

FLASH

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20th General Chapter



23 /11/2021

The 20th General Chapter of our Holy Family Institute has begun

Finally, after a long period of preparation, reflections and discernment, we have begun our Chapter with 55 Capitulants and with the facilitator Matthieu Daum. The telematic Chapter was opened at 12 noon Rome time, using our virtual platform.

A General Chapter is a journey of faith, a significant moment in the life of the Institute as we discern ways of responding to the universal calls, in listening to God's voice at this moment in our history.

Some moments were marked the opening of this great event.

→ The members of the General Chapter:

⇒ 55 Capitulants from 18 units including the Generalate

⇒ the General Leadership Team and elected

members from the Vicariate

⇒ And a special invitee

→ The work of the General Chapter will comprise:

- Reflection and sharing (work in small groups, plenary) on the fruits of the preparatory meeting of Feb-March, the Processes followed in the Units, and the texts prepared by Teams of Capitulants,
- Prayer and Discernment
- Voting on the decisions taken – Chapter decrees, orientations, etc.
- Vote-counting
- Election of New General Leadership Team– (Superior General, Vicar for the Contemplatives and Apostolic Councillors)



20th General Chapter

The opening Prayer:

The prayerful atmosphere was intended to help all to be ready to enter into the heart and spirit of the Chapter journey; to help all to live in faith and in unconditional openness to the Spirit. It carried a number of beautiful moments, each of them highly significant in their own way. The prayer ended with a meaningful gesture – calling all participants to place one hand close to the heart and carry the lighted candle in the other, while the song "Veni Sancte Spiritus" was sung. Thus began the first day.



The ritual of calling out the name of Capitulants:

One of the important ritual done during the prayer, was, the Capitulants expressing their commitment by responding to Ana Maria saying, "Here I am".



The opening address of the Superior General Ana Maria Alcalde

In her opening words, Ana Maria emphasized the importance of this Ecclesial event:

‘The Chapter is a crucial time, and the key question that has accompanied us from the beginning now emerges with full force: “Can we still live our purpose as we begin our third century?” The hour has come to discern and make the decisions that respond to this question.’

Developing her reflection, she explained:

What a Chapter is

that the Chapter is a spiritual event...

How we need to live this Chapter Journey

The Chapter as a synodal journey - to live this dynamic of synodality, we need listening as the basis for dialogue, lived in freedom and humility. ...

After highlighting the responsibilities and spirit of the Chapter, she reminded all that we are not alone in stating ...

"In communion with all our Sisters, with the whole Family and with all those who are accompanying us in a special way during these days, let us "set out for the other shore" urged on the words of the Founder: "Nothing now can check your course. Go Forward! May Jesus, Mary and Joseph be with you always".

→ Please use this link to read the full text of the opening address by Ana Maria:

<https://saintefamillebordeaux.org/chapter/sites/chapter/files/OPENING%20OF%20THE%2020TH%20GENERAL%20CHAPTER.pdf>

After the address of Ana Maria, Matthieu invited the group to share their feeling since March - what are the experiences, memories, and what they have been. Time was given for personal reflection, group and plenary sharing. The exercise was done in a spirit of openness, generative listening and speaking.

Next the Chapter moved to a vote: again the Facilitator explained the process of voting and the platform he had already prepared for this purpose.

→ There were two different matters to be voted.

One was for the Chapter to accept Pauline Manzueto, invited by the Superior General, to be included among the number of Capitulants, including her right to vote.

The second vote was to accept and amendment to article no. 66 of the Constitutions regarding the election process for the Vicar.

Both votes were passed with more than the

necessary majority.

Following this election procedure, Matthieu called an end to the days' session, giving some guidelines for continued reflection and work.

Over the past months, the Capitulants already have gained some experience and confidence in the use of online meeting technology, and there were very few technical hitches.



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