

# CENTRAL COMMISSION 2024



**San Francisco de Mostazal, Chile, 6-16 June, 2024**

## CONTENTS

<b>PARTICIPANTS</b>	p. 4
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	p. 6
<b>I. FUNCTIONING OF THE GENERAL CHAPTER 2025</b>	
• Coordination Commission	p. 7
• Communication	p. 7
• Discretion and Confidentiality	p. 8
• Evaluation	p. 8
• Formulation of House Reports and Regional Reports	p. 9
• Invited Guests	p. 10
• New Superiors at the General Chapter	p. 10
• Purpose and Responsibility	p. 10
• Spiritual Dimension	p. 11
<b>II. PRELIMINARY VOTING</b>	
II. 1. Election of a Fifth Member of the Co-ordination Commission	p. 12
II. 2. Changes in Procedure	
II. 2.1 Synthesis	p. 12
II. 2.2 <i>Ad hoc</i> Commission Reports	p. 12
II. 2.3 Resignation of a Superior	p. 13
II. 2.4 Superior <i>ad nutum</i>	p. 13
II. 3. Document on the Study of House Reports	p. 14
II. 4. The <i>ad experimentum</i> Procedure on Reports of 14 Commissions	p. 14
<b>III. MAJOR TOPICS FROM THE AGENDA</b>	
III. 1 Affiliation	P. 15
III. 2 Commission of Solidarity	p. 15
III. 3 Conventual Chapter	p. 16
III. 4 Economic Visitations and Extraordinary Acts of Administration	p. 17
III. 5 Formation	p. 17
III. 6 Harmonization of Constitutions of Monks and Nuns	p. 19
III. 7 Terms of Office in Our Order	p. 19
III. 8 Mothers Immediate	p. 20
III. 9 Papal Rescript	p. 21
III. 10 Redistribution of the Regions	p. 22
III. 11 Statutes	
III. 11.1. Revision of Statute on Fragile Communities	p. 23
III. 11.2. Statute on Hermits	p. 23
III. 11.3. Revision of Statute on Publications	p. 24
III. 11.4. Revision of Statute on Regular and Economic Visitations	p. 24
III. 12 Safeguarding and Abuse	p. 25
III. 13 The Place of the Eucharist in Cistercian Life	p. 25

<b>IV. CONCLUSION: SUMMARY OF DECISIONS FOR THE PROGRAM OF THE GENERAL CHAPTER OF 2025</b>	p. 27
<b>V. EVALUATION AND CLOSURE</b>	P. 30
<b>VI. PLENARY COUNCIL OF THE ABBOT GENERAL</b>	p. 31
<b>VII. APPENDICES</b>	
i. Opening Conference of the Abbot General	p. 32
ii. Report of <i>ad hoc</i> Commission on the Spiritual Dimension of the General Chapter	p. 39
iii. Report of Central Secretary for Formation	p. 41
iv. What Happens when we vote for the Suppression of a Monastery	p. 43
v. Summary of Votes	P. 45





**Interpreters**

27	French - English	Father WILLIAM Dingwall, <i>Spencer</i>
28	French - Spanish	Brother BENJAMÍN Murillo, <i>Miraflores</i>
29	English - French	Father GRAHAM Touchie, <i>Calvaire</i>
30	English - Spanish	Sister NADIA DEL CARMEN Bastias, OSB
31	Spanish - French	Father RAPHAËL García-Pelayo, <i>Cîteaux</i>
32	Spanish – English	Brother GREGORY Escardo, <i>Gethsemani</i>
33	English – Japanese	Sister CLOTHILDE Anamizu, <i>Glencairn</i>

**Secretaries**

34		Sister FIACHRA Nutty, <i>Glencairn</i>
35		Sister MARILUCIA Ji, <i>Quilvo</i>

**Invited guest to give a report by video conference**

Father MAURICIO Tavella, *Azul*, Central Secretary for Formation

-----

## INTRODUCTION

Dom Bernardus, Abbot General welcomed everyone to the Central Commission of 2024, held at the Casa Alvernia in San Francisco de Mostazal, Chile. He extended a special welcome to M. Regina and M. Rachel, who, because of difficulties with getting visas, joined the meeting online. He then proceeded with an explanation of Dom Jean Bosco's gracious agreement to temporarily fill the vacancy on the Co-ordination Commission which resulted from the unexpected death of Dom Godefroy of Acey, in 2023. An election for this position will be held at the beginning of the General Chapter of 2025.

A very warm welcome, together with a short audio-visual presentation by M. Mariela of Quilvo followed, providing a quick glimpse of some of the extraordinary diversity and beauty to be discovered in Chile.

### Opening Address

The Abbot General's opening address began with an explanation of our presence in Chile as a response to the Pope's call to go to the periphery, a place of encounter where we could '*widen our tent*' by dying to our own interests and perceptions and engaging with each other, for the sake of the spiritual life of the Order, our communities and ourselves.

He presented the key of Co-responsibility for mission as a light by which all are invited to read our new Constitutions, for they will assist us, as contemplative monks and nuns, to fulfil our special and hidden way of working effectively for the salvation of all (C.31).

He recognized that while co-responsibility for mission in the life of the Church is rooted in baptism, in the life of the Order, it is rooted in the bond of charity which unites individuals, communities and regions.

Two challenges for co-responsibility for the mission in the life of the Order today were identified.

1. The greatest challenge in a time of crisis being to 'move beyond ourselves' rather than become closed, self-absorbed and concentrated on self-preservation.
2. The other challenge is the rediscovery, awareness and redefinition of the mission of our contemplative Cistercian life articulated by Dom Mauro Giuseppe Lepori (at General Chapter of 2022 Part 1) when he said: "*Fraternal communion in Christ is the substance of the mission, of the whole mission of the Church, even of the mission of the monasteries. Communion is the motive, method and end; the origin, meaning and purpose of the Church's mission*".

During his opening conference the Abbot General announced the official written approval of the *Dicastery for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life*, of our Constitutions. The approval was given on the 3rd of April 2024 and the new Constitutions are now available in Latin, English, French and Spanish on the website of the Order.

Dom Bernardus concluded by expressing his hope that our new Constitutions would prove to be a challenge to renew our co-responsibility for mission, for the life of the local Church to which we belong, for the universal Church and for the world, since this is our vocation. "*We are made for love!*"

## I. FUNCTIONING OF THE GENERAL CHAPTER 2025

### Co-ordination Commission

To encourage better participation both in commissions and in the aula, the Co-ordination Commission was asked to remember the following:

- To implement the recommendations of the *ad hoc* commission – consisting of D. Anatasius, D. Isidoro and M. Kathy - which was appointed to increase the spiritual dimension of the General Chapter.
- To sometimes place limits on the length of interventions in the aula.
- To assign suitable topics for discussion in the Regions and give the Regions more time to meet during the Chapter.

Vote 20

We ask the Coordinating Commission to establish time limits for interventions in the aula, according to the different kinds of dialogue or discussion.

PLACET            17        NON PLACET            5        ABSTENTIO        1        **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 21

We ask the Coordinating Commission, at their discretion, to assign certain topics to one or more Regions during the General Chapter.

PLACET            16        NON PLACET            5        ABSTENTIO        2        **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 22

We invite the Coordinating Commission to give the Regions more opportunities to meet during the General Chapter.

PLACET            16        NON PLACET            4        ABSTENTIO        3        **Proposition Accepted**

### Communication

To increase participation by capitulants and Communities in the General Chapter of 2025, the following measures were proposed:

1. To disseminate illustrated newsletters to develop interest and awareness before, during and after the General Chapter.
2. That professionals be engaged to record and broadcast the opening and closing Masses and selected conferences during the General Chapter.
3. That a chat system be used *ad experimentum* during one or more sessions in the aula.
4. To provide translation tool(s) for unofficial translation, together with instruction in how they are used.

Vote 19

At the General Chapter of 2025, we wish to experiment with a chat system in the aula for one or two discussions.

PLACET            11        NON PLACET            9        ABSTENTIO        3        **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 81

We wish to make available to the members of the Order a video transmission and recording of the opening and closing Masses of the General Chapter of 2025.

PLACET            20                    NON PLACET    1            ABSTENTIO    2            **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 82

We wish to make available to the members of the Order a video transmission and recording of the opening conference of the Abbot General at the General Chapter of 2025, and to record other conferences that can be made available afterwards as judged opportune.

PLACET            16                    NON PLACET    3            ABSTENTIO    4            **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 83

We ask the Abbot General and his Council to provide the members and personnel of the General Chapter with professional translation tools and with the necessary information for learning how to use them.

PLACET            22                    NON PLACET    1            ABSTENTIO                    **Proposition Accepted**

**Discretion and Confidentiality**

Some Regions expressed concern about discretion and confidentiality with information given at the Chapter. It was decided that, at the beginning of the General Chapter, some indications will be given to all Chapter participants in this regard.

Vote 31

We want a communication to be given at the beginning of the General chapter of 2025 on discretion regarding the work of the General Chapter and on the delicate balance between transparency and confidentiality.

PLACET            23                    NON PLACET                    ABSTENTIO                    **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 32

We ask the Abbot General and his Council to prepare this communication.

PLACET            22                    NON PLACET                    ABSTENTIO    1            **Proposition Accepted**

**Evaluation**

Expert evaluation of the functioning of the General Chapter could perhaps contribute significantly to improvements in facilitation, participation and the technical aspects of the Chapter in the future. To help identify areas requiring attention and the appropriate solutions to address them, it was decided to seek professional assistance.

Vote 33

We ask the Abbot General and his Council to invite someone to evaluate the functioning of the General Chapter.

PLACET            15                    NON PLACET    7            ABSTENTIO    1            **Proposition Accepted**



**Formulation of House Reports and Regional Reports**

It was suggested that alternative methods employed in the compilation of house and regional reports would broaden the scope of their expression and facilitate greater engagement with their content.

*(a) House Reports*

All House Reports will be accompanied by the most recent Visitation Card and may also include a visual representation of the community if so desired.

Vote 23

For the General Chapter of 2025, exceptionally, in the place of house reports, we wish to study only the last visitation cards.

PLACET 9 NON PLACET 11 ABSTENTIO 3 **Proposition Rejected**

Vote 24

For the General Chapter of 2025, we ask that the last visitation card of each community be made available to the Commission that studies its house report.

PLACET 21 NON PLACET 2 ABSTENTIO **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 25

If communities wish, they may provide a visual presentation of their community in addition to their house report for the benefit of the commissions that study them.

PLACET 19 NON PLACET 2 ABSTENTIO 2 **Proposition Accepted**

*(b) Regional Reports*

These reports should aim to share the cultural richness and diversity of the houses in addition to news of events and challenges. They can be presented in either text or a multimedia format of their creator’s choice.

Vote 8

We ask the Regions to prepare regional reports to be presented in plenary session at the beginning of the General Chapter of 2025.

PLACET 19 NON PLACET 3 ABSTENTIO 1 **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 9

Regional reports can be either a document of no more than one page or a 7-minute presentation using other media.

PLACET 21 NON PLACET 1 ABSTENTIO 1 **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 10

We wish to discuss regional reports only in the aula.

PLACET 22 NON PLACET 1 ABSTENTIO **Proposition Accepted**

**Invited Guests**

The question of invited guests was discussed and a suggestion made that some people might be invited to address a particular aspect of the theme for the General Chapter of 2025: *‘The Cistercian Charism in Today’s World Under the Sign of Hope.’*

Since time at the General Chapter is always at a premium, one Region specifically requested fewer invitations be extended, in order to lighten the program, while others saw a limitation on the number of guests as an opportunity to make time available for other purposes.

A short list of names was suggested by members of the Central Commission to the Abbot General and his Council, who will issue invitations.

**New Superiors at the General Chapter**

Approximately one third of capitulants arriving at the General Chapter may never have previously attended, so it was suggested that an on-line presentation prior to arrival could help with orientation and introduction to facilities, procedures and protocols.

It was also suggested that Regional Presidents should arrange for an experienced member(s) of their Region to act as a ‘Guardian Angel(s)’ to new superiors, to provide initial accompaniment and make introductions.

Vote 13

We ask the Abbot General and his Council to organize some form of preparation for new capitulants (and others who wish) before the General Chapter.

PLACET            23                    NON PLACET            ABSTENTIO            **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 14

We wish to give sufficient time at the General Chapter to provide orientation for new capitulants (and others who wish).

PLACET            18                    NON PLACET    2            ABSTENTIO    3            **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 15

We suggest to the Regional Presidents that they assign “Guardian Angels” to the new capitulants in their Region.

PLACET            13                    NON PLACET    6            ABSTENTIO    4            **Proposition Accepted**

**Purpose and Responsibility**

It was proposed that at the start of the General Chapter of 2025, a reminder should be given to all participants concerning the purpose and responsibility of the Chapter.

The General Chapter’s purpose is to seek the good of the Superiors and of the Communities of the Order. To achieve its goal therefore, everyone should come in a spirit of genuine conversion which includes openness to criticism, correction and mutual support, in accordance with the *Charter of Charity*.

**The Spiritual Dimension of the General Chapter**

Many Regional votes and suggestions of the Central Commission participants demonstrated an interest in promoting the spiritual dimension of the General Chapter. An *ad hoc* Commission consisting of D. Anastasius, D. Isidoro and M. Kathy was elected to examine the issue during the Central Commission meeting and make recommendations for the consideration of Abbot General and his Council when planning the event (*Appendix ii*).

Their suggestions included:

- An opening day of retreat with Mass of the Holy Spirit to include a renewal of Baptismal promises
- Times for personal and group reflection and prayer
- Spiritual conferences at the beginning and midway through the Chapter
- Retain the half day work schedule on Sundays with the Blessed Sacrament reserved in the chapel
- Begin and end each days’ work with a prayer and incorporate alternatives for Terce and None e.g. a period of meditation and silence, RB etc.
- Have the closing Mass on the day before the last session
- After the last session, end with a closing prayer that ‘sends forth’ and for a safe journey home

The theme, “*The Cistercian charism in today’s world under the sign of hope*” was chosen to link the commitment to the spiritual dimension of the Chapter to the celebration of the Holy Year of 2025.

**Vote 4**

We wish to form an *ad hoc* commission during this Central Commission to find ways to implement the suggestions of the Regions and of the Central Commission on how to promote the spiritual dimension of the Chapter. This commission will make a report of its work to the Central Commission. The Abbot General and his Council will then take the work of this *ad hoc* commission into account when planning the General Chapter of 2025.

PLACET            12                            NON PLACET    11            ABSTENTIO                            **Proposition Accepted**

**Vote 5**

~~We ask the Abbot General and his Council to find ways to implement the suggestions of the Regions on how to promote the spiritual dimension of the 2025 General Chapter.~~

**Vote 6**

We wish to have an overall theme for the General Chapter of 2025.

PLACET            16                            NON PLACET    6            ABSTENTIO    1                            **Proposition Accepted**

**Vote 7**

We wish to relate the theme of the General Chapter of 2025 to the Holy Year of 2025: “*The Cistercian charism in today’s world under the sign of hope.*”

PLACET            16                            NON PLACET    2            ABSTENTIO    5                            **Proposition Accepted**

## II. PRELIMINARY VOTING

### II.1. Election of the Fifth Member of the Co-ordination Commission

The untimely death of Dom Godefroy, Abbot of Acey in 2022, created a vacancy on the Co-ordination Commission. The Council of the Abbot General appointed Dom Jean Bosco of Victoria, as his replacement until the start of the 2025 Chapter, when an election will take place.

### II.2. Changes in Procedures

#### II.2.1. Synthesis

It was agreed that a synthesis of the General Chapter, composed by two elected capitulants, describing the events of the Chapter in a concrete way, will be concluded within one month of the close of the Chapter. When completed, it will be inserted at the start of the minutes of every Chapter in future.

Vote 2

We wish to continue the practice of producing a synthesis of the General Chapter.

PLACET            19                            NON PLACET    4            ABSTENTIO                            **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 3

We propose to the General Chapter to add to the Procedures of the General Chapter a section V. Synthesis with a new paragraph 37: “Two capitulants are elected by the General Chapter at the beginning of the Chapter to write a synthesis of the Chapter. This synthesis, describing concretely the work of the Chapter, must be completed within one month after the Chapter.”

PLACET            21                            NON PLACET    2            ABSTENTIO                            **Proposition Accepted**

#### II.2.2. Ad hoc Commission Reports

A need was identified to revise regulation 13e of the Procedures of the General Chapter, in order to assist *ad hoc* commissions in the drafting of reports. The proposal to add a new paragraph, 13e, with some practical instructions, is to be dealt with by simplified procedure at the beginning of the General Chapter of 2025.

Vote 62

We propose the following changes to the Procedures of the General Chapter to be treated by simplified procedure at the beginning of the General Chapter of 2025:

13 e. The report of the *ad hoc* commission should contain the following elements:

- the members of the *ad hoc* commission;
- a brief description of the topic studied;
- the people consulted (day/time);
- the different responses to the challenges faced by the commission;
- the opinion of the commission;
- the recommendations to the General Chapter;
- suggestions for the follow-up.

PLACET            22                            NON PLACET                            ABSTENTIO    1                            **Proposition Accepted**

### **II.2.3. Resignation of a Superior**

It was proposed that the procedure for treating the resignation of superiors at the General Chapter be amended so that they be studied by more than one commission and allow for involvement by the Region which might also be helpful. To ensure more solid and complete criterion, it was suggested that the Rules of Procedure of the General Chapter for the study of resignations be changed.

#### Vote 26

We propose the following change to the Procedures of the General Chapter regarding the treatment of resignations at the General Chapter: “The resignation of an abbot or abbess will be studied by two commissions and the Region.”

PLACET            5                            NON PLACET    18            ABSTENTIO                            Proposition Rejected

#### Vote 27

We propose the following change to the Procedures of the General Chapter regarding the treatment of resignations at the General Chapter: “The resignation of an abbot or abbess will be studied by one commission and the Region.”

PLACET            20                            NON PLACET    3            ABSTENTIO                            **Proposition Accepted**

#### Vote 28

~~We propose the following change to the Procedures of the General Chapter regarding the treatment of resignations at the General Chapter: “The resignation of an abbot or abbess will be studied by two commissions.”~~

### **II.2.4. Superior *ad nutum***

A proposal was made to amend the regulations governing the treatment of the extension of the regime of Superior *ad nutum*, to allow the involvement of the Region of the monastery concerned.

#### Vote 29

We propose the following change to the Procedures of the General Chapter regarding the extension of the regime of superior *ad nutum*: “The extension of the regime of superior *ad nutum* will be studied by two commissions and the Region.”

PLACET            4                            NON PLACET    19            ABSTENTIO                            Proposition Rejected

#### Vote 30

We propose the following change to the Procedures of the General Chapter regarding the extension of the regime of superior *ad nutum*: “The extension of the regime of superior *ad nutum* will be studied by one commission and the Region.”

PLACET            16                            NON PLACET    6            ABSTENTIO    1            **Proposition Accepted**

### II.3. Document on the Study of House Reports

In order to clarify the correct procedure both for the Father Immediate and for the *ad hoc* Commission that will study a house report on behalf of a Commission, it is proposed to add the following:

- 2.1.a. on the Father Immediate submitting cases for the attention of the General Chapter
- 2.3.2.a. *Ad hoc* Commissions

Vote 63

We propose the following changes to the document “Study of the House Reports,” to be treated by simplified procedure at the beginning of the General Chapter of 2025:

2.1.a. According to the Statute on the Accompaniment of Fragile Communities, par.8, “the superior or the Father Immediate, or a Commission of the General Chapter, or the Abbot General, can bring the situation of a community to the particular attention of the General Chapter.”

2.3.2.a. The report of the *ad hoc* commission and the final report of the commission should contain the following elements:

- the members of the (*ad hoc*) commission;
- a brief description of the topic studied;
- the people consulted (day/time);
- the different responses to the challenges faced by the commission;
- the opinion of the commission;
- the recommendations to the General Chapter;
- suggestions for the follow-up.

PLACET            22                    NON PLACET            ABSTENTIO    1            **Proposition Accepted**

### II.4. The *ad experimentum* Procedure on the Reports of 14 Commissions

A suggestion was made for an *ad experimentum* change in procedure when fourteen Commission reports are generated on the same subject. The proposal is to create a single synthesis of all fourteen reports and for the synthesis alone to be read in the aula.

Vote 1

We propose *ad experimentum* the following procedure for the General Chapter of 2025: “When all 14 commissions of the Chapter produce reports on the same topic, the Co-ordinating Commission may appoint two capitulants to produce a synthesis of the 14 reports. In that case, all the reports will be available to everyone but only the synthesis will be read in plenary assembly.”

PLACET            22                    NON PLACET    1            ABSTENTIO            **Proposition Accepted**



### III. MAJOR TOPICS FROM THE AGENDA

#### III.1. Affiliation Within the Order

Affiliation is a means provided by *Cor orans* to assist fragile communities. For nuns this possibility is the universal law but not for monks. Since it was recognised at the last General Chapter that affiliation could provide opportunities for positive initiatives to assist fragile communities some guidelines were set up for affiliation for both monks and nuns *ad experimentum*.

It was recognized at this Central Commission that many houses fear affiliation as a loss or suspension of autonomy or as ultimate closure, and the role of the Father Immediate in the initial stages of the process is unclear. Nevertheless, this structure also provides an opportunity to form links between houses that could, amongst other things, provide solid formation of new candidates and the possibility of new life.

Given there is very little experience of this structure within the Order, it was felt it would be unwise to generate legislation on a theoretical basis alone. Therefore, it was decided to request the Law Commission to study the question in the light of the regional votes and to present the revised document on Affiliation to the Chapter in the General Booklet.

Vote 52

We ask the Law Commission to revise the document on affiliation, taking into account the votes of the Regions, and to include it as information in the General Booklet of the Chapter of 2025.

PLACET	22	NON PLACET	1	ABSTENTIO		<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	---	-----------	--	-----------------------------

Vote 53

We ask the Abbot General and his Council to provide the General Chapter of 2025 with information on affiliation and on recent experiences of it within the Order.

PLACET	22	NON PLACET		ABSTENTIO	1	<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	--	-----------	---	-----------------------------

Vote 54

The General Chapter of 2025 will vote by ordinary procedure on the extension of the *ad experimentum* use of the document on affiliation.

PLACET	19	NON PLACET	1	ABSTENTIO	3	<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	---	-----------	---	-----------------------------

#### III.2. Commission of Solidarity

The newly established Commission of Solidarity came into effect with the re-structuring of the Finances of the Order in January of 2024. It's primary role and function is to provide financial assistance to members of the Order in need, but at present it has insufficient resources to fulfil this mission.

It was suggested that a working paper which clarifies the Commission's purpose, and provides details of its resources, together with an outline of the needs for which applications are being made, would encourage commitment by all houses of the Order.

Vote 38

We place on the agenda of the General Chapter of 2025 the topic of the role of the Commission of Solidarity.

PLACET	23	NON PLACET		ABSTENTIO		<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	--	-----------	--	-----------------------------

Vote 39

We ask the Commission of Solidarity to prepare a working paper on the topic of vote 38.

PLACET	23	NON PLACET		ABSTENTIO		<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	--	-----------	--	-----------------------------

Vote 40

We will treat this topic by ordinary procedure

PLACET	14	NON PLACET	8	ABSTENTIO	1	<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	---	-----------	---	-----------------------------

Vote 41

~~We will treat this topic by extraordinary procedure.~~

### III.3. Conventual Chapter

The Abbot General and his Council raised the question of whether there ought to be a minimum number of members required to convene a conventual chapter. The question is of particular significance in relation to decisions that might be made in cases of extraordinary administration and the disposal of assets. The experience of other religious institutes suggests it would be prudent to rule on a minimum number of members.

The Law Commission was requested to draw up a working paper on the subject, which will be addressed at the General Chapter by ordinary procedure.

Vote 70

We place on the agenda of the General Chapter of 2025 the topic of the minimum number of solemn professed required to constitute a conventual chapter (Cst 37).

PLACET	21	NON PLACET	2	ABSTENTIO		<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	---	-----------	--	-----------------------------

Vote 71

We ask the Law Commission to draw up a working paper on this topic.

PLACET	21	NON PLACET	1	ABSTENTIO	1	<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	---	-----------	---	-----------------------------

Vote 72

We will treat this topic by ordinary procedure.

PALCET	21	NON PLACET	1	ABSTENTIO	1	<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	---	-----------	---	-----------------------------

### III.4. Economic Visitations & Extraordinary Acts of Administration

The concept of an Economic Visitation to be conducted on a regular basis before the regular Visitation was formally presented to the Order as an outcome of the Central Commission Meeting of Dec 2023. The objective of such a visitation is to examine the financial health and economic functioning of a community. It is further meant to ensure openness and transparency in the fields of internal regulation and responsibility, validation of decisions through the acquisition of required authorizations, and the inclusion of a statement by the Father Immediate or his representative in the visitation card.

Economic visitations already experienced by some communities of the Order have resulted in the adoption of new methods and practices, which have borne fruit in terms of better management, greater efficiency etc. and could be of benefit to all.

A lack of clarity regarding necessary authorizations in cases of Extraordinary Acts of Administration coupled with an observation that a review of this aspect of the Statute on Temporal Administration is overdue, led to the desire for a working paper on this subject.

#### Vote 84

At the General Chapter of 2025, we wish to hear about the experiences of economic visitations made in some communities of the Order.

PLACET	21	NON PLACET	2	ABSTENTIO	<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	---	-----------	-----------------------------

#### Vote 85

In accordance with C. 44.3, we place on the agenda of the General Chapter of 2025 a renewed determination of “the sums in excess of which special permissions are needed for the validity of acts of extraordinary administration.”

PLACET	23	NON PLACET		ABSTENTIO	<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	--	-----------	-----------------------------

#### Vote 86

We ask the bursar of the Order to prepare a working paper on this topic

PLACET	23	NON PLACET		ABSTENTIO	<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	--	-----------	-----------------------------

#### Vote 87

This topic is to be treated by extraordinary procedure.

PLACET	23	NON PLACET		ABSTENTIO	<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	--	-----------	-----------------------------

### III.5. Formation

The Central Secretary for Formation (CSF), Fr. Mauricio from Azul, joined the meeting by video-conference, to present his report (*Appendix iii*), to discuss his challenges, and to offer his ideas for the future.

He reported his continued frustration with lack of communication, particularly with Regional Secretaries for Formation, but was greatly heartened on learning that the possibility of a future Central Secretary residing in Rome was being evaluated. He suggested that this would be an opportune time to undertake a long-overdue revision of this role, which has changed enormously over the last several years.

To conclude his presentation Fr. Mauricio stressed the importance of formation, which is central to the life of the Order, since its goal is our transformation in Christ and growth in our contemplative identity. It is not a matter of accumulating courses but of working to ensure that the knowledge acquired takes root in our lives and in the living of our Cistercian charism.

A question-and-answer session concluded the video-conference together with an expression of appreciation for all Fr. Mauricio’s work.

\*\*\*\*

It is the task of the Central Commission to elect a new Central Secretary for Formation but prior to doing so, a discussion took place to decide whether that office holder should be permanently based in Rome as a member of the Abbot General’s Council. In the event, M. Eleanor, councillor of the Abbot General, was elected as the new Central Secretary for Formation and thus is well placed to foster links between Regional Secretaries for Formation and, if desired, to undertake a much-needed revision of the *Ratio Institutionis*. She will work closely together with D. Marco Antonio.

In response to a recognition of the importance of formation, an *ad hoc* Commission, consisting of Fr. Carlos María (Sobrado), Fr. Samuel (Tarrowara) and Sr. Elizabeth (Butende) was elected to study the formation needs of the Order and to clarify the role of the Central Secretary of formation. This *ad hoc* Commission will present its report to the General Chapter.

The importance of inter-cultural communication and dialogue is of great significance to the General Chapter and to Communities in their on-going formation. The newly elected Secretary of Formation therefore, will prepare a programme of reflection and dialogue, based on the encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, to prepare the whole Order for the General Chapter of 2025.

Vote 16

We wish to form an *ad hoc* commission to study the formation needs of the Order and to clarify the role of the Central Secretary of Formation. This commission’s work would end with the presentation of a report to the General Chapter of 2025.

PLACET	20	NON PLACET	3	ABSTENTIO	<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	---	-----------	-----------------------------

Vote 17

We ask that the General Chapter of 2025 to consider revising the Statute on Formation (*Ratio Institutionis*).

PLACET	22	NON PLACET	1	ABSTENTIO	<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	---	-----------	-----------------------------

Vote 18

We would like, if possible, that the Central Secretary of Formation reside at least part-time at the Generalate.

PLACET	20	NON PLACET	1	ABSTENTIO	2	<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	---	-----------	---	-----------------------------

Vote 80

In order to foster good intercultural relations within the communities of the Order and within the General Chapter, we ask the Central Secretary of Formation to prepare a program of reflection and dialogue for the whole Order on the basis of Pope Francis’ encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*.

PLACET	20	NON PLACET		ABSTENTIO	3	<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	--	-----------	---	-----------------------------

### III.6. Harmonization of the Constitutions for Monks and Nuns

The greater harmonization of the Constitutions of both branches of the Order has long been desired but there still remain a number of Constitutions yet to be addressed.

To begin with, there is the question of the ratification of Statute 75.2.A, on delegated visitors which will be addressed at the General Chapter by simplified procedure.

Furthermore, those issues which have already been studied in the working paper on Mothers Immediate are to be placed on the agenda to be dealt with by ordinary procedure.

The Law Commission are also asked to begin a study of further points that can be harmonized sometime in the future.

#### Vote 74

We place on the agenda of the General Chapter of 2025 the ratification of St 75.2.A, to be voted on by simplified procedure.

PLACET	23	NON PLACET	ABSTENTIO	<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	-----------	-----------------------------

#### Vote 75

We place on the agenda of the General Chapter of 2025 the following points for harmonizing the Constitutions of the monks and nuns: C. 39.1, 39.1.A, 39.2, and 39.3.b. These points are already discussed in the working paper on Mothers Immediate.

PLACET	22	NON PLACET	ABSTENTIO	1	<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	-----------	---	-----------------------------

#### Vote 76

This topic is to be treated by ordinary procedure.

PLACET	22	NON PLACET	1	ABSTENTIO	<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	---	-----------	-----------------------------

#### Vote 77

We ask the Law Commission to begin a study of the points that can be harmonized between the Constitutions of the monks and nuns.

PLACET	22	NON PLACET	1	ABSTENTIO	<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	---	-----------	-----------------------------

### III.7. Terms of Office in Our Order

Unlike the Benedictine Order and other members of the Cistercian family, our Order does not prescribe the term of office of the Abbot General, his councillors or members of the Orders’ permanent commissions, nor, apart from the Abbot General, does it provide any age limits. Given that new legislation generated at this time will not affect the current Abbot General, it was suggested that this would be an appropriate moment to consider the matter.

Great energy is required of those who undertake the roles of major responsibility, due to the added complexity of work involved both in the world and in the Order. Furthermore, the longer one remains in office, the more difficult it is to see things from a new perspective. It was also pointed out that extended appointments for the positions of superior *ad nutum* and monastic commissary, might result in difficulties when houses need to close.

Perhaps other mandates ought to be limited in the same way as that of major superiors.

The formation of an *ad hoc* commission to write a working paper on these and other issues was proposed. Work on the paper by D. Aelred (Bethlehem) and D. Juan José (San Isidro) is to be based on a simple survey of communities to gather opinions and to ascertain the fragility of communities in the context of the Order’s lack of suitable personnel.

Vote 34

We place on the agenda of the General Chapter of 2025 the topics of terms in office, number of mandates, and age limits for the Abbot General, the councilors, and members of the Order’s commissions.

PLACET 21 NON PLACET 2 ABSTENTIO **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 35

We ask for a working document on the topic of vote 34.

PLACET 21 NON PLACET 1 ABSTENTIO 1 **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 36

We entrust this working paper to an *ad hoc* commission of 2 persons.

PLACET 23 NON PLACET ABSTENTIO **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 37

We will treat this topic by extraordinary procedure.

PLACET 18 NON PLACET 3 ABSTENTIO 2 **Proposition Accepted**

### III.8. Mothers Immediate

The difficulty of vocabulary and terminology surrounding the case of ‘Mothers Immediate’ needs to be addressed in the interests of clarity, especially regarding the role of a female superior delegated to undertake the duties and responsibilities of a Father Immediate.

The questions of appropriate vocabulary, impact on the persons involved in both giving and receiving pastoral assistance, the varied contexts in which the positions have arisen, and the dangers of overburdening, were all considered.

Some Regions felt a certain urgency in regard to the need for legislation, but others would prefer to gather more information based on real experiences, conduct a theological study, and reflect on the issue, before moving forward. However, with ten houses already receiving the assistance of ‘Mothers Immediate,’ concrete problems are beginning to surface as situations are becoming more complex.

Vote 42

At the General Chapter of 2025, we wish to hear about the experiences of some abbesses who have received a mandate to fulfil the role of Father Immediate.

PLACET 19 NON PLACET 2 ABSTENTIO 2 **Proposition Accepted**



Vote 43

We wish to hear about the experiences of some communities who have been served by an abbess with a mandate to act in the role of Father Immediate.

PLACET            22                      NON PLACET                      ABSTENTIO            1                      **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 44

We ask the Abbot General and his Council to choose representative cases of the experiences mentioned in votes 42 and 43.

PLACET            22                      NON PLACET                      ABSTENTIO            1                      **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 45

We place on the agenda of the General Chapter of 2025 the topic of Mothers Immediate, to be treated by extraordinary procedure.

PLACET            22                      NON PLACET                      ABSTENTIO            1                      **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 46

We ask the Law Commission to update, if necessary, its working paper on Mothers Immediate, taking into account the work in the Regions

PLACET            22                      NON PLACET                      ABSTENTIO            1                      **Proposition Accepted**

### III.9. Papal Rescript

The Papal rescript of 18th May, 2022 recognizes the possibility of a non-cleric undertaking the role of a major superior in a clerical institute. In the event of a non-cleric assuming such a role, however, the question arises as to who assumes the role of Ordinary?

To avoid any confusion in this matter, the Holy See asks that it be made clear in our legislation who would undertake the role of Ordinary in the event that a non-cleric assumes the role of major superior in a house of monks of our Order.

Vote 66

We ask the Law Commission to study possible changes to our legislation in the light of the Papal Rescript of May 18, 2022, on the possibility of a non-cleric being a major superior of a clerical institute of pontifical right.

PLACET            21                      NON PLACET            2                      ABSTENTIO                      **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 67

We place this topic on the agenda of the General Chapter of 2025, to be treated by ordinary procedure.

PLACET            19                      NON PLACET            4                      ABSTENTIO                      **Proposition Accepted**

### III.10. Re-distribution of the Regions

Our worldwide Order is both multi-cultural and multi-lingual. Its division into Regions needs to be addressed, to improve proportional equality of influence and to broaden the perspective of cultural diversity. It was suggested that our smaller Regions enjoy more spontaneous, fraternal relations, deeper and simpler exchanges, and better pastoral care, but reduced numbers are adversely affecting their proper functioning.

Our larger regions, which are geographically distanced and culturally diverse, struggle with the need for translation/interpretation and have insufficient opportunities to meet.

To address the current imbalance, two suggestions were proposed:

- a. To create larger Regions in Europe and retain the present Regions as sub-regions for pastoral meetings. In RAFMA, ORIENS and REMILA, sub-regions could be created that are geographically and culturally closer.
- b. To create Regions of linguistic similarity to ensure inter-culturality but with much less need for interpretation / translation.

A further suggestion to ensure equality was to create norms for the functioning of Regions, e.g. the attendance and role of delegates which would be the same at all regional meetings. This would allow delegates to potentially forge inter-regional and inter-cultural links whilst also facilitating the expression and reception of different perspectives throughout the Order.

The proposal for a working paper to be written on this topic was agreed. M. Regina (Abakaliki) and D. Steele (Tarrowarra) were elected and agreed to carry out the task.

Vote 57

We place on the agenda of the General Chapter 2025 the topic of the redistribution of the Regions and their functioning.

PLACET	22	NON PLACET	1	ABSTENTIO	<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	---	-----------	-----------------------------

Vote 58

We ask for a commission of two persons to write a working paper on this topic.

PLACET	15	NON PLACET	8	ABSTENTIO	<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	---	-----------	-----------------------------

Vote 59

~~We ask for a commission of three persons to write a working paper on this topic.~~

Vote 60

We want this subject to be treated by extraordinary procedure.

PLACET	18	NON PLACET	5	ABSTENTIO	<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	---	-----------	-----------------------------

Vote 61

~~We want this subject to be treated by ordinary procedure~~

### III.11. Statutes

#### III.11.1. Revision of Statute on Fragile Communities

It was agreed that this Statute may require some minor modifications e.g. to ensure that the various steps of accompaniment are carried out in correct order.

While continuing to gather evidence of the practical implementation of the Statute, a number of topics arose:

1. Change of stability – the duty to have stability in a house of the Order and the means by which it can be changed, i.e. duration of ‘the time of presence’ and the procedure surrounding acceptance
2. Cases of *sede vacante* – who takes responsibility for daughter houses when this situation arises in a mother house?
3. Consciousness and resistance – how a community that refuses to face the reality of its fragility can be helped by a Commission for the Future to develop openness and accept assistance.
4. A clarification of the terms “closure” and “suppression” given by the Dicastery. (See *Appendix iv* for document from Plenary Council of Abbot General)

#### Vote 11

At the General Chapter of 2025, we wish to hear about recent experiences (5 maximum) of various forms of aid that have been put in place to help fragile communities

PALCET	22	NON PLACET	ABSTENTIO	1	<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	-----------	---	-----------------------------

#### Vote 12

We ask the Abbot General and his Council to choose the persons who will share these recent experiences of aid for fragile communities.

PLACET	22	NON PLACET	ABSTENTIO	1	<b>Propositions Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	-----------	---	------------------------------

#### Vote 68

We ask the Law Commission to update the Statute on the Accompaniment of Fragile Communities and the Suppression of monasteries in the light of the work of the Regions.

PLACET	23	NON PLCAET	ABSTENTIO		<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	-----------	--	-----------------------------

#### Vote 69

We place the approval of the updated Statute on the Accompaniment of Fragile Communities and the Suppression of monasteries on the agenda of the General Chapter of 2025, to be treated by simplified procedure.

PLACET	22	NON PLACET	1	ABSTENTIO	<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	---	-----------	-----------------------------

#### Vote 73

We ask the Abbot General and his Council to provide a clarification on who is responsible for the daughter house(s) in the case of *sede vacante* in a mother house

PLACET	23	NON PLACET	ABASTENTIO		<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	------------	--	-----------------------------

#### III.11.2. Statute on Hermits

In 2021, the Dicastery for Religious issued new guidelines for hermits which make it more possible to live out this vocation within the local Church under the responsibility of a bishop. As a result of this publication several

Benedictine and Cistercian congregations chose to remove the possibility of becoming a hermit from their Constitutions.

Because the eremitical option is sometimes used to resolve community difficulties, it would help both superior and candidate if objective criteria were provided to discern a true call to this special vocation.

In drawing up a statute for this form of life it would be important that it should address the question of relationships and duties between the hermit and the community and the hermit and the superior and that information on existing hermits within the Order be ascertained.

Vote 79

We ask the Abbot General and his Council to begin preparatory work towards the creation of a Statute on Hermits for our Order.

PLACET            20                    NON PLACET    1            ABSTENTIO    2            **Proposition Accepted**

### **III.11.3. Revision of Statute on Publications**

A regional vote from USA requested an update of the Order’s antiquated statute on publications, which takes no account of publications arising from the use of modern internet technologies, e.g. social media, E-books etc.

The spirit of the original statute focused on discernment about what appears in the public domain, a topic that undoubtedly should be included in the course of initial and on-going formation.

Vote 78

We ask the Abbot General and his Council to begin preparatory work towards a future revision of the Order’s Statute on Publications.

PLACET            22                    NON PLACET    1            ABSTENTIO                    **Proposition Accepted**

### **III.11.4. Revision of Statute on Regular Visitation and the ratification of St 75.2 A**

A question that arose under No 8 of The Statute on Regular Visitation concerned the way difficult situations are to be brought to the attention of the General Chapter.

A second issue concerned economic visitations; when they should occur, the duties of the Father Immediate in relation to matters temporal, and the possibility of creating a protocol for this aspect of visitation.

The third issue concerned the delegation of visitors under St 75.2 A – a statute that needs to be ratified by the General Chapter.

Vote 64

We ask the Law Commission to propose to the General Chapter of 2025 a revised version of the Statute on Regular Visitations, taking into account the work of the Regions and of the Central Commission.

PLACET            23                    NON PLACET                    ABSTENTIO                    **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 65

The General Chapter of 2025 will vote on this revised version by simplified procedure.

PLACET            22                    NON PLACET    1            ABSTENTIO                    **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 74

We place on the agenda of the General Chapter of 2025 the ratification of St 75.2.A, to be voted on by simplified procedure.

PLACET            23                    NON PLACET                    ABSTENTIO                    **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 84

At the General Chapter of 2025, we wish to hear about the experiences of economic visitations made in some communities of the Order.

PLACET            21                    NON PLACET    2                    ABSTENTIO                    **Proposition Accepted**

### III.12. Safeguarding and Abuse

The safeguarding of vulnerable people is a constant concern but it would be imprudent to issue directives on the issue, because of the different contexts in which our communities live. The sharing of experiences and an evaluation of measures taken in other houses could be of great value to those who have experience and those not yet aware of specific problems. The related experience of a victim, especially, can make a significant impact.

It is very important to be aware of other, more subtle forms of abuse, such as the abuse of authority, spiritual abuse, or abuse of conscience. Therefore, a request was made that the issue of abuse be put on the agenda of the General Chapter of 2025, to include, if possible, the sharing of experiences and/or a conference with discussion in the aula.

Vote 55

We place on the agenda of the General Chapter of 2025 the topic of various forms of abuse.

PLACET            22                    NON PLACET    1                    ABSTENTIO                    **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 56

We ask the Abbot General and his Council to organize for the General Chapter of 2025 input from experts and/or the sharing of experiences in this area.

PLACET            17                    NON PLACET    3                    ABSTENTIO                    3                    **Proposition Accepted**

### III.13. The Place of the Eucharist in Cistercian Life Today

Constitution 18 provides for the daily celebration of the Eucharist by the whole community of each monastery. However, the dearth of priestly vocations both at the diocesan level and in many male houses of our Order has given rise to situations in which it is no longer possible to carry out this provision, especially in houses of nuns that no longer have a chaplain.

Following extensive reflection and discussion on the matter, it was decided to address this issue by:

1. Including the topic on the agenda of the forthcoming General Chapter
2. Undertaking a survey of the current situation and its impact on the members of our houses

3. Making a broad study of the place of the Eucharist in Cistercian life today: a theological reflection on the place of the Eucharist in relation to: the liturgy of the hours; different situations and challenges of today; the role and place of the chaplain.
4. Asking the elected *ad hoc* commission of D. Loris (Frattocchie) and M. Bénédicte (Echourgnac) to undertake that study and draw up a working paper
5. Inviting a competent person to give a conference on the subject in the aula

Vote 47

We wish to elect a commission of two persons to make a broad study of the place of the Eucharist in Cistercian life today, in the light of the current shortage of priests, taking into account the diversity of situations in the Order as reflected in the minutes of this Central Commission.

PLACET            17                    NON PLACET    3            ABSTENTIO    3            **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 48

We ask this commission to include in its work a survey of the communities of the Order.

PLACET            22                    NON PLACET    1            ABSTENTIO                    **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 49

We ask this commission to draw up a working paper

PLACET            21                    NON PLACET    2            ABSTENTIO                    **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 50

We place this topic on the agenda of the General Chapter of 2025, to be treated by extraordinary procedure.

PLACET            20                    NON PLACET    3            ABSTENTIO                    **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 51

We ask the Abbot General and his Council to invite a competent person to give a conference on this topic, taking into account, the working paper mentioned in Vote 49.

PLACET            18                    NON PLACET    5            ABSTENTIO                    **Proposition Accepted**



## IV. CONCLUSION

### SUMMARY OF DECISIONS FOR THE PROGRAM OF THE GENERAL CHAPTER OF 2025

Theme: *“The Cistercian Charism in Today’s World  
under the Sign of Hope”*

#### Advance Preparation

##### Points for Central Secretary of Formation:

- program of reflection and dialogue for the whole Order on the basis of Pope Francis’ encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*.

##### Points for Abbot General and Council:

- to invite someone to evaluate the functioning of the General Chapter.
- to investigate the possibility of a chat system in the aula for one or two discussions.
- to investigate possibilities for broadcasting and recording opening and closing Mass, opening conference and selected others.
- to provide translation tools and training.

##### Points for Coordinating Commission:

- time limits for interventions in the aula, according to the different kinds of dialogue or discussion.
- to assign certain topics to one or more Regions during the General Chapter at their discretion
- to give the Regions more opportunities to meet during the General Chapter
- to follow up on recommendations of the *ad hoc* commission for the spiritual dimension of the General Chapter.

#### Immediate Preparation

- House reports AND visitation cards
- House reports may be accompanied by a visual presentation
- Regional reports: one page maximum or a multimedia presentation of max 7 minutes
- Introduction for the new superiors (and others) by online meeting
- Newsletters before, during and after the General Chapter by the Abbot General, M. Katharina (Nazareth) and D. Jan (Caldey)

#### Introduction at the General Chapter

- Functioning of the Chapter
- Goal and responsibility of the Chapter
- Discretion and confidentiality

#### Opening conference of the Abbot General

- Followed by discussion in aula and commissions

## Preliminary votes

- Election of fifth member of the Co-ordinating Commission
- Changes to the Procedures of the General Chapter:
  - Synthesis
  - *Ad hoc* commissions
  - Resignation, treated by 1 commission and the Region
  - Superior *ad nutum*, treated by 1 commission and the Region
- Document on the Study of the House reports:
  - 2.1.a. on the Father Immediate bringing cases to attention of General Chapter
  - 2.3.2.a. *ad hoc* commissions
- Vote for *ad experimentum* procedure on 14 commissions' reports

## Topics

### Extraordinary procedure

- Terms in office for the Abbot General, Councillors and members of the Commissions of the Order  
Working paper by D. Aelred (Bethlehem), D. Juan José (San Isidro)
- “Mothers Immediate”: Working paper to be updated by the Law Commission
- Place of the Eucharist in the Cistercian life today in the different situations around the world: working paper by D. Loris (Frattocchie) and M. Bénédicte (Echourgnac), including a survey of the Order. Also, a conference
- Redistribution of the Regions and their functioning: working paper by M. Regina (Abakaliki) and D. Steele (Tarrowarra)
- Determination of sums for acts of extraordinary administration: working paper by D. Emmanuel, bursar of the Order

### Ordinary procedure

- Role of the Commission of Solidarity: working paper by the Commission of Solidarity
- Continuing *ad experimentum* use of Affiliation: Statute of affiliation updated by the Law Commission; information given by the Abbot General and his Council; reports on experiences of recent cases
- Papal rescript: working paper by the Law Commission
- Minimum number for a Conventual Chapter: working paper by the Law Commission
- Harmonizing the Constitutions mentioned in the working paper on Mothers Immediate

### Simplified procedure

- Revision of the Statute on the Regular Visitation by the Law Commission
- Update of the Statute on the Accompaniment of Fragile Communities, etc.
- Ratification of St 75.2 A

## Reports in the aula

- Regional reports (only in the aula)
- Experiences of fragile communities (maximum of 5), with discussion in the aula
- Conference and/or sharing of experiences on abuse, with discussion in aula

- Report on formation by *ad hoc* commission: Fr. Carlos Maria (Sobrado), Fr. Samuel (Tarrawarra), Sr. Elizabeth (Butende)
- Clarification on who has the responsibility for daughter houses in case of *sede vacante* in the mother house by the Abbot General and Council

### **Questions to the General Chapter**

- Revision of the *Ratio* (To be included in the report of the *ad hoc* Commission on Formation)

### **Guests**

### **Suggestions to facilitate the work of interpreters and secretaries:**

- If possible, for longer interventions, to provide a written text.
- Test new interpreters.
- Room assignments in *Domus Pacis*.
- Good headphones that cover the ears.
- Text on the screen big enough.
- Instruction for capitulants: speak slowly, don't forget your name, monastery and language.
- Appoint a contact person for secretaries.
- Job description for secretaries, in order to inform their successors.
- Use of new technologies.

## V. EVALUATION AND CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

Great appreciation was expressed for the hospitality extended by the monasteries of Quilvo and Miraflores which was outstanding, especially in its attention to detail. It was agreed by all, that this was a concrete example of fruitful collaboration between houses, and of hearts that had expanded through generous, self-giving service in Christ.

The Co-ordination Commission maintained a steady rhythm of work to ensure all 330 regional votes were addressed in an atmosphere described as warm, fraternal and generous throughout. Happily, consensus was reached in several instances following quite lively debates. Several participants remarked on the whole experience as one of great grace and richness, thanks to profound listening and open-hearted, generous sharing.

Three particularly creative moments were identified:

1. The recognition of the need for work at grassroots level, to develop interculturality at higher levels in the Order
2. A suggested new approach to translation and interpretation at the General Chapter which will involve professional translators alone working in the aula
3. The idea of increasing awareness and participation through promotion of the General Chapter to participants and Communities through illustrated newsletters, which will appear before, during and after the event.

The three sessions of the Abbot General's Plenary Council highlighted the pastoral aspect of the Central Commission and facilitated a sharing of the burden carried by the Abbot General and his Council.

Co-responsibility and interculturality were strong topics throughout the meeting and emphasized the need to grow towards a greater sense of responsibility for mission and increased mutual understanding at all levels.

For many, this meeting provided a better understanding of the juridical dimension of the General Chapter and how it functions. It also gave clarity to new Regional Presidents of what is expected of the Regions and the importance of Regional votes.

In his closing speech, the Abbot General thanked everyone present for their commitment and contributions. He commended all attendees for their willingness to come to Chile and saw the outcome as one of immense blessings for the participants, the Communities of Quilvo and Miraflores and hopefully for the entire Order. With almost 90 proposals and votes, many seeds were planted for the General Chapter of 2025, which now need to germinate and grow.

In conclusion, Dom Bernardus expressed immense gratitude to M. Mariela, D. Lucas and their respective communities for all that had been done to make the meeting such an outstanding success.

## **VI. PLENARY COUNCIL OF THE ABBOT GENERAL**

*held during the Central Commission meeting 2024*

According to Statute 80.I the Abbot General made use of the Central Commission as his plenary Council. There were three meetings held (9<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> June 2024) and the following topics were discussed.

\* The cause of beatification of Brother Michael Strode, oblate of Caldey Abbey, was, according to ST. 79.A., entrusted to the Postulator General of the Order. ([www.brothermichaelstrode.org](http://www.brothermichaelstrode.org) )

\*According to ST. 84.1.B.a the Abbot General and his plenary Council approved the foundation of Sept Fons, Notre Dame de Bàdi, in the diocese of Tambacounda in Senegal.

\*At the request of the Abbess and the community of Soleilmont (Belgium) the Abbot General and his plenary Council, acting on behalf of the General Chapter, raised the community of Kunnambetta (India) to the rank of Simple Priory.

\*After a discussion with the Dicastery for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and the Societies of Apostolic Life on the *Statute on the Accompaniment of Fragile Communities and on the Suppression of a Monastery*, some clarifications needed to be given on the difference between closure and suppression of a monastery. A paper was presented (which is included in the appendix of these minutes). The Law Commission will be asked to update the Statute according to this paper.

\*Two communities were suppressed. More information will be given when all the persons involved are informed.

\*Information was given on several situations in the Order.

Appendix i

## Opening Conference of the Abbot General to the Central Commission Meeting

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

With this conference I open the meeting of the Central Commission 2024 in preparation for the General Chapter of 2025. I thank you all for taking the trouble to come with me and the Council here to Chile. I thank our brothers and sisters of Miraflores and Quilvo for all the work they have done to make this meeting possible and the hospitality with which they have welcomed us 'at the end of the earth'.

This is the first time in the history of our Order that the Central Commission is meeting outside Europe or the United States. An important historical moment because it shows the reality of the Order's expansion since the 1950s, across all continents and with it the "desire to participate in a monastic manner in fulfilling the mission of evangelization as the contemplative presence of the Church" (C. 68.1).

By coming to Chile, we are also responding to Pope Francis' call to go to the ends of the earth and widen our tent. Using the term "periphery", Pope Francis has from the beginning of his pontificate referred not only to a geographical area but also to a challenge. In *Evangelii gaudium*, he says: "Each Christian and every community must discern the path that the Lord points out, but all of us are asked to obey his call to go forth from our own comfort zone in order to reach all the "peripheries" in need of the light of the Gospel."<sup>1</sup>

In doing so, he clearly distanced himself from liberation theology that saw 'periphery' and 'centre' primarily as geographical areas: "the dependent underdeveloped areas" versus "the capitalist West". Pope Francis broadened the definition of 'periphery', with a new spiritual geography becoming increasingly central. The 'periphery' is then any kind of border area where encounter is possible. This is why the addition 'and widen our tent' is so important. We have also come to this end of the earth to enlarge our tent!

Enlarging our tent is a reference to Isaiah 54.2 "Enlarge the space of your tent", which was used as the theme for the continental phase of the Synod of Bishops on synodality. The Church as a tent of meeting, a place of encounter with God, yourself and the other. "Enlarge the tent requires welcoming others into it, making room for their diversity. It thus entails a willingness to die to self out of love, finding oneself again in and through relationship with Christ and one's neighbour: "Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit" (Jn. 12:24). The fruitfulness of the Church depends on accepting this death, which is not, however, an annihilation, but an experience of emptying oneself in order to be filled by Christ through the Holy Spirit, and thus a process by which we receive richer relationships, deeper ties to God and each other."<sup>2</sup>

By coming to Chile, we, as members of our communities, as delegates of our Regions, as superiors of the Order, take up this challenge of encounter. Our tent is widened by coming to this end of the earth, by listening to each other, by dialoguing with each other, by praying with each other, by living with each other to prepare next year's General Chapter.

---

<sup>1</sup> Pope Francis, *Evangelii gaudium*, 20.

<sup>2</sup> 'Enlarge the space of your tent.' Working document for the continental stage, 27-10-2022. nr. 28.  
<https://www.synod.va/en/highlights/working-document-for-the-continental-stage.html>



All of us are invited to move away from our own centre. Not me, not my Region, not just the monks, not just the nuns but thanks to the other, we are the place of encounter. It is good to repeat the words of Dom Mauro Giuseppe Lepori O. Cist during the first part of the General Chapter 2022, in preparation for the election of a new Abbot General: *“We do not become “us” only by addition, but through a paschal transformation. The “I” does not become a “we” simply by adding other “I”s to my “I,” as by adding other coins to the coin I have. In fact, Jesus chooses the parable of the grain of wheat to explain how we pass from I to us: “Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much fruit. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life” (Jn 12:24-25) .... Communion is scary because it implies death to oneself.”*<sup>3</sup>

It may feel uncomfortable for some of us to have come all the way to Chile for this meeting but, in this sense, may it be fruitful not only for good preparation for the General Chapter but also fruitful for the spiritual life of the Order, ourselves and our communities. And let us not forget what our coming and presence means for our brothers and sisters in Chile and for the whole Region of REMILA.

In this opening conference, I want to focus on the theme of co-responsibility for the mission. On 13 March 2024, I wrote to all communities inviting you to listen to each other in your communities around the theme of co-responsibility for the mission. It was a request from the Union of Superiors General to our Order to reflect on this very theme in preparation for the final part of the synodal process in the Church, the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops from 2 to 27 October this year.

I am not going to summarise all the answers sent in<sup>4</sup>. Actually, the theme of the questions was co-responsibility for the mission. However, the vast majority of answers were just on the theme of co-responsibility. Only a few communities answered very clearly to the question about co-responsibility for the mission. Some also honestly indicated that they have struggled with the word 'mission'. In this conference, I want to engage only with the question: How do we as an Order bear responsibility to each other in our co-responsibility for the mission? Especially in a time of crisis, co-responsibility for the mission is a challenge.

As you know, we made many adjustments to our Constitutions during our last General Chapter in September 2022. At the end of 2022, we submitted those adjustments to the Holy See for approval. It took a long time to reach an agreement with the Dicastery for Religious. Finally, we received a verbal commitment of approval in early 2024. At the end of April 2024, I received the official approval of the Constitutions. The decree was signed on 3 April 2024 by Cardinal Braz de Aviz, prefect of the Dicastery and Sr Carmen Ros Norte's, undersecretary. I hereby announce the official approval to all the Order. The official Latin text, as well as the English, French and Spanish translations, will be published on the Order's website. With this, they officially go into effect!

In 1995, on the occasion of five years of the new Constitutions, Dom Bernardo Olivera wrote a circular letter to the Order containing three keys for reading the new Constitutions. *“We offer here three keys for reading in order to understand correctly our Constitutions: Jesus Christ and his Gospel, the cenobitic Rule of Benedict, and the contemplative charism of Cîteaux.”*

Today, I am adding a fourth key for reading: *co-responsibility for the mission*. Actually, it is not a new key for reading because the theme of co-responsibility for the mission can be found in all three of Dom Bernardo's

---

<sup>3</sup> Dom Mauro Giuseppe Lepori O. Cist, Synodality of Communion. Minutes General Chapter 2022/1, p. 203.

<sup>4</sup> 54% of communities responded, i.e., 82 out of 152 communities. 48 communities of nuns (62%) and 34 communities of monks (33%). CNE 4; ISLES 4; NED 4; RE 5; ReCif 6; REI 5; REM 10; USA 10; REMILA 10; ORIENS 16; RAFMA 7.

reading keys. Let the new Constitutions be an occasion for all of us to take up again this 'book of life' so that we may grow in our Cistercian vocation and thus in the mission we have received 'for the salvation of all'.

### 1. Co-responsibility for the mission in the life of the individual monk and nun in the community

During my visit to the community of Quilvo, we celebrated the Eucharist one day to ask God for vocations to religious life. The opening prayer of this Mass formula reads as follows: *"Look with favour on your family, O Lord, and increase it always with new offspring, so that it may lead its sons (and daughters) towards their goal of perfect charity and work effectively for the salvation of all. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen."*<sup>5</sup>

The mission of religious life is reflected here by the words: *"to work effectively for the salvation of all."* This is not only our mission as religious, but it is the mission of all baptized persons. In baptism, we have received in Christ the task of priesthood, the task of kingship and the task of prophecy in order to cooperate with, through and in Christ in the salvation of the world.

As contemplative religious, we do so in a special and hidden way. Our Constitutions articulate the mission as follows in C. 31: **Apostolate of Monks/Nuns** *"Fidelity to the monastic way of life is closely related to zeal for the Kingdom of God and for the salvation of the whole human race. Monks/nuns bear this apostolic concern in their hearts. It is the contemplative life itself that is their way of participating in the mission of Christ and his Church and of being part of the local church."*

The co-responsibility for this mission in the life of every monk and nun is rooted in baptism and confirmation, which in monastic vows 'is renewed and given vitality' (C. 8). And also, in the daily celebration of the Eucharist, *"by sharing in the paschal mystery of the Lord the brothers and sisters are united more closely with one another and with the whole Church"* (C. 18).

Co-responsibility for mission is expressed in cenobitic life (C. 13) of which the common meal is a concrete expression *"and strengthens the unity of the brothers"* (St. 13.1.A) and even in the proper use of 'private rooms' (St. 13.1.B) in connection with 'reading and prayer'.

Co-responsibility for mission is also a spiritual exercise. According to C. 13.2, brothers and sisters are called *"to bear their infirmities with great patience and to serve one another humbly. They are to support by prayer and by other appropriate means those who are weak troubled or unwell. The sick, the aged and the dying are to be surrounded with a care that is attentive and affectionate."*

The Constitutions are vigilant that concern for co-responsibility does not come at the expense of healthy pluralism. Co-responsibility is different from uniformity but *"Each brother and each sister is to contribute to the upbuilding of fraternal relations especially by sharing with others the spiritual gifts he/she has received by God's manifold grace"*. (C. 14.1)

It is very clear that the Constitutions use the principle of co-responsibility for the mission so that *"each brother, each sister, may grow in the Cistercian vocation"* (C.14.2). If we are to grow in our Cistercian vocation, then all have *"the right and duty to participate fully in the common life, although this participation can be exercised in different ways. All are called to mutual care, mutual co-operation, and mutual obedience. All are concerned for the spiritual state of the community, knowing that the good zeal of one is a help to all, whereas bitter zeal is a hindrance."* (C. 16.1.2)

---

<sup>5</sup> The Roman Missal, English translation according to the Third Typical Edition. 2011, p. 1266.

The service of authority and governance of the community is also founded by the Constitutions on the principle of co-responsibility for the mission. Due to lack of time, I will not elaborate on this now. Let this be an invitation to read and meditate on the Constitutions from the standpoint of co-responsibility for the mission, so that everyone may grow in the Cistercian vocation for the salvation of all.

## 2. Co-responsibility for the mission in the life of the Order

While co-responsibility for the mission in the life of the Church is rooted in baptism, in the life of the Order this co-responsibility for the mission is rooted in love. C. 71.1 says: *“Autonomous monasteries of the Cistercian Order of the Strict Observance, spread throughout different parts of the world, **are joined together by the bond of charity** and by a common tradition of doctrine and law.”* In other words, C. 4.1 expresses the same: *“The communities of the Order spread all over the world **are gathered into unity by a bond of charity.**”*<sup>6</sup>

As autonomous communities, we are responsible for the mission of each other because we are bound to each other by love. We are so used to this observation that it is important to get a good understanding of it again. We do not take our responsibility for each other by claiming power, to use that instrument to be close to another. Our mutual responsibility is based on charity *“in order to accompany life, to sustain hope, to be the sign of unity... to build bridges, to break down walls, to sow seeds of reconciliation.”*<sup>6</sup>

In the Order, this love-based co-responsibility for mission between communities is regulated at the level of superiors. C 71.2-4 says: <sup>2</sup> *Their superiors are united by the bond of solicitude for the welfare of each community.*

<sup>3</sup> *They collegially exercise this pastoral care, together with supreme authority in the Order, when they assemble for the General Chapter.*

<sup>4</sup> *The same pastoral care is exercised, under the guidance of the General Chapter, through the institutions of filiation and regular visitation, as well as by assemblies of superiors and the various offices by which the welfare of the whole Order is fostered.*

But it is not only the task of superiors. C. 72 clearly places a responsibility on all monks and nuns. *“They collaborate and give mutual help in many ways, having due regard to their healthy differences and the complementarity of their gifts.”*

Co-responsibility for the mission based on charity begins at the moment the General Chapter recognizes a community as a foundation. *“When they give approval to a foundation the abbots and abbesses are to encompass the new offshoot with fraternal care”* (C. 69.1). Two statutes are added to C. 69 in which the co-responsibility towards a new community in the bond of charity is made clear: *“If there are financial difficulties in a foundation the superiors of the Order are to provide the necessary help”* (St. 69.1.B) and *“The superiors of the Order should provide help in the area of formation, especially for very remote monasteries”* (St. 69.1.C).

Co-responsibility for the mission is mainly shown within the system of Paternity and Filiation. C 73 says: *“In accordance with the Charter of Charity, Cistercian communities are united by the bond of filiation. Traditionally filiation has its juridic form in the function of the Father Immediate. Paternity and filiation are expressed through mutual assistance and support.”* However, it does not mean that co-responsibility for the mission ends at the border of the filiation. Already the *Carta Caritatis* regulates the relationship between

---

<sup>6</sup> Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, October 3, 2020. nr. 276.

communities that do not belong to the same filiation. Towards them the same attitude is adopted as towards the communities of one's own filiation. Congregationalism is alien to our bond of charity from the beginning, which is not to say that temptation lurks every time, even today.

In the last 60 years, a new structure, the Regional conference, has emerged as a good instrument for taking co-responsibility for the mission. C 81 says: *“The communities of the Order are grouped in Regions approved by the General Chapter. These Regional conferences foster communion and fraternal co-operation within each geographical area and in the Order as a whole. Regional conferences can be composed of both monks and nuns.”* St 81.C makes this very concrete: *“The relationship of the various Regional conferences gives rise to a dialogue among the various nations and peoples by which the common patrimony of the Order can be more deeply appreciated.”*

Therefore, our mutual responsibility is based on charity *“in order to accompany life, to sustain hope, to be the sign of unity... to build bridges, to break down walls, to sow seeds of reconciliation.”*<sup>7</sup>

The encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* helps us to rediscover the concept of charity and thus our co-responsibility for the mission within the Order. In *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis elaborates the definition of charity (*caritas*) given by his predecessor, Pope Benedict XVI, in his encyclical *Deus Caritas est*. Christian charity (*caritas*) is first and foremost *“the simple response to immediate needs and specific situations”*<sup>8</sup>. *It is an activity that “must be independent of parties and ideologies”*<sup>9</sup>. *“Charity, furthermore, cannot be used as a means of engaging in what is nowadays considered proselytism. Love is free; it is not practiced as a way of achieving other ends.”*<sup>10</sup> *“For the Church, charity is not a kind of welfare activity which could equally well be left to others, but is a part of her nature, an indispensable expression of her very being.”*<sup>11</sup>

It is good that we make this description of *caritas* our own when thinking about strengthening co-responsibility towards each other in the Order.

### **3. Two challenges for co-responsibility for the mission in the life of the Order today**

The greatest challenge in a time of crisis is to ‘move beyond ourselves’. Indeed, the danger of crisis is that we shut ourselves up inside ourselves, feel ourselves victims and scapegoat the other or the outside world. *“Closed groups and self-absorbed couples that define themselves in opposition to others tend to be expressions of selfishness and mere self-preservation.”*<sup>12</sup> An attitude that is also a real challenge for our communities today in the Order. *“In the depths of every heart, love creates bonds and expands existence, for it draws people out of themselves and towards others. Since we were made for love, in each one of us “a law of ekstasis” seems to operate: “the lover ‘goes outside’ the self to find a fuller existence in another.” For this reason, “man always has to take up the challenge of moving beyond himself”.*<sup>13</sup>

What *Fratelli Tutti* says about human beings can easily be translated to communities. Communities too are made for love and called to move beyond themselves.

In the past, there was maybe a one-sided emphasis on this moving beyond ourselves by making new foundations. However, the present times seem to invite us to find other and new ways in which a community can move beyond itself. We are challenged to help each other across boundaries of filiation by giving brothers

---

<sup>7</sup> idem. 6

<sup>8</sup> Pope Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas est*. 31a.

<sup>9</sup> idem, 31b.

<sup>10</sup> idem, 31c.

<sup>11</sup> idem, 25a.

<sup>12</sup> Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, n. 89.

<sup>13</sup> idem, 88.

and sisters to help other communities. This call that applies not only to large and thriving communities but do fragile communities also dare to take the risk of moving beyond themselves to help others in the mission of their lives? Do different cultures dare to rise above themselves to welcome others and help others?

Instead of reaching too quickly for the tool of suppression, for example, we should try, in my opinion, to make more use of the instrument of affiliation to be close to each other in weakness. The anxiety about affiliation is often a concern that it would be a too heavy burden on the supposedly stronger community. But isn't that always the risk of love?

Another challenge is the rediscovery, awareness, and redefinition of the mission of our contemplative, Cistercian life. "As John Paul II once said to the Bishops of Oceania: 'All renewal in the Church must have mission as its goal if it is not to fall prey to a kind of ecclesial introversion'".<sup>14</sup> This introversion leads to an attitude of mere survival and monastic life becomes a museum full of pessimistic, cynical, and relativizing brothers and sisters. Specific to this attitude is that people no longer know in which direction they should go. In the current crisis, many communities and individuals have lost the mission of their lives.

Before the Second Vatican Council, our Order had a clearly articulated mission: "*vita monastica vita poenitentiae est*" (Dom de Rancé). By doing penance, as an individual within the confines of a community, one collaborated with Christ in the salvation of the world. This mission inspired many to give themselves in imitation of Jesus Christ.

Already during the years before the Council, this vision faded into the background. The other was not central to the mission of contemplative life but the person himself, in the context of an unshakeable belief in the capacity of human beings. The choice for monastic life became first and foremost a choice for the good of one's own soul and beatitude. The individualism of the world thus crept into the monastery.

But everyone who tries to persevere in the monastic life will sooner or later be confronted with the question of its meaning not only for himself but also for others. Our fathers of Citeaux found the mission of their lives '*in the salvation of many*'<sup>15</sup>. Is that still our mission or rather our co-responsibility for the mission of our Cistercian life?

Thomas Merton tried to alert the Order to the need for a rediscovery and reformulation of the mission of contemplative Cistercian life as early as the late 1960s. For him, the monk's mission was to be found in freedom. "The monk must be a sign of freedom, a sign of truth, a witness to the inner freedom of the children of God with which Christ came to shower us".<sup>16</sup> In this way, the monk could contribute to the salvation of many in Christ. Our Blessed Brothers of Tibhirine have also very clearly tried to articulate again the mission of Cistercian life through their life of prayer among those who pray. Together, they took responsibility for that mission until death. A final witness to the search for a new articulation of our mission as Cistercians is Dom Mauro Giuseppe Lepori in his conference for the General Chapter 2022, Part 1: "*Fraternal communion in Christ is the substance of the mission, of the whole mission of the Church, even of the mission of the monasteries. Communion is the motive, method, and end; the origin, meaning and purpose of the Church's mission*".<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup> Pope Francis, *Evangelii gaudium*, n. 27.

<sup>15</sup> *Exordio Parvum* 16.3.

<sup>16</sup> Thomas MERTON, *Contemplation in a World of Action*, Doubleday & Company, New York, 1971, p. 225-234

<sup>17</sup> Dom Mauro Giuseppe Lepori O. Cist. *Synodality of Communion*. Minutes General Chapter 2022/1, p. 202.

What is our common response today to the question of the mission of our lives? Our Constitutions say that the contemplative life itself is our contribution in the mission of Christ and his Church. But what do these words mean? How do we give form to them in the present time and in our various contexts? I encourage everyone to think about this and share it with each other. A challenge to help us move beyond ourselves.

### **Conclusion**

In this conference, I have tried to re-read our new Constitutions in the light of co-responsibility for the mission. The Constitutions as the book of life show us that we are grounded in love for God and each other. A love that makes us move beyond ourselves to give ourselves with, in and through Christ for the salvation of all. Let that love be the basis of our co-responsibility for the mission as individual monks and nuns living in community but also as communities living within the body of the Order. May the new Constitutions also be a challenge to renew our co-responsibility for the mission for the life of the local Church to which we belong, for the universal Church and for the world. Love, after all, is our vocation! We are made for love!

Mostazal, Chile, 6 June 2024  
Br. Bernardus Peeters ocso  
Abbot General

Appendix ii

## **Report of *ad hoc* Commission on the Spiritual Dimension of the General Chapter 2025**

### **Vote 4—Central Commission**

*We wish to form an ad hoc commission during this Central Commission to find ways to implement the suggestions of the Regions and of the Central Commission on how to promote the spiritual dimension of the Chapter. This commission will make a report of its work to the Central Commission. The Abbot General and his council will then take the work of this ad hoc commission into account when planning the General Chapter of 2025.*

**Members elected: D. Anastasius, Procurator; D. Isidoro, Huerta; M. Kathy, Crozet**

### **GENERAL CHAPTER SAMPLE HORARIUM**

**3- 23 September 2025**

05:30 – 08:30 Breakfast / Petit déjeuner / Desayuno  
07:00 Lauds and Mass / Laudes et Messe / Laudes y Misa  
09:00 Terce / Tierce / Tercia  
1° session / session / sesión  
10:30 Break / Pause / Pausa  
10:50 – 12:15 2° session / session / sesión  
**12:45 Lunch / Déjeuner / Almuerzo**  
15:00 None / None / Nona  
3° session / session / sesión  
16:30 Break / Pause / Pausa  
16:50 – 18:10 4° session / session / sesión  
18:30 Vespers / Vêpres / Vísperas  
19:30 Supper / Repas / Cena

### **Suggestions:**

#### **Opening Day: Retreat**

- Mass of the Holy Spirit—Basilica  
- Renewal of Baptism
- Spiritual Conference
- Breakout into discussion groups for reflection/sharing
- *Convivium* — lunch together
- Spiritual presentation used at new Superior course—then afternoon used for personal reflection and prayer
- Vespers with adoration and Supper as usual

#### **Mid-way: Spiritual Emphasis**

- Spiritual Conference on the Eucharist in our Cistercian Life
- Breakout into discussion groups for reflection/sharing
- *Convivium* — lunch together
- Part II of new superiors' course presentation & personal reflection

**Mass/Liturgy**

- Sun, Sept 14th *The Exaltation of the Cross*. 30 minutes of adoration
- Keep ½ day schedule on Sunday's
- Keep Blessed Sacrament Reserved in Chapel (*auditorium*)
- Sacristans to use flowers etc. on special days
- Vespers with Poor Clare's, Franciscans, Benedictines?

**Aula Sessions:**

- Incorporate alternatives for Terce & None with Meditation & Silence, RB, etc.  
Coordinating commission to help keep a positive environment, and end each day's work with a prayer

**Commission Sessions:** to begin and end with short prayer

**Meals:**

- Coordinating commission to offer a prayer of blessing at the last session before the noon-day meal
- Breakfast before and after Mass in silence

**Closing Mass:**

- Day before last session after last session
- After the last session add a closing prayer 'to be sent', and for a safe journey



Appendix iii

## Report from the Central Secretary of Formation to the Central Commission of 2024

A fraternal and warm greeting to each one of you, wishing you a beautiful and joyful celebration of this Solemnity.

I have re-read my speech at the previous Central Commission, and I think I would say the same thing again! In a way I feel a sense of shame that you have to take this time to listen to me. Thank you for your patience. It seems to me that a meeting with the Abbot and his Council was pending after the last General Chapter in order to receive suggestions and perceptions about **this service**. In my opinion, it would be opportune to review the task that the *Ratio* entrusts to the Central Secretary for Formation (**CSF**). He should facilitate communication between the Regions in the area of formation. Nowadays, this is no longer an indispensable and exclusive competence for one person, given the magnitude of possibilities for communication, whether by superiors, regional secretaries (RSF), or the monks and nuns themselves. The RSF often communicate with each other, share the courses they are going to do and the CSF is not involved, or is not aware of it. Nor do I believe that the SCF can ensure the distribution of information on the topics of monastic formation. The material is accessible by various means (publications, internet, exchanges between communities) and in particular, I have had almost no requests for material from brothers or sisters. Sometimes, thanks to the publication on the Order's website, I myself have become aware of meetings or courses, to mention but a few, those concerning St. Bernard held at the *Sant'Anselmo* Institute. Only one Nun of the Order was able to attend the formation course for English-speaking monks, held in Rome... and she was French speaking!

The cooperation received from the **RSF** in publicizing what they were organizing came about thanks to the consultations I made with them; in general, it did not come from their own initiative to share the meetings they planned, except in the case of ORIENS, who informed us well in advance of a long-awaited meeting. Usually, it takes a long time until, when the Newsletter is going to be published, I ask them and find out what they have done. In any case, I think it is to be commended and thanked for what has been organized after the pandemic. Even having some of the recordings available has made it possible to make more use of them in cases where schedules or other reasons prevented participation. In anticipation of the meeting, I was going to have with you, I asked the RSF if they had any concerns or issues to raise and there were none from those who responded. From some of the responses I received, I heard the news that the possibility of the SCF being in Rome is being evaluated... I don't know if my proposal during the previous Central Commission was taken into account or remembered, but I must say that it has caused me some joy... Going back to the RSF, there has also been a situation where they have been replaced or even a sister has passed away and I only found out after writing to them....

As for the possible **Program for the Order** which I had entrusted to Fr Rafael Pascual, I have to say that nothing has materialized. Father Pascual has been in a delicate health situation, hospitalized and making a slow recovery for almost the whole of last year. I was able to find out about it thanks to a mass mailing he sent himself on his return to the monastery, after having sent him a few that never received a reply. He did not decline my request, but after about three attempts, it seemed inappropriate to keep asking him about it. It was a frustrating experience on my part.

At the moment I am aware of **upcoming regional formation meetings** in September and October this year (REMILA, English-speaking ORIENS sub-region; also, the French-speaking ones) and in 2025 the other ORIENS sub-region. These are rather sessions for the formators and not so much for the young people in formation.

In inviting me to this meeting Dom Bernardus asked me if I would be willing to be re-elected to this service. You know that I have already been doing it for more than the three years that are stipulated in the *Ratio*. Personally, I do not think that I am the best person for this. I think there is a need for someone with more proximity or some involvement with people who could help with formation, who knows monks/nuns who are in the field of research, either out of personal interest, or somewhat more on an academic level, through publications. However, if the goal of formation is our transformation in Christ, growing in our contemplative identity, neither is it a matter of accumulating courses and knowledge that do not take root in our life and in the living of our Cistercian charism.

Thank you very much.

Azul, Argentina, 7 June 2024

Hno. Mauricio Tavella

Appendix iv

## What happens when we vote for the suppression of a monastery: clarifying our understanding

### A. “Closure” and “suppression”

In the Order up to now, we have often used the terms “closure” and “suppression” without distinction, sometimes even as interchangeable. But they should be distinguished.<sup>18</sup> **Closure** happens when regular life at the monastery ceases. **Suppression** is the extinguishing of the canonical existence of the juridic person (canon 120 §1). The Decree of Suppression is issued by the Abbot General (for all OCSO communities, monks and nuns) when everything is completely finished in canon and civil law (par. 27 of the *Statute on Fragile Communities*, to be amended).

A community can **close** before or after the vote for suppression. In Grandselve, in Bela Vista, and effectively in Engelszell, the communities closed first (regular life at the monastery ceased), and later the suppression was voted. In other cases (for example, Mistassini), it was the opposite: the suppression was voted first, and later the community closed. It depends on local circumstances.

The General Chapter votes for *suppression*. It does not vote for closure. A community can close without a vote. When the General Chapter votes for suppression, it implies closure (if this has not already happened).<sup>19</sup>

Between the vote for suppression and the issuing of the Decree of suppression, some things need to take place: in particular, all the members must make stability elsewhere, the property must be disposed of, and any other civil law matters must be finalised.

### B: The effect of the vote for suppression and the establishment of the Commission for Closure:

**The superior:** the superior (whether abbot / abbess, superior *ad nutum*, or monastic commissary) ceases to have any canonical authority.

**Conventual chapter:** the conventual chapter ceases to have any authority.

*Authority for the disposal of the property and other assets passes to the Commission for Closure.*

*A Confirmation, addressed “to whom it may concern” is issued to the President of the Commission (or others if necessary) so that he or she can act in matters of civil law to liquidate the entities and activities of the monastery whose suppression has been voted - cf. Neiges, Engelszell...*

**Stability:** the stability of the brothers / sisters remains at the monastery whose suppression has been voted, but it is a “dead” stability which no longer carries any rights or obligations.

- *The members should make stability at another community as soon as possible. (It is possible for their new superior to permit a member to continue to live at the former monastery for a time, to assist with the process of closure.)*

---

<sup>18</sup> Clarified with P. Gerindini at the DIVCSVA, 20 March 2024.

<sup>19</sup> We need to check all our proper law to make sure that we are using the words correctly, and amend if necessary.

- *If necessary<sup>20</sup>, the Abbot General appoints a superior of the Order to be the canonical superior of a member until a change of stability is possible. (This superior will ensure that the member changes stability within a reasonable period.)*

*This does not give the member any conventual chapter rights in the community of the superior.*

*The canonical superior can act if the member requests permission for absence, exclaustation, or dispensation from vows, or to begin the process of dismissal from the Order, and in any other case requiring the authority of the member's major superior.*

*[Until we incorporate this into our Constitutions and get approval from the Holy See, the Abbot General can make this appointment in accordance with C. 82.5.]*

**Father Immediate:** The function of the Father Immediate ceases (usually the Father Immediate becomes a member of the Commission for Closure).

**Daughter houses:** If the monastery whose suppression has been voted has daughter houses, they lose their Father Immediate and a new one must be found. This is done in discussion with the communities concerned. The General Chapter approves the change of paternity (St. 73.B [m]; St. 73.C [f]).

**Closure:** Once the suppression has been voted, the community should close as soon as is reasonably possible (if it has not already done so).

The remainder of the process follows according to the *Statute on the Accompaniment of Fragile Communities and on the Suppression of a Monastery*.

---

<sup>20</sup> This is not done, or does not have to be done, if it is reasonably expected that the member will change stability in the near future. Someone can be without a canonical superior for a short period, as happens when a monastery is *sede vacante*.

Appendix v

## Summary of Votes

Vote 1

We propose *ad experimentum* the following procedure for the General Chapter of 2025: “When all 14 commissions of the Chapter produce reports on the same topic, the Coordinating Commission may appoint two capitulants to produce a synthesis of the 14 reports. In that case, all the reports will be available to everyone but only the synthesis will be read in plenary assembly.”

PLACET 22                      NON PLACET 1                      ABSTENTIO                      **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 2

We wish to continue the practice of producing a synthesis of the General Chapter.

PLACET 19                      NON PLACET 4                      ABSTENTIO                      **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 3

We propose to the General Chapter to add to the Procedures of the General Chapter a section V. Synthesis with a new paragraph 37: “Two capitulants are elected by the General Chapter at the beginning of the Chapter to write a synthesis of the Chapter. This synthesis, describing concretely the work of the Chapter, must be completed within one month after the Chapter.”

PLACET 21                      NON PLACET 2                      ABSTENTIO                      **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 4

We wish to form an *ad hoc* commission during this Central Commission to find ways to implement the suggestions of the Regions and of the Central Commission on how to promote the spiritual dimension of the Chapter. This commission will make a report of its work to the Central Commission. The Abbot General and his Council will then take the work of this *ad hoc* commission into account when planning the General Chapter of 2025.

PLACET 12                      NON PLACET 11                      ABSTENTIO                      **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 5

~~We ask the Abbot General and his Council to find ways to implement the suggestions of the Regions on how to promote the spiritual dimension of the 2025 General Chapter.~~

Vote 6

We wish to have an overall theme for the General Chapter of 2025.

PLACET 16                      NON PLACET 6                      ABSTENTIO 1                      **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 7

We wish to relate the theme of the General Chapter of 2025 to the Holy Year of 2025: “The Cistercian charism in today’s world under the sign of hope.”

PLACET 16                      NON PLACET 2                      ABSTENTIO 5                      **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 8

We ask the Regions to prepare regional reports to be presented in plenary session at the beginning of the General Chapter of 2025.

PLACET 19                      NON PLACET 3                      ABSTENTIO 1                      **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 9

Regional reports can be either a document of no more than one page or a 7-minute presentation using other media.

PLACET	21	NON PLACET	1	ABSTENTIO	1	<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	---	-----------	---	-----------------------------

Vote 10

We wish to discuss regional reports only in the aula.

PLACET	22	NON PLACET	1	ABSTENTIO		<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	---	-----------	--	-----------------------------

Vote 11

At the General Chapter of 2025, we wish to hear about recent experiences (5 maximum) of various forms of aid that have been put in place to help fragile communities

PALCET	22	NON PLACET		ABSTENTIO	1	<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	--	-----------	---	-----------------------------

Vote 12

We ask the Abbot General and his Council to choose the persons who will share these recent experiences of aid for fragile communities.

PLACET	22	NON PLACET		ABSTENTIO	1	<b>Propositions Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	--	-----------	---	------------------------------

Vote 13

We ask the Abbot General and his Council to organize some form of preparation for new capitulants (and others who wish) before the General Chapter.

PLACET	23	NON PLACET		ABSTENTIO		<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	--	-----------	--	-----------------------------

Vote 14

We wish to give sufficient time at the General Chapter to provide orientation for new capitulants (and others who wish).

PLACET	18	NON PLACET	2	ABSTENTIO	3	<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	---	-----------	---	-----------------------------

Vote 15

We suggest to the Regional Presidents that they assign “Guardian Angels” to the new capitulants in their Region.

PLACET	13	NON PLACET	6	ABSTENTIO	4	<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	---	-----------	---	-----------------------------

Vote 16

We wish to form an *ad hoc* commission to study the formation needs of the Order and to clarify the role of the Central Secretary of Formation. This commission’s work would end with the presentation of a report to the General Chapter of 2025.

PLACET	20	NON PLACET	3	ABSTENTIO		<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	---	-----------	--	-----------------------------

Vote 17

We ask that the General Chapter of 2025 consider revising the Statute on Formation (*Ratio Institutionis*).

PLACET	22	NON PLACET	1	ABSTENTIO		<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	---	-----------	--	-----------------------------

Vote 18

We would like, if possible, that the Central Secretary of Formation reside at least part-time at the Generalate.

PLACET	20	NON PLACET	1	ABSTENTIO	2	<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	---	-----------	---	-----------------------------

Vote 19

At the General Chapter of 2025, we wish to experiment with a chat system in the aula for one or two discussions.

PLACET            11            NON PLACET            9            ABSTENTIO            3            **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 20

We ask the Coordinating Commission to establish time limits for interventions in the aula, according to the different kinds of dialogue or discussion.

PLACET            17            NON PLACET            5            ABSTENTIO            1            **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 21

We ask the Coordinating Commission, at their discretion, to assign certain topics to one or more Regions during the General Chapter.

PLACET            16            NON PLACET            5            ABSTENTIO            2            **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 22

We invite the Coordinating Commission to give the Regions more opportunities to meet during the General Chapter.

PLACET            16            NON PLACET            4            ABSTENTIO            3            **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 23

For the General Chapter of 2025, exceptionally, in the place of house reports, we wish to study only the last visitation cards.

PLACET            9                            NON PLACET            11            ABSTENTIO            3            Proposition Rejected

Vote 24

For the General Chapter of 2025, we ask that the last visitation card of each community be made available to the Commission that studies its house report.

PLACET            21                            NON PLACET            2            ABSTENTIO                            **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 25

If communities wish, they may provide a visual presentation of their community in addition to their house report for the benefit of the commissions that study them.

PLACET            19                            NON PLACET            2            ABSTENTIO            2            **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 26

We propose the following change to the Procedures of the General Chapter regarding the treatment of resignations at the General Chapter: “The resignation of an abbot or abbess will be studied by two commissions and the Region.”

PLACET            5                            NON PLACET            18            ABSTENTIO                            Proposition Rejected

Vote 27

We propose the following change to the Procedures of the General Chapter regarding the treatment of resignations at the General Chapter: “The resignation of an abbot or abbess will be studied by one commission and the Region.”

PLACET            20                            NON PLACET            3            ABSTENTIO                            **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 28

~~We propose the following change to the Procedures of the General Chapter regarding the treatment of resignations at the General Chapter: “The resignation of an abbot or abbess will be studied by two commissions.”~~

Vote 29

We propose the following change to the Procedures of the General Chapter regarding the extension of the regime of superior *ad nutum*: “The extension of the regime of superior *ad nutum* will be studied by two commissions and the Region.”

PLACET 4 NON PLACET 19 ABSTENTIO Proposition Rejected

Vote 30

We propose the following change to the Procedures of the General Chapter regarding the extension of the regime of superior *ad nutum*: “The extension of the regime of superior *ad nutum* will be studied by one commission and the Region.”

PLACET 16 NON PLACET 6 ABSTENTIO 1 **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 31

We want a communication to be given at the beginning of the General chapter of 2025 on discretion regarding the work of the General Chapter and on the delicate balance between transparency and confidentiality.

PLACET 23 NON PLACET ABSTENTIO **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 32

We ask the Abbot General and his Council to prepare this communication.

PLACET 22 NON PLACET ABSTENTIO 1 **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 33

We ask the Abbot General and his Council to invite someone to evaluate the functioning of the General Chapter.

PLACET 15 NON PLACET 7 ABSTENTIO 1 **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 34

We place on the agenda of the General Chapter of 2025 the topics of terms in office, number of mandates, and age limits for the Abbot General, the councillors, and members of the Order’s commissions.

PLACET 21 NON PLACET 2 ABSTENTIO **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 35

We ask for a working document on the topic of vote 34.

PLACET 21 NON PLACET 1 ABSTENTIO 1 **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 36

We entrust this working paper to an *ad hoc* commission of 2 persons.

PLACET 23 NON PLACET ABSTENTIO **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 37

We will treat this topic by extraordinary procedure.

PLACET 18 NON PLACET 3 ABSTENTIO 2 **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 38

We place on the agenda of the General Chapter of 2025 the topic of the role of the Commission of Solidarity.

PLACET 23 NON PLACET ABSTENTIO **Proposition Accepted**



Vote 39

We ask the Commission of Solidarity to prepare a working paper on the topic of vote 38.

PLACET	23	NON PLACET		ABSTENTIO		<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	--	-----------	--	-----------------------------

Vote 40

We will treat this topic by ordinary procedure

PLACET	14	NON PLACET	8	ABSTENTIO	1	<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	---	-----------	---	-----------------------------

Vote 41

~~We will treat this topic by extraordinary procedure.~~

Vote 42

At the General Chapter of 2025, we wish to hear about the experiences of some abbesses who have received a mandate to fulfil the role of Father Immediate.

PLACET	19	NON PLACET	2	ABSTENTIO	2	<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	---	-----------	---	-----------------------------

Vote 43

We wish to hear about the experiences of some communities who have been served by an abbess with a mandate to act in the role of Father Immediate.

PLACET	22	NON PLACET		ABSTENTIO	1	<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	--	-----------	---	-----------------------------

Vote 44

We ask the Abbot General and his Council to choose representative cases of the experiences mentioned in votes 42 and 43.

PLACET	22	NON PLACET		ABSTENTIO	1	<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	--	-----------	---	-----------------------------

Vote 45

We place on the agenda of the General Chapter of 2025 the topic of Mothers Immediate, to be treated by extraordinary procedure.

PLACET	22	NON PLACET		ABSTENTIO	1	<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	--	-----------	---	-----------------------------

Vote 46

We ask the Law Commission to update, if necessary, its working paper on Mothers Immediate, taking into account the work in the Regions

PLACET	22	NON PLACET		ABSTENTIO	1	<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	--	-----------	---	-----------------------------

Vote 47

We wish to elect a commission of two persons to make a broad study of the place of the Eucharist in Cistercian life today, in the light of the current shortage of priests, taking into account the diversity of situations in the Order as reflected in the minutes of this Central Commission.

PLACET	17	NON PLACET	3	ABSTENTIO	3	<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	---	-----------	---	-----------------------------

Vote 48

We ask this commission to include in its work a survey of the communities of the Order.

PLACET	22	NON PLACET	1	ABSTENTIO		<b>Proposition Accepted</b>
--------	----	------------	---	-----------	--	-----------------------------

Vote 49

We ask this commission to draw up a working paper.

PLACET            21                    NON PLACET    2            ABSTENTIO                    **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 50

We place this topic on the agenda of the General Chapter of 2025, to be treated by extraordinary procedure.

PLACET            20                    NON PLACET    3            ABSTENTIO                    **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 51

We ask the Abbot General and his Council to invite a competent person to give a conference on this topic, taking into account, the working paper mentioned in Vote 49.

PLACET            18                    NON PLACET    5            ABSTENTIO                    **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 52

We ask the Law Commission to revise the document on affiliation, taking into account the votes of the Regions, and to include it as information in the General Booklet of the Chapter of 2025.

PLACET            22                    NON PLACET    1            ABSTENTIO                    **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 53

We ask the Abbot General and his Council to provide the General Chapter of 2025 with information on affiliation and on recent experiences of it within the Order.

PLACET            22                    NON PLACET                    ABSTENTIO            1            **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 54

The General Chapter of 2025 will vote by ordinary procedure on the extension of the *ad experimentum* use of the document on affiliation.

PLACET            19                    NON PLACET    1            ABSTENTIO            3            **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 55

We place on the agenda of the General Chapter of 2025 the topic of various forms of abuse.

PLACET            22                    NON PLACET    1            ABSTENTIO                    **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 56

We ask the Abbot General and his Council to organize for the General Chapter of 2025 input from experts and/or the sharing of experiences in this area.

PLACET            17                    NON PLACET    3            ABSTENTIO            3            **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 57

We place on the agenda of the General Chapter 2025 the topic of the redistribution of the Regions and their functioning.

PLACET            22                    NON PLACET    1            ABSTENTIO                    **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 58

We ask for a commission of two persons to write a working paper on this topic.

PLACET            15                    NON PLACET    8            ABSTENTIO                    **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 59

~~We ask for a commission of three persons to write a working paper on this topic.~~

Vote 60

We want this subject to be treated by extraordinary procedure.

PLACET 18 NON PLACET 5 ABSTENTIO **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 61

~~We want this subject to be treated by ordinary procedure~~

Vote 62

We propose the following changes to the Procedures of the General Chapter to be treated by simplified procedure at the beginning of the General Chapter of 2025:

13 e. The report of the *ad hoc* commission should contain the following elements:

- the members of the *ad hoc* commission;
- a brief description of the topic studied;
- the people consulted (day/time);
- the different responses to the challenges faced by the commission;
- the opinion of the commission;
- the recommendations to the General Chapter;
- suggestions for the follow-up.

PLACET 22 NON PLACET ABSTENTIO 1 **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 63

We propose the following changes to the document “Study of the House Reports,” to be treated by simplified procedure at the beginning of the General Chapter of 2025:

2.1.a. According to the Statute on the Accompaniment of Fragile Communities, par.8, “the superior or the Father Immediate, or a Commission of the General Chapter, or the Abbot General, can bring the situation of a community to the particular attention of the General Chapter.”

2.3.2.a. The report of the *ad hoc* commission and the final report of the commission should contain the following elements:

- the members of the (*ad hoc*) commission;
- a brief description of the topic studied;
- the people consulted (day/time);
- the different responses to the challenges faced by the commission;
- the opinion of the commission;
- the recommendations to the General Chapter;
- suggestions for the follow-up.

PLACET 22 NON PLACET ABSTENTIO 1 **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 64

We ask the Law Commission to propose to the General Chapter of 2025 a revised version of the Statute on Regular Visitations, taking into account the work of the Regions and of the Central Commission.

PLACET 23 NON PLACET ABSTENTIO **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 65

The General Chapter of 2025 will vote on this revised version by simplified procedure.

PLACET 22 NON PLACET 1 ABSTENTIO **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 66

We ask the Law Commission to study possible changes to our legislation in the light of the Papal Rescript of May 18, 2022, on the possibility of a non-cleric being a major superior of a clerical institute of pontifical right.

PLACET 21 NON PLACET 2 ABSTENTIO **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 67

We place this topic on the agenda of the General Chapter of 2025, to be treated by ordinary procedure.

PLACET 19                      NON PLACET 4                      ABSTENTIO                      **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 68

We ask the Law Commission to update the Statute on the Accompaniment of Fragile Communities and the Suppression of monasteries in the light of the work of the Regions.

PLACET 23                      NON PLACET                      ABSTENTIO                      **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 69

We place the approval of the updated Statute on the Accompaniment of Fragile Communities and the Suppression of monasteries on the agenda of the General Chapter of 2025, to be treated by simplified procedure.

PLACET 22                      NON PLACET 1                      ABSTENTIO                      **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 70

We place on the agenda of the General Chapter of 2025 the topic of the minimum number of solemn professed required to constitute a conventual chapter (Cst 37).

PLACET 21                      NON PLACET 2                      ABSTENTIO                      **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 71

We ask the Law Commission to draw up a working paper on this topic.

PLACET 21                      NON PLACET 1                      ABSTENTIO 1                      **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 72

We will treat this topic by ordinary procedure.

PLACET 21                      NON PLACET 1                      ABSTENTIO 1                      **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 73

We ask the Abbot General and his Council to provide a clarification on who is responsible for the daughter house(s) in the case of *sede vacante* in a mother house

PLACET 23                      NON PLACET                      ABSTENTIO                      **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 74

We place on the agenda of the General Chapter of 2025 the ratification of St 75.2.A, to be voted on by simplified procedure.

PLACET 23                      NON PLACET                      ABSTENTIO                      **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 75

We place on the agenda of the General Chapter of 2025 the following points for harmonizing the Constitutions of the monks and nuns: C. 39.1, 39.1.A, 39.2, and 39.3.b. These points are already discussed in the working paper on Mothers Immediate.

PLACET 22                      NON PLACET                      ABSTENTIO 1                      **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 76

This topic is to be treated by ordinary procedure.

PLACET 22                      NON PLACET 1                      ABSTENTIO                      **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 77

We ask the Law Commission to begin a study of the points that can be harmonized between the Constitutions of the monks and nuns.

PLACET 22                      NON PLACET 1                      ABSTENTIO                      **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 78

We ask the Abbot General and his Council to begin preparatory work towards a future revision of the Order’s Statute on Publications.

PLACET            22                    NON PLACET    1            ABSTENTIO                    **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 79

We ask the Abbot General and his Council to begin preparatory work towards the creation of a Statute on Hermits for our Order.

PLACET            20                    NON PLACET    1            ABSTENTIO    2                    **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 80

In order to foster good intercultural relations within the communities of the Order and within the General Chapter, we ask the Central Secretary of Formation to prepare a program of reflection and dialogue for the whole Order on the basis of Pope Francis’ encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*.

PLACET            20                    NON PLACET                    ABSTENTIO    3                    **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 81

We wish to make available to the members of the Order a video transmission and recording of the opening and closing Masses of the General Chapter of 2025.

PLACET            20                    NON PLACET    1            ABSTENTIO    2                    **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 82

We wish to make available to the members of the Order a video transmission and recording of the opening conference of the Abbot General at the General Chapter of 2025, and to record other conferences that can be made available afterwards as judged opportune.

PLACET            16                    NON PLACET    3            ABSTENTIO    4                    **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 83

We ask the Abbot General and his Council to provide the members and personnel of the General Chapter with professional translation tools and with the necessary information for learning how to use them.

PLACET            22                    NON PLACET    1            ABSTENTIO                    **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 84

At the General Chapter of 2025, we wish to hear about the experiences of economic visitations made in some communities of the Order.

PLACET            21                    NON PLACET    2            ABSTENTIO                    **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 85

In accordance with C. 44.3, we place on the agenda of the General Chapter of 2025 a renewed determination of “the sums in excess of which special permissions are needed for the validity of acts of extraordinary administration.”

PLACET            23                    NON PLACET                    ABSTENTIO                    **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 86

We ask the bursar of the Order to prepare a working paper on this topic

PALCET            23                    NON PLACET                    ABSTENTIO                    **Proposition Accepted**

Vote 87

This topic is to be treated by extraordinary procedure.

PLACET            23                    NON PLACET                    ABSTENTIO                    **Proposition Accepted**

\*\*\*\*