the elections of the superior general, the presidency is assumed by the oldest priest in terms of profession.

101 If the new superior is not present at the chapter, he shall be summoned immediately and the chapter shall remain suspended until his arrival.

102 Once the election has been duly completed, the president shall announce the elected confrere. In the event that the president himself is elected as superior general, the first chapter teller has the duty of announcing the elected confrere.

103 The elected confrere is granted two days from the communication to decide whether to accept the election. However, he should strive to see the confidence shown in him by his confreres as reflecting the will of God, who will be close to him and comfort his human weakness.

By accepting his election, the elected confrere obtains full rights (*plenum ius*) (c. 178).

104 The new superior shall assume the presidency and address the members of the chapter, who shall pay him homage.

The new superior shall make the required profession of faith (c. 833, 8).

105 Once the superior general has been elected, it is appropriate to have a break before proceeding with the other elections.

106 The following ballots are for the election of the general councillors. The first to be elected is the vicar general. They are appointed in a separate ballot and by an absolute majority of votes in the first two ballots. Should these ballots fail, the two

confreres who received the highest number of votes in the second ballot, will be put to vote, or if there are several, the two oldest of these; in case of equal votes, the older candidate by first profession will be appointed. In case of equality by profession, the older by age will be appointed (C 121 e c. 119,1).

The president announces the elected confreres, after obtaining their consent. If they are absent, they should be immediately summoned; in the meantime, the chapter shall proceed with its work.

107 The chapter secretaries shall record the election proceedings in the book of minutes reserved exclusively for the general chapter elections; these shall be signed by the president, the tellers and the secretaries.

108 The chapter president or secretaries shall communicate the composition of the new general government to the Sacred Congregation for Religious.

CLOSURE OF THE CHAPTER

109 The closure of the chapter is decided by a qualified majority of votes in the assembly. The chapter secretaries shall draw up the minutes.

110 The chapter members shall gather together for a solemn Eucharistic concelebration.

111 The superior general and his council have the duty of promulgating the resolutions of the general chapter and

establishing when they come into effect for the entire Institute, unless the time of application is already specified in the resolutions themselves or has already been established by the chapter.

PROVINCIAL CHAPTER

112 The provincial chapter is the representative assembly of the province, which is legitimately convoked to promote the renewal and the good of the province and the Congregation, according to the directives of the Church and our own Law.

113 In particular, it is the competence of the provincial chapter to:

- 1) study and examine in depth the reports of the provincial superior and of the provincial treasurer;
- 2) verify the orientations and the decisions of the preceding provincial chapter;

- 3) indicate the general guidelines for the programming which will be carried out by the provincial council;
- 4) review the suggestions and requests of the local chapters and of the individual confreres, and upon evaluation make a decision about them;
- 5) discuss and see that whatever has been established by the general chapter and general council is implemented;
- 6) establish the number of provincial councillors;
- 7) establish the dues to be contributed to the provincial treasurer.

Further, whenever the provincial chapter has been called in view of the general chapter, it is its task to:

- 8) discuss the topics suggested by the document announcing the chapter;
- 9) discuss and vote the summary document of the discussed problems and foreseen solutions;
- 10) elect the provincial delegates to the general chapter, in accordance with the general regulations no. 251 (R 253).

114 The provincial chapter has the faculty to elaborate, modify, and interpret authentically the provincial norms.

In order to abrogate them, the absolute majority of votes is sufficient. In case of important matters to be evaluated in the chapter, a two-thirds majority of votes is required.

If necessary, the provincial chapter can make decisions also with decrees.

Before their promulgation, motions, proposals, norms and decrees must be approved by the general council (R 252).

This shall be officially communicated to the confreres by the provincial superior.

115 The provincial chapter meets regularly:
every time the general chapter is celebrated;
one more time within his period of six years (C 128).

116 The provincial chapter is normally announced by the provincial superior, with the consent of his council, five months before its celebration. The provincial superior shall convoke the chapter participants – elected confreres, *ex officio* members and any guests – within an appropriate period of time.

117 In the letter of announcement, the provincial superior provides instructions on:

- the grouping of the communities for the local chapters;
- the procedures and times for the celebration of the local chapters;
- the provisional date and venue for the celebration of the provincial chapter;
- the main topics for discussion.

He shall promptly inform the superior general regarding all matters.

118 The following confreres participate in the provincial chapter *ex officio*:

- the provincial superior
- the provincial councillors
- the provincial treasurer and secretary
- the superiors of delegations dependent on the province
- the most recent provincial superior emeritus
- the superiors of communities with the minimum

number of confreres specified by the directories of each province (R 254).

The following confreres participate by election or invitation, according to the norms of each province:

the delegates elected by the local communities;
a maximum of three confreres invited by the provincial superior, with right of active and passive vote (C 127).

119 The chapter is presided over by the superior general, if present, or by the provincial superior. If he is unable to attend and the celebration cannot be postponed, the chapter is presided over to all effects by the vicar provincial.

120 The chapter shall be conducted in accordance with the general rules of this directory (nos. 1-26), applying the provisions for the general chapter by analogy in regard to:

- the chapter organisms and offices: president, moderators, secretaries, council of presidency, chapter groups and committees, and spiritual animation (nos. 42-62);
- the work of the chapter: speeches in the assembly, voting, the initial proceedings of the chapter, the reports of the superior and treasurer and the discussion of issues (nos. 63-92).

121 When the provincial chapter is announced in preparation for the general chapter, the delegates to the general chapter shall be elected, in accordance with what has been established by the superior general, with the consent of his council:

- in the decree announcing the chapter;
- according to a uniform proportion for all the provinces;
- in proportion to the number of their perpetual or temporary professed members.

In establishing this proportion the general council should see that each province is adequately represented (R 251)

122 The delegates shall be elected in accordance with the rules specified in nos. 11-21 of this directory. Once the election has taken place, the president, tellers and secretaries of the provincial chapter shall sign the proceedings and minutes of the election of the delegates and substitutes to the general chapter.

ASSEMBLIES* OF VICE-PROVINCES AND DELEGATIONS DEPENDENT ON THE GENERAL COUNCIL.

*** The following articles are suspended and will have to be revised in order to adapt them to the new Regulation.**

123. With the consent of their respective councils, the superiors of vice-provinces and delegations shall convoke an assembly of confreres with similar competences and rules as the provincial chapters (nos.112-122), by necessity in preparation for the general chapter and on one other occasion during the six years period. The superiors of vice-provinces and delegations may also convene their confreres in assemblies in cases of particular need, with the agreement of the superior general.

124 There are two ways in which the confreres of a vice-province or delegation dependent on the superior general may participate in their assembly:

- a) with the participation of all the perpetual confreres of the vice-province or delegation;
- b) by election, in local chapters, of delegates from each community, as is the case with provincial chapters.

125 The manner in which the assembly is conducted is laid down in the statute of the vice-province or delegation, or in the letter of announcement of the assembly, after consultation with the superior general.

126 The letter announcing and convoking the assembly must be sent at least three months before its celebration.

The superior of the vice-province or delegation shall give instructions on the following in the letter:

- the form, place and time in which the assembly will be celebrated;
- the main issues for discussion;
- a list with the names of the participants.

He shall inform the superior general and his council about all matters.

- 127** The assembly has the follow tasks and responsibilities:
- 1) to study and analyse the report of the superior of the vice-province or delegation and that of the treasure;
 - 2) to confirm the guidelines adopted by the previous assembly;
 - 3) to indicate general guidelines for the planning to be conducted by the council of the Vice-province or Delegation;
 - 4) to examine any proposals or requests from the various communities or individual confreres;
 - 5) to discuss and provide for the implementation of the indications of the general chapter and the general council;
 - 6) to establish the contributions to be made to the treasury of the vice-province or delegation by the individual communities;

If the superior of the province or delegation is unable to attend and the celebration cannot be postponed, the assembly shall be presided over to all effects by the first councillor.

131 When not all the perpetual confreres are invited to participate, the *ex officio* members of the assembly of the vice-province or delegation are the following:

- the superior of the vice-province or delegation;
- the councillors;
- the treasurers and secretaries;
- the most recent superior emeritus of the vice-province or delegation;

- the superiors of the communities with the minimum number of confreres specified by the respective statute or directory (R 254).

Those who participate by election or invitation, in accordance with the norms of the respective directory, include:

the delegates elected by the local communities;

- a maximum of three confreres invited, with the right of active and passive vote, by the superior of the vice-province or delegation, with the consent of his own council.

ASSEMBLY OF A DELEGATION DEPENDENT ON A PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR**

**** The following articles are suspended and will have to be revised in order to adapt them to the actual situation of the Delegation.**

The relationship between the assembly and the provincial chapter needs to be clarified, with better definition of the process for electing the confreres that participate in the provincial chapter and in the general chapter.

The DIRECTORY OF THE ‘Our Lady of Hope’ DELEGATION should also be revised.

132. The assembly of a delegation dependent on a province is normally attended by all the confreres of that delegation with

perpetual vows. In exceptional cases, the provincial superior may decide, with the consent of his council, to convene the confreres in another form: for example, by the election of delegates from each of the delegation's communities.

133 The superior of the delegation, in agreement with the provincial superior on which the delegation depends, and with the consent of his council, shall convoke the delegation assembly mandatorily in preparation for the provincial chapter and whenever deemed necessary for the good of the delegation.

134 This assembly is presided over by the Superior General, if present, or the provincial Superior or the Superior of the Delegation.

135 The delegation assembly shall be conducted with reference, by analogy, to the indications given for the assembly of vice-provinces and delegations dependent on the general council, as well as to the norms provided in the delegation statute or established by the provincial superior in the letter announcing the provincial chapter.

136 The election of delegates to the provincial chapter shall be conducted in accordance with the norms provided by the provincial superior and his council in the letter announcing the provincial chapter, in view of which the assembly has been convoked.

In particular, the form in which confreres with three years of temporary profession may exercise their right to vote to elect the delegates to the provincial chapter should be clearly established.

137 In the specific case in which the assembly and the provincial chapter are convened in preparation for the general chapter, the provincial superior and his council shall also define measures to ensure the participation of some members of the delegation in the general chapter, taking into account the number of confreres and communities in the delegation.

LOCAL CHAPTER *

138 As a responsible participation in the life of the Institute, the local chapter is an assembly of confreres called to elect the representatives to the provincial chapter and to discuss the issues proposed in the letter announcing the provincial chapter (R 255).

139 The confreres assigned to the single houses or grouped into electing colleges are members of the local chapters with right to vote (R 256).

Confreres that have taken perpetual vows prior to the date of celebration of the local chapter have the right of active and passive vote.

Confreres with temporary vows already professed for a full three-year period prior to the date of celebration of the local chapter have the right of active vote only (R 241).

140 Confreres assigned to houses and activities directly dependent on the general government follow the norms issued by the province to which they belong (R 257).

141 The election of confreres as delegates to the provincial chapter shall follow the norms provided in the provincial directory and the instructions given by the provincial superior in the letter announcing the provincial chapter.

142 With regard to the local chapter, the following confreres may vote by letter, which should be sent, by secure and rapid post, to the local superior:

those who are temporarily absent from their own community and cannot participate in the local chapter; (confreres that are unjustifiably absent have no right to vote, in accordance with no. 7b);

- students and infirm confreres that are away from their province and unable to go there to vote;

In these cases, it should be ensured that the votes are cast with the same ballots and envelopes used by all the other confreres.

143 All other procedures (for example, the grouping of communities or residences, etc.) should follow the indications given by the provincial superior and his council in the letter announcing the provincial chapter and the provisions of articles 1-26 on the proper procedures for chapters.

144 Before the election, the provincial superior shall draw up and communicate the complete list of confreres entitled to vote. Once the election has taken place, he shall communicate the name of the elected confreres and substitutes.