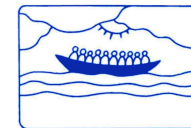


The Discernment and Election Process in the Province

February 2010

Faith and Light International
Formation session



Preliminary Steps

When	By whom	Action
As soon as possible	Provincial Team	Carefully chooses and calls people to form a Nomination Committee
<p>The members of the Nomination Committee are chosen according to the criteria determined by the International Board of Directors (to be ratified by the Assembly). The Provincial Team determines the number of Vice-Provincial Coordinators that are needed for the life and growth of the communities in the Province. The Team also discerns and proposes a method for choosing the Vice-Provincial Coordinators, which it will present to the Assembly (Appointment or Election).</p>		
	Provincial Team and Vice-International Coordinator with input from the Nomination Committee	Plan the Assembly
<p>Project teams can help with the preparation and animation of parts of the meeting of the Assembly</p>		
	Vice-international Coordinator or his/her delegate	Works closely with the Provincial Nomination Committee and facilitates the election of the Provincial Coordinator and the choosing of the Provincial-Vice-Coordinators.

The **Communities** are at the beginning and at the conclusion of the discernment and election process in the Province by discerning and providing nominations and, through their delegations to the **Assembly**, by their discerning choice at the time of election.

First Phase of Discernment
Letter of request

When	By whom	Action
Three to Six Months before Assembly	Nomination Committee	Sends a letter, description of the roles, criteria for each role and nomination form to each recognized community of the Province
<p>The Committee asks the community members to prayerfully discern names of people who have the gifts, qualities, experience and availability to serve in each role. Using the criteria from the International Board of Directors, the communities are instructed to explain how each person fits the role for which they are nominated (e.g. builds unity, works well as a member of a team, delegates responsibility, listens well, is very organized, gives concrete, positive and helpful suggestions, inspires trust...). The Committee gives a clear timeframe within which the communities have the possibility to respond with their nominations.</p>		

The Nomination Committee remains in communication with the Vice-International Coordinator throughout the process, passing on information, seeking advice, expressing joys and difficulties and maintaining communion.

Second Phase of Discernment
Reception of Nominations

When	By whom	Action
After reception of filled nomination forms from communities	Nomination Committee	Contacts those who gave the nomination or others who might know the person nominated, for further information
<p>If there is not enough information about the gifts, experience, and qualities of any person nominated – especially in regards to the criteria established for the role.</p> <p>They will ask questions directly related to the gifts needed to live this role well. (How have you experienced this person demonstrating this gift, quality or skill?)</p>		
After reception of missing information	Nomination Committee	Reviews all the nomination forms and additional information (If at all possible the members of the Nomination Committee meet together)
<p>They prayerfully discern, focusing as objectively as possible on the information provided, their own experience and on the essential criteria.</p> <p>They match the persons nominated into: those who have clearly shown that they have the gifts, qualities and experience for the role for which they have been nominated – regardless of how many or how few times they have been nominated; those who clearly have not shown that they have the necessary gifts for the role - regardless of how many or how few times they have been nominated and those for whom there is not enough information.</p> <p>Many people who are very good people with long histories of service and experience in Faith and Light may be named – people of prayer, who love our people with intellectual disabilities, generous and caring people. The key question is do they have the gifts needed for <u>this</u> role?</p>		

Third Phase of Discernment
Contacting Nominees

When	By whom	Action
After phase two	Nomination Committee	Contact those who have demonstrated the gifts essential for the role and inform them of their nomination
Asks them to pray and discern (with their spiritual or personal accompanier) whether this might be an invitation from God. The Committee members do not ask the persons nominated about availability at this time, but if the person volunteers strong reasons why this service is not possible, the Committee member will ask them to confirm their response with trusted accompaniers and will also ask if they would be willing/able to present their reasons for their decision to the Assembly if this is needed.		
	Nomination Committee	Contact those who have been nominated many times, but have not demonstrated the necessary gifts for the role
Invites them to pray and discern to what service in Faith and Light God might be calling them (project teams, etc.).		
Prior to the election	Nomination Committee	Contact again those persons whose gifts and experience match the essential criteria for the role and ask about their availability.
		Those who have discerned that this is not their call at this time, too, will be asked if they are willing to share their reasons with the delegates to the assembly if needed.
		The Committee makes lists of the people who allow their names to remain for the final phase of the discernment and election process.

Fourth Phase of Discernment
The Assembly – 1. Introduction

When	By whom	Action
At the very beginning of the Provincial Assembly	Vice-International Coordinator or his/her delegate	Prayer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At the very start, it is important to create an atmosphere of prayer and discernment. Start with a song. - Scripture reading: (e.g. Acts 1, 21-26). Reflection questions: From the reading, who initiates the process of discernment? (Verse 24). What are we looking for in a person nominated? (verse 22). What does it mean to be a witness of resurrection for us in F&L? (22: to witness that the community transforms us...) Time for quiet reflection 		
	Vice-International Coordinator or his/her delegate	Introduces the Animation sequence of the Assembly
<p>The election is done in an atmosphere of discernment. We ask the Spirit to guide us in the choices that we will make, but at the end we are the ones who are choosing...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Present the steps of this Assembly - Why a discernment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To establish the priorities of the Province for the next four years - To elect coordinator and choose vice-coordinators - To learn - The role of the facilitator (Vice-international coordinator or his/her delegate) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To help the group make decisions. To be at the service of the group. Facilitator does not have pre-determined ideas about what the needs are or who should be chosen. - Delegates vote on proposal of method for choosing the Vice-Provincial Coordinators - Determine who have the right to vote - Number of votes required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - First ballot : 75%, Second 75%, Third: 50% + 1 		

Fourth Phase of Discernment

The Assembly – 2. Process and Priorities

When	By whom	Action
	Delegates	Vote on the proposal of the Provincial Team about the method by which the Vice-Provincial Coordinators will be chosen (appointment or election).
This decision remains in effect until the next Provincial Assembly.		
	The whole Assembly	Discusses and decides upon the priorities for the Province for the next four years.

These priorities are the core of the mandate for the new Provincial Team and are a key part of this fourth phase of the discernment of who might better assist the communities of the Province to live well and to grow.

Suggestions for the facilitator:

- Use flip chart paper or a white board to capture the comments of the participants.
- Start with an ice breaker question like: **“What did we accomplish well in the last two or three years?”** This warm up question aims at helping participants to recall what is happening in the province. By this discussion, participants remember good things that have happened in the Province and rediscover issues that need to be improved
- To help the group identify priorities: **“What would you like to do more or to do better?”** By this question you focus the attention on the positive. Take great care to carefully note on the board what participants say. Do not interpret their comments.
- Make sure to post all the sheets with things to do more or to improve.
- Ask the group to identify three priorities from this list on which the new Provincial Team should work.
- Post these three priorities so that everyone can see them for the next phases of this meeting.

Fourth Phase of Discernment

The Assembly – 3. Presenting the persons available

When	By whom	Action
	Vice-International Coordinator, with help from the Provincial Nomination Committee	Animates this part of the process
<p>They present the list of persons available for the role of Provincial Coordinator, along with a brief description of who they are and of their experience. If it seems necessary or of value, those who discerned that this was not their call at this time, are given an opportunity to explain their decision. It is very helpful to provide opportunity for the delegates to get to know (or to know better) the remaining nominees.</p> <p>If the list is very small, this can be done by asking the nominees to respond to the same two or three questions before the assembled delegates. (e.g. What is your vision for the Province? How do you see us addressing these priorities over the next four years? Where will you need help to live this role well?) If the list is longer, the Assembly can be divided up into several small groups made up of delegates from different communities and parts of the Province. The nominees can rotate from group to group every five to ten minutes answering whatever questions arise. The purpose of these questions is to help the delegates to continue to discern who might be the better choice to lead the Province for the next four years.</p>		

Fourth Phase of Discernment
The Assembly – 4. Election

When	By whom	Action
<p>At the time of the election of a Provincial Coordinator, the Assembly is arranged by community delegations. Each recognized community has one vote and each member of the current Provincial Team has one vote. The Vice-International Coordinator reminds the delegates of the format for the election and invites them into another moment of prayerful discernment. Considering the needs and priorities of the Province today and for the next four years and considering the demonstrated gifts, experience and availability of the nominees we pray for the freedom we need to make a good choice and the wisdom we need to recognize who might better lead us at this time.</p>		
After a time of silence	The delegations	Quietly converse among themselves about whom they might vote for and why. When each delegation reaches a consensus, it returns to silence.
		Election of the Provincial Coordinator
<p>Before proceeding with the vote: bring attention to the priorities for the Province posted on the wall. The election proceeds by written ballot according to the tradition of Faith and Light. Rules for voting: Normally by secret ballot. Blank votes are authorized. A person normally does not vote for oneself. Couples have only one vote. Recall the % of votes necessary to be elected.</p>		
		Election or appointment of Vice-Provincial Coordinators
<p>If the Assembly decides to elect the Vice-Provincial Coordinators, the process is parallel to, and comes after, that for the Provincial Coordinator. If the Assembly decides that the Vice-Provincial Coordinators will be appointed by the current Provincial Team along with the newly elected Provincial Coordinator, the Nomination Committee presents the list of nominees for Vice Coordinator to the new Provincial Coordinator, who discusses with the Vice-International Coordinator on how best to proceed.</p>		

Fourth Phase of Discernment

The Assembly – 5.The Vice-Coordinators

When	By whom	Action
	New Coordinator and Vice-International Coordinator	Meet the current Provincial Team
<p>If any of the current team remain on the list of names for Vice-Coordinator, they are asked to leave the room while the others prayerful discern who to call to serve. If any of those called accept to serve, they are invited to join in the discernment of the rest of the new Provincial Team.</p>		
	The Vice-International Coordinator	Introduces the new team to the Assembly
Before the Assembly concludes	The new Provincial Team	Meets, deliberates and then proposes a Nomination Committee to the delegates and asks for ratification.
	The delegations	Vote on the proposal of a Nomination Committee
<p>This Committee will serve the Province for the next four years (through the next Provincial Assembly).</p>		
	Facilitator	Celebration
<p>Take time to celebrate and to confirm the new Coordinator and Vice-coordinators in their role.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Present a symbolic gift - Everyone offers their commitment to support the new team - Thank those who participated by leaving their name in the process - Thank the former Coordinator and Vice-Coordinators 		