



CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF SYDNEY

Assistant Director of Music St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney

Applications are invited for the position of Assistant Director of Music at St Mary's Cathedral. This full-time role represents a unique opportunity for an outstanding church musician to further their career and experience whilst working as part of a dynamic team at this national centre of liturgical and musical excellence.

The position will be available from 23 November 2015.

Introduction

St Mary's Cathedral is the spiritual home of Sydney's Catholic community, and the seat of the Archbishop of Sydney. The Cathedral plays a vital role in the spiritual and cultural life of Sydney, as well as Australia in general. The Cathedral Choir is Australia's oldest continuing musical organisation and is integral to the Cathedral's life and worship. Continuing support from successive Archbishops has provided for a professional music foundation encompassing 24 boy choristers who are educated at the Cathedral's on-site (non-boarding) Choir School, 12 lay clerks who are professional singers, a specialised program for former choristers whose voices have changed, and an adult volunteer choir. Every week during school term time there are at least nine choral services (Mass and Vespers) sung by the Cathedral Choir (or part thereof), with an additional five non-choral services staffed by a cantor and organist. The Cathedral Music Department operates an extensive program, providing and facilitating music for all services and events that take place in the Cathedral.

Music at St Mary's Cathedral

The Choir of St Mary's Cathedral traces its origins to the very earliest days of the colony. Since 1955, consistent with the Benedictine English tradition from which the Cathedral's founders came, the Choir has been a male-voice liturgical choir. The Choir is currently Australia's only fully professional church choir.

The Music Department of St Mary's Cathedral consists of the Director of Music, the Assistant Director of Music, two Assistant Organists, lay clerks, choristers and the Music Administrator. A volunteer choir for adults – The St Mary's Singers – further enriches the Cathedral's music program.

The boy choristers of the Cathedral Choir attend St Mary's Cathedral College – the Cathedral's (non-boarding) Choir School which stands within the Cathedral precincts. Boys enter the Cathedral Choir and the Cathedral College from Year Three (eight years old) and receive full tuition scholarships as well as weekly individual singing lessons. The primary division of the Cathedral College exists in order to educate the Cathedral Choristers and is also open to a limited number of non-chorister boys who take part in a specialist music program. All boys in years three to six learn at least one musical instrument. When a chorister's voice begins to change he may be reauditioned to join the Cathedral Scholars. These former choristers retain their scholarships to the Cathedral College (which continues as a secondary school) and the Scholars' ensemble sings an average of two choral services in the Cathedral each week (Vespers and Mass).

The choristers rehearse at the Cathedral Song School every weekday morning except Friday before school. They return after school on at least two afternoons in order to rehearse and sing Mass in the evening. The Scholars rehearse before school on Mondays and Tuesdays, and sing Vespers and Mass with the Junior Choristers on Wednesdays as well as singing Vespers and Mass on their own on alternate Saturday evenings.

Of the twelve regular lay clerks, six sing Vespers and Mass with the Senior Choristers on Monday evenings, and the other six sing Vespers and Mass on Thursday evenings. The full Cathedral Choir sings Solemn Mass on Sunday mornings, and the full complement of lay clerks sings Solemn Vespers and Benediction on Sunday evenings.

The Cathedral organists share the playing for the various musical services, including the several non-choral (cantor and organ) services which take place in the Cathedral each week. The Assistant Director of Music is the primary accompanist for the Cathedral Choir, and assumes responsibility for the provision of organ music generally in the Cathedral. This responsibility is delegated from the Director of Music, who is himself an organist.

The Music Department currently runs a series of monthly organ recitals which take place before Vespers on Sunday afternoons, as well as a concurrent 'Grand Organ Recital Series'. The Cathedral Choir performs an annual Christmas concert and, when its liturgical duties permit, undertakes other concert, recording, and touring projects.

Further particulars relating to the role

The Job Description for the position of 'Assistant Director of Music' details the scope and focus of the role.

Further to the information included in the Job Description, the position is a flexible one which allows scope for bringing new interests and strengths to the Cathedral.

A flexible and collaborative approach to working hours is required. During school term time the Assistant Director of Music can expect to be in attendance on six days per week, subject to the Cathedral's schedule and the agreed roster of organists.

Leave and time off in lieu is taken between school terms.

It is expected that the appointee will naturally wish to pursue a wider musical career in conjunction with the present appointment. In many cases it is possible to combine a certain amount of other work, such as teaching, with duties at the Cathedral. Where necessary, and as allowed for by the Cathedral schedule, special leave may be granted subject to agreement in advance with the Director of Music.

Candidates should show awareness of the distinctive nature and ethos of Roman Catholic worship and its related musical idioms and forms, with particular emphasis on the tradition of Gregorian Chant and the art of accompanying it, as well as liturgical improvisation. They will also be expected to demonstrate an imaginative and constructive attitude to non-choral liturgical music, including congregational services.

The salary will be according to the appointee's previous experience and takes into account the importance and unique nature of the position. Fees are paid in addition for all special services at a rate which is revised annually.

Accommodation is not provided.