

From the Directory for the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops, April 25, 2007:

### **“APOSTOLORUM SUCCESSORES”**

#### **104. *Consecrated Women.***

An inestimable service is given to the Church in countless ways by consecrated women in religious institutes (295), in societies of apostolic life, in secular institutes (296) and in the order of virgins, (297) and it is hoped that in the future this service will expand even further. For this reason, the Bishop takes special care to provide suitable and, if possible, abundant resources for their spiritual growth, their Christian instruction, and their cultural enrichment.

**The Bishop should show particular concern for the order of virgins, who are dedicated to the service of the Church, entrusted to the Bishop’s pastoral care and consecrated to God at his hands.** Bearing in mind the formation needs of consecrated women today, not dissimilar to those of consecrated men, the Bishop should assign chaplains and *confessors* to them from among the best at his disposal, distinguished by a good understanding of consecrated life and by their piety, sound doctrine, ecumenical and missionary spirit (298).

The Bishop should also be vigilant that consecrated women are given sufficient *opportunities for participation* in different diocesan structures, such as diocesan and parish pastoral councils, where these exist, in the various diocesan commissions and delegations, and in the direction of apostolic and educational initiatives in the diocese. They should also be involved in decisionmaking processes, especially in matters directly affecting them. In this way they can bring to the service of God’s people their particular sensitivities and their missionary fervour, their unique gifts and the fruits of their experience (299).

(295) Cf. *Code of Canon Law*, c. 607 §§ 1-3.

(296) Cf. *Code of Canon Law*, c. 713 § 2.

(297) Cf. *Code of Canon Law*, c. 604 § 1.

(298) Cf. SECOND VATICAN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL, Decree on the Training of Priests *Optatam Totius*, 19; Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 6; *Code of Canon Law*, cc. 567 § 1, 630 § 3; JOHN PAUL II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Vita Consecrata*, 58.

(299) Cf. JOHN PAUL II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Vita Consecrata*, 62.