



In many of our parishes at present, it seems to be more common to have either a Coordinator of Liturgy or a Director of Music Ministry on the professional staff rather than both. Sometimes, one or the other is full-time and/or salaried, while the other is part-time and/or a volunteer. And sometimes, one of these roles is one person's only responsibility while the other role is merely part of another person's (e.g., an Associate Pastor's) job description. In specific pastoral situations, therefore, the contents of either of these two profiles may in fact overlap or be more expanded or more restricted than indicated here. The intended value of separating responsibilities as two distinct profiles, as presented here, is to provide a clear frame of reference when blending or separating out job descriptions at the local parish level.

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRY

A Vision of this Ministry

The Director of Music Ministry is a professional who holds specialized credentials in music and who has a thorough understanding of Roman Catholic liturgy. This person of faith is responsible for the effective planning, coordination, and execution of music within the liturgical celebrations of the parish. He or she is gifted with a vision of how a local Church can develop its potential.

"...Every liturgical celebration...is a sacred action surpassing all others" (*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, #7). "Among the many signs and symbols used by the Church to celebrate its faith, music is of preeminent importance...Music should assist the assembled believers to express and share the gift of faith that is within them, and strengthen their interior commitment of faith" (*Music in Catholic Worship*, #23).

Responsibilities and Tasks

Ministry of Administration

The Director of Music Ministry:

1. Collaborates with the Pastor, under his supervision, and with other members of the parish staff, integrating his or her own area of responsibility with the overall parish endeavor.
2. Directs the parish music program, selects and plans music in cooperation with the Coordinator of Liturgy and the liturgy teams/committee for use in parish liturgies.
3. Provides leadership in areas related to liturgical music, e.g., selects and develops participation aids for the congregation, selects and maintains musical instruments, coordinates services and schedules of parish musicians, assures copyright permission, etc.
4. Prepares and manages the budget for the parish music program in collaboration with the Coordinator of Liturgy and the Pastor.
5. Collaborates with the Coordinator of Liturgy, and with other staff members, e.g., Principal, DRE, Youth Minister, etc., to coordinate and ensure appropriate music for all parish sacramental celebrations, and provides them with consultation and needed assistance.

Ministry of Worship

The Director of Music Ministry:

1. Provides music and musicians for all Sunday and other major celebrations, including weddings, funerals, etc.
2. Builds repertoire and encourages participation of parish community in singing at various liturgies.
3. Acts as consultant to parishioners for planning sacramental liturgies, e.g., weddings, funerals, baptisms, etc.

Ministry of Education

The Director of Music Ministry:

1. Invites, motivates, and trains all parish ministers of music (whether volunteer, stipended, or salaried).
2. Provides liturgical formation, music education, and practical preparation for liturgical celebration for cantors/leaders of song, choral, and instrumental groups.
3. Serves as a resource consultant for parish concerns regarding music, helping to educate staff, ministers of music, and congregation in developing their potentials to understand the role of music in worship and to celebrate liturgies of musical quality.
4. Keeps abreast of current developments in liturgy and in music, and directs music ministers to available training workshops, and formational opportunities.

Ministry of Pastoral Services

The Director of Music Ministry:

1. Is visibly present at principal parish events, keeping attuned to the living faith and real concerns of parishioners.
2. Cooperates with the Coordinator of Liturgy in recruiting needed musicians, and attempts to involve newcomers and a broad spectrum of parishioners.
3. Works to foster unity among all parish musicians, and to create a spirit of harmony with the presider and other liturgical ministers.
4. Promotes good public relations both within and beyond the parish, and is involved in ecumenical, cluster, Deanery, and archdiocesan networks of professional peers.

Qualities

The Director of Music Ministry possesses the qualities common to all pastoral ministers, described in Section I, under "Qualities Needed By All Pastoral Ministers," beginning on page 25. Effective functioning of this ministry requires, in particular, that the Director of Music Ministry is a person of prayer, is sensitive to the cultural experience of parishioners, and understands their spirituality and worship life.

Competencies and Skills

In addition to the competencies and skills needed by all pastoral ministers, described in Section I, under “Competencies and Skills,” beginning on page 27, there are several which the Director of Music needs in particular:

1. Is knowledgeable of and comfortable with Church music literature in all forms and styles for the congregation, choirs (adult, teen, and children), vocalists, and instrumentalists.
2. Is proficient in liturgical principles.
3. Has a thorough understanding of the musical, liturgical, and pastoral judgments which must be made in selecting music for liturgy.
4. Is proficient in at least one performance area (e.g., keyboard, choral, voice).

Formation, Training, and Criteria for Readiness

In addition to the training for all pastoral ministers, described in Section I, under “Competencies and Skills,” beginning on page 27, preparation for this ministry demands professional training in music and liturgy. Minimally, a Bachelor’s Degree or equivalent is required for a Director of Music Ministry, even though a more professional qualification, such as the equivalent of a Master’s Degree in music and liturgy, is preferred.

Coordinating Parish Ministries, Gerard T. Broccolo and others, Copyright 1987, Archdiocese of Chicago, pages 91-92, permission granted for reprint.