

APPENDIX II: DELEGATION AND APPOINTMENT

Delegation of authority (any authority) may be considered, in non-juridic terms, as giving someone a loan of some or all of one's authority. A delegated Visitor, for example, receives a loan of the authority of the Father Immediate to make a Regular Visitation. Only someone who has authority in the first place can delegate it. I cannot give a loan of someone else's authority.

So,

- (a) If there is an actual Father Immediate who, for whatever reason, wishes another person to act in his place towards one of his daughter houses for a period of time, he delegates his authority to that person, and that person is a **Delegated Father Immediate**. The Report from the Commission on Fathers Immediate for the General Chapter of 2022, Part II suggests that in order to make clear that a delegated Father Immediate is not permanent, the term **delegate of the Father Immediate** be used [Minutes p. 456]. This may have a value, but the term "delegated Father Immediate" is not wrong. It indicates that the authority which is delegated includes all the responsibilities of the Father Immediate – the person is a delegate of the Father Immediate merely for one act (e.g. to preside at an abbatial election).
- (b) If there is no one who actually holds the authority of Father Immediate towards a particular community (e.g. because the monastery which has the paternity is itself under the regime of a monastic commissary who does not have responsibility for the daughter houses), then the General Chapter – or, between General Chapters, the Abbot General – nominates someone as **Acting Father Immediate**.

The extent of the authority of a Delegated or Acting Father Immediate depends on the letter delegating or appointing them and whether any limitations are imposed or particular responsibilities excluded (e.g. responsibility for daughter houses). Often there are no restrictions.

Both delegated and acting Fathers Immediate exercise their role temporarily. It is not a permanent arrangement; it is not a change of filiation. The delegation or nomination ends at the time specified (e.g. a delegation may be "until the next General Chapter"),

or when the person who made the delegation or nomination declares that it is ended (e.g. because circumstances have changed and a community which was unable for a time to exercise the paternity is now able to resume the exercise of paternity).

A distinction should be made (though sometimes is not made) between the delegation of authority of Father Immediate by one *person* to another person (which is what is usually required), and delegation of the responsibility of a *community* to another community. If one Father Immediate delegates his responsibility as Father Immediate to another person, the delegated Father Immediate is delegated in a personal capacity. He has the responsibility for the daughter-house, but his community does not. The delegation is given to him independently of his role as abbot of his own community. If he ceases to be abbot of his own community, he continues to be Delegated Father Immediate of the daughter house unless otherwise specified. His responsibility as Delegated Father Immediate does not pass automatically to the new abbot who succeeds him; that would require a new delegation.

If a *community* delegates another community to exercise the paternity of a daughter house (which would require votes of both communities) then the delegation is not personal, and continues even when there is a new abbot in the delegated community.