



RESPONSIBILITIES OF A GENERAL CHAPTER DELEGATE

Before the chapter, each delegate:

- Prepares by praying for a spirit of openness and discernment, using readings and other resources useful to her.

Comment: True discernment requires openness to the opinions of others. Preparation requires time, so a delegate needs to give this, despite the demands of her own ministry.

- Keeps an open mind and heart, trusting that the Spirit will guide the chapter's discernment especially during the time of elections.

Comment: *Superiors in the conferral of offices and members in elections are to observe the norms of universal and proper law, are to abstain from any abuse or partiality, and are to appoint or elect those whom they know in the Lord to be truly worthy and suitable, having nothing before their eyes but God and the good of the institute. Moreover, in elections they are to avoid any procurement of votes, either directly or indirectly, whether for themselves or for others.* --Canon 626

- Participates in online sessions of the delegates before the General Chapter

Comment: It is important for delegates to get to know each other before the General Chapter

- Takes what steps she can to ensure she is somewhat rested before traveling and before the opening of the chapter.

Comment: If participants come tired to a chapter, this has a negative effect on its work, as both listening and discernment become difficult.

During the chapter, each delegate:

- Learns more about the concerns of the wider Congregation and is committed to putting the good of the Congregation before personal interests or the specific interests of her own province.

Comment: The importance of considering the whole Congregation may mean resisting pressures from her own province or others, to bring about certain decisions.

- Speaks the truth as she sees it, taking full part in small group and plenary sessions and respecting the views of others.

Comment: There may be a certain risk in speaking out, especially if a Sister's honest opinion differs from that of others.

- Shares in the organization and running of the chapter by volunteering for necessary services.

Comment: Involvement in additional tasks develops a sense of ownership and shared responsibility among all chapter members.

- Suggests whatever changes she considers helpful when chapter delegates are invited to review the functioning and progress of the chapter.

Comment: Chapter members need to be ready to voice their suggestions openly in the plenary sessions. Remarks at the end of a chapter such as: "*I wish we had done (or not done) X or Y*"; "*I wanted to suggest ... but was afraid to*" are too late to be of help.

- Enters seriously into the discernment process for the election of the Congregational leadership team, being open to whatever the Lord may ask of her or of others.

Comment: This means not coming to the chapter with one's own decisions finalized.

After the chapter, each delegate:

- Brings back the message of the chapter to her own province and helps the Sisters there to enter into it and understand it.

Comment: Often there is the temptation for a delegate to leave all the follow-up work to those with official responsibility, rather than being ready to support follow-up decisions and help in their implementation.