

ROLE DESCRIPTION

Position Title:	Assistant Master of Ceremonies
Responsible To:	Master of Ceremonies
Location:	Office of the Bishop
Term:	Three years (renewable) or at the Bishop's pleasure

The public celebration of the liturgy of the Church is a primary means by which the community of faith gives public worship to God in response to the Paschal Mystery. This is especially true when the Church gathers to celebrate the Eucharist, the 'summit and source' of the Christian life (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 10), the celebration of which should be marked by a noble simplicity.

This desire for noble simplicity is particularly significant when the Bishop presides over liturgical celebrations as the Bishop of the Diocese, especially in his Cathedral Church, and these should serve as models and examples both to parishes and diocesan instrumentalities and to the public at large. To that end, these liturgical celebrations should be prepared and celebrated with great care and due regard for the liturgical tradition of the Church.

Those appointed as Assistant Master of Ceremonies are appointed by the Bishop to support and share in the mystery of the Master of Ceremonies in the Church of Maitland-Newcastle.

References:

The role of the Master of Ceremonies is mentioned in the liturgical books of the Roman Rite as follows:

For a liturgical celebration, especially a celebration presided over by the bishops, to be distinguished by grace, simplicity, and order, a master of ceremonies is needed to prepare and direct the celebration in close cooperation with the bishop and others responsible for planning its several parts, and especially from a pastoral standpoint.

The master of ceremonies should be well-versed in the history and nature of the liturgy and in its laws and precepts. But equally he should be well-versed in pastoral science, so that he knows how to plan liturgical celebrations in a way that encourages fruitful participation by the people and enhances the beauty of the rites.

He should seek to ensure an observance of liturgical laws that is in accord with the true spirit of such laws and with those legitimate traditions of the particular Church that have pastoral value. (Ceremonial of Bishops, 34)

It is desirable, at least in cathedrals and in larger churches, to have some competent minister or master of ceremonies, to see to the appropriate arrangement of sacred actions and to their being carried out by the sacred ministers and lay faithful with decorum, order and devotion. (General Instruction of the Roman Missal, 106)

Gifts and skills

The ministry of Assistant Master of Ceremonies requires the following capacities and gifts:

- deep faith, expressed in love of neighbour and a passion for mission, love of scripture and liturgy
- to discern the initial and ongoing call to ministry within the context of community
- knowledge and understanding of the liturgy
- a sense of the grace and rhythm of the liturgy
- leadership expressed in
 - a presence and direction that is ultimately ‘unseen’
 - co-ordination and empowerment of other liturgical ministers
- appreciation of liturgical ministry as being at the service of communal worship
- an eye and mind for detail
- open and transparent communication
- willingness and openness to engage in initial and ongoing formation
- collaborative ministry that respects and relies on the diverse gifts present in the College and other liturgical ministers
- to reflect on the experience of ministry, identifying questions and insights that promote the growth of the ministry of the Assistant Master of Ceremonies and the liturgical life of the church

Primary Tasks:

The Assistant Master of Ceremonies shall fulfil their responsibilities at the direction of the Master of Ceremonies by:

- Directing liturgical celebrations of the Bishop of Maitland-Newcastle that are proper to the Office of Bishop, or of the Vicar General or others who may be delegated to represent the Bishop from time to time;
- Communicating and meeting with communities ahead of the liturgical celebration as appropriate and required;
- Being the conduit of communication between the presider and the community on the day of the liturgy;
- Making any last-minute liturgical adjustments and decisions as may be required;
- Being an active participant in the College of Assistant Masters of Ceremonies;
- Working with the Manager of Worship and Prayer and Diocesan Liturgy Council to nurture the growth of the liturgical life of the Church.

Key Relationships:

An Assistant Master of Ceremonies will develop relationships with:

- The Bishop of Maitland-Newcastle;
- The Master of Ceremonies;
- The Rector/Dean of the Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart;
- The Diocesan Manager of Worship and Prayer;
- The Sacristan(s), Director of Music and other key staff of the Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart;
- The members of the Office of the Bishop, particularly the Vicar General and the Bishop's Executive Assistant;
- The executive and members of the Diocesan Liturgy Council;
- Other diocesan and parish personnel in order to fulfil their responsibilities.

February 2022.

