

ROLE DESCRIPTION

Position Title:	Master of Ceremonies
Responsible To:	Bishop of Maitland-Newcastle
Location:	Office of the Bishop
Term:	Five 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.

The Master of Ceremonies is appointed by the Bishop to assist in ensuring that all liturgies of the Bishop or his delegate are celebrated appropriately and witness to the significant place of liturgy in the life of 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)

Primary Tasks:

In the diocese of Maitland-Newcastle, the Master of Ceremonies works in collaboration with the Manager of Worship and Prayer, the Diocesan Liturgy Council, the College of Assistant Masters of Ceremonies, and others responsible for the preparation, celebration, and review of most liturgies associated with the Bishop or his delegate. In this diocese, all liturgical ministry is undertaken collaboratively with the aim of serving and fostering good liturgical practice within the diocese.

Within this context the Master of Ceremonies fulfils the following responsibilities:

- 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;
- Directing other liturgical celebrations as requested by the Bishop from time to time;
- Assisting in the preparation of liturgies proper to the Office of the Bishop and other liturgies;
- Being a resource to the Diocesan Liturgy Council and College of Assistant Masters of Ceremonies on liturgical matters;
- Contributing to the promotion of the liturgical life of the diocese as a member of or consultant to the Diocesan Liturgy Council;
- Being responsible for the formation, life and ministry of the College of Assistant Masters of Ceremonies.

Key Relationships:

An Assistant Master of Ceremonies will develop relationships with:

- The Bishop of Maitland-Newcastle;
- The Dean of the Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart;
- The Diocesan Manager of Worship and Prayer;
- The College of Assistant Masters of Ceremonies
- 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.