



At 7:30 PM Tuesday evening, December 28, 2010, at the Immaculate Conception Spiritual Renewal Center in Putnam, Connecticut, Fr. Marcel Poirier, the provincial of the North American province, was finally able to officially open the provincial chapter, after a full day's delay due to an early winter New England blizzard that left at least one delegate stranded in Dallas and others holed up at home because of impassable roads.

All but one of the 16 delegates were present for the opening in addition to Fr. Richard Lamoureux, the Superior General, six lay delegates, and three support staff from four countries and eight nationalities (Canadian, American, Mexican, Filipino, French, Russian, Vietnamese, and Polish).

The Center is run by the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, a Lithuanian congregation founded in 1918. Located in the rustic northeast corner of the state, the Center is surrounded by rolling hills, picturesque farms, and quintessential New England towns. The staff of sisters and lay-people are extremely accommodating and friendly allowing our first full day to be quite pleasant and productive.

The opening session, as usual, included a brief prayer service and covered all the basic introductions, instructions, and formalities, such as official welcomes, testing of the simultaneous translation equipment (anyone can speak in English, French, or Spanish), appointment of tellers and other officers, and approval of the schedule. Once completed, the evening ended with a social which allowed all participants to get to know each other, some for the first time, others to be re-acquainted.