



## Chapter Meeting Communiqué June 25, 2023

### Opening Liturgy

Delegates of the Chapter of Affairs and Election 2023 first joined together in sharing a Eucharistic Celebration with Rev. Philip Dabney, C.Ss.R, who urged the delegates and visitors to “step away from busy-ness and to open themselves more fully to the Holy Spirit.” He reiterated the encouragement by insisting that we need to do “some decisive looking back,” and further insisting that we need to take time to remember and feed on what the past has brought us. After the liturgy, a delicious luncheon provided energy for the afternoon meeting.

### Opening Ritual

As the afternoon session began, Sister Mary Virginia explained the opening ritual would encompass the delegation roll call and “Calling Forth the Delegates.” Sister Donna Shallo called each delegate’s name, and each delegate stood responding with “I am” to the following question: “Are you open to God’s Spirit working in you?” Sister Donna paused after each group of forty-four and a portion of the Centennial Hymn was sung. Sister Donna then called forth all other Sisters who were physically present as observers, and those joining the livestream to ask if they too would be open to the Spirit working in them.

The final invocation was addressed to our deceased Sisters, as they would remain with us and help with their guidance throughout the Chapter.

Sister Mary Ellen Tennity next began her address to the delegation, but noted in the beginning that she had recently added some thoughts to the address and believed that she should begin with those thoughts.

Sister Mary Ellen referred first to the death of ten Sisters, since our last meeting. She added that while we were engaging in the work of the Chapter, the Sisters in Camilla would be examining the process of grief. With an obvious note of sorrow, Sister Mary Ellen observed that God obviously has a “bigger picture,” but our recent multiple deaths represent a picture that is bigger than we can imagine. In her words, “No strategic plan can capture the essence of the past two months.” She acknowledged the Camilla Sisters who were viewing today’s meeting and then asked for a camera span so that they could see the delegation acknowledging them.

Sister Mary Ellen then centered her address on “God’s dwelling with the human race.” Her Marian reflection centered on Mary as Virgin, Mother, and Queen, weaving the Angelus prayer throughout. Sister’s address will be made available to all members of the congregation.

Sister Mary Ellen then officially opened Chapter 2023.

#### Orientation for Chapter

Following a call to collaboration and transformation, Sister Catherine Bertrand, SSND, then asked the delegates to consider two questions for reflection: “What do you want to carry into this work? What difference will that make in how you respond to all that happens this week?” She connected the questions to several qualities of Mary mentioned in Sister Mary Ellen’s presentation.

Following a short break, Sister Catherine reviewed some of the main approaches to achieving a contemplative dialogue. Delegates were urged to slow down, be present to the moment, listen, focus on what is being said, be aware of feelings, and consider what is being asked of each of them. In a more specific way, Sister Catherine provided some advice about preparing for the community elections. Delegates were then asked to look at information about candidates that could be found in their folders.

#### RCA Recommendations

Sister Donna Shallo introduced the process for voting on possible changes to the FW constitutions and FS status/customs that had been forwarded from RCAs since the last chapter. Before the actual voting, though, Sister Kathryn Clemmer gave some instructions about using the clickers for the voting process.

Most materials were easily approved: Changes to FW 24.5 created some points of discussion but eventually passed; FW 79.1 and FW 159 passed with no discussion; FS #21 and FS #53 both passed with no discussion.

The proposed deletion of FW 33 created much more discussion. Eventually, more time was allotted to a discussion as table members were asked to discuss the proposal for 20 minutes. When delegates indicated they were ready for the vote, the voting began. One hundred seven (107) members voted in favor of the deletion. Since it involved a constitution, 117 votes were needed for the deletion to occur. So, this recommendation did not pass.

The meeting adjourned after the voting on RCA Recommendations.