



# Coordinating Council General Procedures

Deep Faith. Courageous Spirit. Action for Justice.

## Decision Making

Members of the Coordinating Council value prayer, reflection, and commitment to the discernment process. A contemplative stance is a priority for the Coordinating Council. The members of the Coordinating Council “recognize and reverence the diversity among us. (Chapter 2012)” Reflecting this priority, adequate time is planned in the agenda for discerning and sustained conversations. Members of the Coordinating Council seek consensus in decision making. Consensus is that point in group decision making when participants reach substantive agreement or can accept the decision despite incomplete agreement. The consensus process assumes that each option is considered seriously. It calls from individuals the willingness to influence and to be influenced by the group, and ultimately to choose a decision that honors the group movement. Adequate time and reflection will be taken before a decision is reached, often returning to make a decision later in the agenda. In order to articulate the consensus, some appropriate procedure (i.e., colored cards, secret ballot, clapping, voice, etc.) will be used. Minority opinions will be part of the record.

Consensus requires:

- ownership of a commitment to the process
- a level of trust in the group
- a desire for group cohesiveness throughout the process
- adequate time for discussion and clarification
- a willingness to support the decision of the group.

In those instances in which consensus is not achieved a two-third majority vote is needed for major policy decisions, except where otherwise stated in the Constitutions. In each instance, the facilitator will test the group’s readiness before the vote is taken.

## Facilitator

The Coordinating Council will utilize the services of a facilitator at its meetings. The facilitator attends to the dynamic of the group and suggests alternate procedures when an impasse develops. The facilitator assists the group as necessary and may challenge the group in the process. The facilitator works with the Coordinating Council Agenda Committee to design a process that:

- provides balance between work within small and large groups
- provides adequate time for reflection and deliberation
- engages the group with a contemplative stance
- assists integrating social analysis, an eco-justice perspective and theological reflection into the process of deliberation

## **Coordinating Council Committees**

### Procedural Notes:

- Ordinarily, committees will be formed on a volunteer basis.
- If more than the designated number volunteer for a committee, the volunteers will determine among themselves the composition of the committee, according to the qualifications required.
- If fewer than the designated number volunteer, the Coordinating Council will nominate individuals for the committee. Those volunteering and those nominated, if willing to accept, will determine the composition of the committee, according to the qualifications required.
- Unless otherwise specified, committee members serve to the end of their three- year term.
- Committees will be accountable for communicating with the Coordinating Council.

## **Standing Committees**

**Agenda Committee** Three members of the Coordinating Council, including the President and two Representatives approved by the Coordinating Council serve on the Agenda Committee. The committee works with the facilitator to insure that both the process and content of the meetings enable the Coordinating Council to achieve its purpose. The Agenda Committee reviews and recommends revisions of the General Procedures to the Coordinating Council for approval to ensure that the procedures reflect the Chapter statement and directions. A member of the Agenda Committee will facilitate communication between the Prayer/Ritual Committee as needed to prepare for the meetings.

**Prayer/Ritual Committee** Three members of the Coordinating Council serve on the Prayer/Ritual Committee on a rotating basis. The committee's responsibility is to plan the prayer and ritual for the Coordinating Council meeting in the light of the substance of the Coordinating Council's agenda, and with reference to evaluative comments regarding prayer/ritual made by the Coordinating Council. The committee may call upon other Coordinating Council members to assist them. One member of the Agenda Committee is the liaison with the Prayer/Ritual Committee.

**Vitalization Committee:** Three members of the Coordinating Council, including two Representatives and one Leadership Council member serve on the Vitalization Committee. The task of this committee is to assist the Coordinating Council in achieving its purposes (Article 108 and S – 29) in light of our commitment to shared leadership and participative decision making.

In light of the new government plan, the committee will stay attentive to and facilitate its ongoing implementation and the development of viable forms of communication that will assist the membership in staying informed, in a timely manner.

The committee will review the effective functioning of the Mission Circles, the Wisdom Circle, the Blessing Circle and Coordinating Council on an ongoing basis. It will, also, evaluate these structures and processes in light of IHM future reality, recommending any changes to the Coordinating Council prior to the Chapter.

## **Ad-Hoc Committees**

These committees may be formed at the will of the Coordinating Council to serve for the period of time dictated by the task. When a committee is established, the Coordinating Council will attend to the following:

- clear indication of task, responsibility, and expected time commitment
- optimum number of persons needed for task
- skill/interests required.

## **Observers**

Observers are welcome at sessions of the Coordinating Council. They may be invited to participate during a meeting as time allows and is appropriate, at the discretion of the Agenda Committee/Facilitator.

## **Procedure for Substitutes**

A substitute for a regular representative from a Mission Circle, Wisdom Circle and Associates should be one person for the entire meeting time and this person has the right to vote at the CC meeting. Substitutes should prepare as all other members for the CC meeting. It would be helpful to have the name of the substitute prior to the CC meeting.

If a representative from a Mission Circle, Wisdom Circle or Associates cannot attend a portion of the CC meeting, a member of the Mission Circle, Wisdom Circle or Associates may attend the meeting as an observer. However, she will not be seated at the table and will not vote.

## **Communication Before & After CC Meetings**

- Agenda and background materials will be provided to the Coordinating Council members in a timely fashion to insure preparation time
- Communication to the total membership will follow the Coordinating Council meeting as soon as possible by means of minutes and the regular interchange within the Mission Circles, Wisdom Circle and Associates.

## **Ground Rules for Group Interaction**

Each member comes with:

- Readiness to grow in a consciousness of global, ecclesial and congregational issues and give consideration to the long-term implications of community decisions.
- Openness to reflection, respectful, nonjudgmental listening, attempting to hear from each member of the CC, seeking clarification when needed and naming assumptions.
- Commitment to speak one's truth even if it requires articulation of an opinion different from the majority.
- Willingness to work at contributing to the group process by: negotiating, collaborating, and synthesizing.
- Readiness to retain a sense of humor and an ability to maintain perspective.
- Willingness to give time and energy necessary for:
  - Study and analysis of the issues
  - Serving on committees
  - Being available to the membership

As a member of the Coordinating Council, the representatives from the Mission Circles, Wisdom Circle, Associates or members of the Leadership Council concerns herself with the general welfare of the Congregation. The representatives from the Mission Circles, Wisdom Circle and Associates represent her particular group. She participates in the discussions and decisions of the Coordinating Council, voicing the needs, concerns, and perspectives of the members of her group when appropriate. At other times she participates as a member of the body bringing her insights and experience to the issue at hand. At all times she makes decisions for the common good of the total Congregation based on fidelity to the charism and mission of the Congregation.

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