



## JUBILATE DEO CHOIR

### REGULATIONS

#### INTRODUCTION

The rules listed below are internationally recognised to be the etiquette of any professional choir. The following regulations, including the appendices, have been compiled to act as guidelines to the members of the *Jubilate Deo Choir* and for all intents and purposes shall be deemed binding.

#### 1. ADMINISTRATION

- 1.1. The head of the *Jubilate Deo Choir* is the Music Director.
- 1.2. The Music Director is assisted by two Assistant Music Directors. In the absence of, or as directed by the Music Director, the Assistant Music Directors shall assume the full duties/responsibilities of the Music Director.
- 1.3. The Music Director shall, from time to time or as deemed necessary, appoint one or more members of the choir for particular duties for a term of one season (October – September) that is automatically renewed unless the choir member or the Music Director wishes to terminate the appointment, in which case a minimum advance notice of eight weeks is to be given. All of the following posts report **solely and directly** to the Music Director.
  - 1.3.1. **Choir Secretary** who will be responsible to assist the Music Director and the Assistant Music Directors in fulfilling their duties.
  - 1.3.2. **Treasurer** who will be responsible for the administration of the choir's funds.
  - 1.3.3. **Librarian** who will be responsible for the preparation, distribution, collection and filing of the *Jubilate Deo Choir's* music.
  - 1.3.4. **Logistics Officer** who will be responsible for the logistics of the choir, including stage set-up, instrumental requirements, travelling arrangements etc ...
  - 1.3.5. **Sponsors and Social Activities Officer** who will be responsible for the collection of sponsors and the organisation, in collaboration with the Logistics Officer, of any social activities for the members of the *Jubilate Deo Choir*.
  - 1.3.6. **Public Relations Officer** who will be responsible for the marketing and PR on behalf of the *Jubilate Deo Choir*.
  - 1.3.7. **Webmaster** who will be responsible to update the choir's website and ensure that the site is always in proper working order.

## 2. OBJECTIVES

- 2.1. The main objective of the *Jubilate Deo Choir* is the specialisation in sacred music, primarily for services held at Naxxar Parish Church. However, in order to support this primary objective, services in other parish churches as well as concerts of sacred and secular music that fall within the ability of the choir or that can potentially enhance the capabilities of the choir are encouraged.

## 3. MEMBERSHIP

- 3.1. Membership is subject to a voice test/audition and a trial period of not less than four weeks but under no circumstance longer than 12 weeks from the date of voice test/audition.
- 3.1.1. Throughout the trial period, the Music Director – with or without any or both of the Assistant Directors – shall inform the candidate of his/her progress.
- 3.1.2. At the end of the trial period, the Music Director shall inform the candidate whether he/she is deemed fit/unfit to become a full member of the choir in the presence of at least one of the Assistant Music Directors.
- 3.2. Former members wishing to rejoin the choir shall inform the Music Director and will also be required to take a voice test.
- 3.3. There are no racial, sexual or otherwise unnecessary discrimination of membership. However, entry is reasonably dependent on demonstrating a level and/or potential of vocal ability.

## 4. ATTENDANCE

- 4.1. Your presence in *each* rehearsal is vital for yourself, for your section and for the whole choir. The balance within and the general improvement of your section and of the whole choir *entirely* depend on your presence and your full participation.
- 4.2. There are times, however, when conflicts arise – no matter how much planning is involved. You must nevertheless try your best not to miss rehearsals unless for an extremely valid reason.
- 4.3. For the intents and purposes of the present regulations binding the members of the *Jubilate Deo Choir*, the following are deemed to be *excused* absences:
- 4.3.1. illness;
  - 4.3.2. death or funeral of a relative or close friend;
  - 4.3.3. urgent medical appointments;
  - 4.3.4. family emergencies;
  - 4.3.5. inclement weather that would make it impossible to attend (determined by the Music Director);
  - 4.3.6. work;
  - 4.3.7. the wedding day of a close family member.
- 4.4. For the intents and purposes of the present regulations binding the members of the *Jubilate Deo Choir*, the following are deemed to be *unexcused* absences:
- 4.4.1. all absences that are not considered excused, or that are not handled according to policy;
  - 4.4.2. leaving a rehearsal without getting permission from the Music Director;
- 4.5. Excused absences should, hopefully, be very rare but *if* such a situation arises and you have to miss a rehearsal you are requested to notify the choir secretary who will pass on your apology to the Music Director.

- 4.6. A foreseen long absence should be notified to the Music Director or to the Choir Secretary well in advance.
- 4.7. An updated register of attendance will be kept. Only those choir members who attend at least 80% of the rehearsals are admitted to sing in the scheduled church services and/or concerts.
- 4.8. Without prejudice to the above, the Music Director reserves the right to admit chorister/s – such decision resting entirely on one's vocal and musical capabilities – for church services and/or concerts without the need for said chorister/s to satisfy clause 3.7. above.
- 4.9. Any member who fails to attend four (4) consecutive rehearsals or a church service and/or concert without good reason and without having given prior notice to the Music Director, shall be deemed to have offered his or her resignation.
- 4.10. The Music Director may alter or vary the days, times or places of rehearsals or arrange additional rehearsals as agreed beforehand with choir members.
- 4.11. The Music Director reserves the right to terminate a membership if a choir member fails to satisfy the requirements of an assessment as per paragraph 4 of these regulations.

## 5. ASSESSMENTS

- 5.1. If the Music Director or any of the Assistant Music Directors deems that a choir member's performance is deteriorating below the acceptable standards of the *Jubilate Deo Choir*, the Music Director shall ask the choir member to sit for an audition.
- 5.2. A notice of minimum 2 weeks and maximum 4 weeks will be given.
- 5.3. Auditions will be held before a panel, usually made up of the Music Director and the two Assistant Music Directors. The Music Director may appoint an extra member on the auditioning panel at his discretion.
- 5.4. The Music Director, in the presence of the auditioning panel, will inform the choir member of the result.
- 5.5. Should the panel decide that the choir member has failed the audition, his membership will be terminated forthwith.
- 5.6. The decision in respect of termination shall be final.

## 5. SEMINARS

- 5.1. The Orchestra Member shall attend all seminars that the *Jubilate Deo Choir* may organize. The *Jubilate Deo Choir* may organize such events in conjunction with other institutions.
- 5.2. For the intents and purposes of these regulations, seminars shall be treated as church services or concerts. Attendance regulations as quoted in paragraph 3 above shall apply in their entirety.

## 6. ENGAGEMENT IN OTHER VOCAL ACTIVITIES

- 6.1. The choir member's first allegiance is to the *Jubilate Deo Choir*.
- 6.2. By way of concession a choir member may perform or undertake other commitments (paid or unpaid) with third parties provided that such commitments do not clash with any commitments of the *Jubilate Deo Choir* and that such commitments do not hinder in any way the member's performance or prestige as a member of the *Jubilate Deo Choir*.

## 7. DISCIPLINE

- 7.1. Each member of the *Jubilate Deo Choir* is required to comply with the terms and conditions of these regulations and with proper standards of performance and behaviour, and to maintain the highest levels of integrity.
- 7.2. In any of the following cases of misconduct or any other such case that goes against the present regulations, suspension of or termination of membership shall apply as determined by the Music Director – any decision in this respect shall be final:
  - 7.2.1 stealing anything to the detriment of the *Jubilate Deo Choir*, the Parish Church of Naxxar or of any premises or their owners where services/concerts/seminars are undertaken;
  - 7.2.2 causing wilful physical damage to property belonging to the *Jubilate Deo Choir*;
  - 7.2.3 causing wilful damage to the reputation and the integrity of the *Jubilate Deo Choir*;
  - 7.2.4 flagrant or repeated harassment of any member of the musical staff or members of the choir or of any of its guests;
  - 7.2.5 sexual harassment;
  - 7.2.6 flagrant or repeated disregard to the terms and conditions of these regulations;
  - 7.2.7 failure to attend sessions or persistent late attendance for sessions;
  - 7.2.8 manifest lack of interest in one's performance;
  - 7.2.9 disregard of the choir's rules and practices;
  - 7.2.10 insubordination or repeated failure to observe any directives given by the Music Director or any of the Assistant Music Directors.

## 8. MUSIC

- 8.1. The choice of music for church services as well as programme selection for concerts shall be in the hands of the Music Director.
- 8.2. Although you are very welcome to make suggestions to the Music Director about repertoire, please do keep in mind that only those suggestions that fall in line with the Music Director's long term strategy for the choir's overall development can be entertained.
- 8.3. All music is the property of the *Jubilate Deo Choir* and may not be loaned to third parties without sanction from the Music Director.
- 8.4. You are being lent copies of music from a library. Choir members are therefore requested to:
  - 8.4.1. return all music when required;
  - 8.4.2. treat music sheets very carefully;
  - 8.4.3. mark music using only soft (2, 3 or 4B) pencil; *never* in ink or colour;
- 8.5. You will be issued with a library code and each member is responsible for all the music bearing his/her code. Members who fail to return music which has been loaned to them shall be liable to pay the cost of such music and any resulting additional charges.

## 9 FINANCE & CONCERT PROMOTION

9.1 Funding of concerts is not always easy and competition for sponsors in the arts sector is intense, so if you know of any potential sponsors please pass them on to the Music Director or to the Sponsors and Social Activities Officer.

9.2 The activities of the *Jubilate Deo Choir* are given as much publicity as possible. However, your support and assistance (sending e-mail shots, extending personal invitations or assisting the Public Relations Officer) would ensure an ever-increasing following.

## CONCLUSION

Please refer to the regulations and to the attached appendices as often as you possibly can. Following these regulations would make life much easier for the Music Director, for your fellow choir members and for yourself. The overall improvement of the choir depends largely on everybody's *full* commitment, collaboration and participation.

This is a team ... we all play on the same side. Let us appreciate the joys that music can give and let us share it with others.

## APPENDIX I

## REHEARSAL TECHNIQUES &amp; DEPARTMENT

1. Please be ready for warm up routines five minutes before the call. Warm-up exercises *are not optional extras* – they are designed to teach the necessary vocal techniques. Moreover, even after a hard day, you will find these vocal and physical routines physically and mentally refreshing.
2. Although every rehearsal should start with a short warm-up session, limited rehearsal time as well as time restrictions sometimes make it difficult to include a group warm-up session. It is therefore advisable that, prior to every rehearsal, each choir member allows ample time for some individual warm-up such as stretching exercises, humming, breathing and vocal exercises in order to prepare oneself and one's voice for rehearsal.
3. Rehearsals are timed very carefully and would be upset if sent awry. Punctual attendance (i.e. being ready to sing 5 minutes before the call) is a sign of respect towards your fellow choir members, towards the Music Directors and towards the choir to which you belong. Punctual attendance is *absolutely mandatory*.
4. At each rehearsal you will need to have with you *all* the music that has been issued to you and a soft pencil to mark up dynamics and interpretive notes on your scores.
5. If you have accidentally forgotten your music please do not borrow from someone else but ask the librarian for a temporary copy and ensure that you return it after the rehearsal.
6. After an absence, a choir member should take the initiative to copy any markings that one would have missed. It is advisable to borrow your neighbour's music for such markings and/or explanations from the Music Director.
7. Sit up straight ... use good posture.
8. During rehearsals, the Music Director will often pause to correct faulty intonation, diction, dynamics or to explain some vocal technique you need for the work you are learning. At these intervals it is often tempting to talk to your neighbour about the passage you have just sung but please resist the temptation. At precisely those points the Music Director will be explaining what is needed to enhance the performance. You are, of course, welcome to question the conductor on any musical point but otherwise leave the chatting until a break or till the end of a rehearsal.
9. We all make mistakes at times but this is a most useful learning tool. When you are aware you have made a slip, put up your hand, briefly; this lets the conductor know he need not stop this time because you have acknowledged you will not repeat the error. Having marked the spot in the score, you might check this passage later.
10. It is advisable to mark your scores with effective *aide memoirs* that can help you to avoid certain mistakes in the future. A list of such *aide memoirs* has already been distributed and is available for new choir members.
11. Know your part and sing your part the very best you can. If you don't know your part, practice, study the text and/or get help as necessary.
12. No food or beverages other than water are allowed during rehearsals.
13. Mobile phones should be switched off during all rehearsals. If you are expecting an urgent phone call, please inform the Music Director prior to the rehearsal. Upon receiving the phone call, discreetly draw the attention of the Music Director and answer the call outside the rehearsal hall.
14. Do not miss rehearsals. Usually, it doesn't really matter to the ensemble *why* you are missing but do remember that your choir is greatly affected *if* you are absent.
15. Be a leader and not a follower.

**APPENDIX II****PERFORMANCE DEPARTMENT**

1. Warm up routines start 45 minutes before for concerts and 30 minutes before for church services. As with rehearsals, warm-up exercises are not optional extras.
2. Concert attire for men is dinner suits, white shirt, black bow tie, black stockings and concert shoes. Female members of the choir should consult the Choir Secretary for exact details. Any distractions to the audience should be avoided (e.g. excessive jewelry, overstated make up or complex hair styles).
3. Do not wear any perfumed products during a performance. Scented perfume, after-shave lotion, hand lotion, hair spray, etc ... although pleasant to you, may cause serious allergies to others.
4. Each choir member should file the music in a plain black folder and in the correct performance order. This prevents you from sorting the music during applause.
5. Ensure that you remember the agreed entrance and exit procedures as rehearsed (usually before or after the general rehearsal).
6. Going on stage, folder down in the right hand, walk out briskly and confidently and make eye contact with the audience upon reaching your place and when acknowledging the greeting applause. Smile and look confident. If you are nervous take ten deep breathes and breathe them out very slowly.
7. During the performance, keep your music folder high enough to enable you to see the conductor at a glance, but not so high as to hide your face from the audience.
8. Sing your part as best as you possibly can. Always be a leader and never a follower.
9. Remember that you are in direct line of sight with the audience and any motions (adjusting glasses, scratching your nose, talking to your neighbour etc...) will distract the audience from the performance.
10. Maintain a good posture throughout.
11. Only the choir's black folders are to be taken on stage. No purses, food, beverages, chewing gum, mints, etc., are allowed on stage during performance.
12. Standing up, sitting down and page turns should be done as quietly and as discreetly as possible.
13. In general, choir members (as well as orchestra members) do not applaud. There are occasions however when, after particular performance choir/orchestra members feel so moved that they feel they should join in the applause.
14. Getting off the stage, do not leave while the audience is still applauding (unless directed by conductor); folder in right hand, maintain poise.

**APPENDIX III**

**JUBILATE DEO CHOIR ADMINISTRATION**

**Season 2005-2006**

**Christopher Muscat**  
*Music Director*

**Ronald Camilleri & Josef Bugeja**  
*Assistant Music Directors*

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**Anna Zammit**  
*Choir Secretary*

**Lily Galea Pirotta**  
*Deputy Choir Secretary*

**Terezino Borg**  
*Treasurer*

**Carmelo Grech**  
*Librarian*

**Lily Galea Pirotta**  
*Deputy Librarian*

**Helga Ebejer**  
*Logistics Officer*

**Tarcisio Vella & Paul Catania**  
*Sponsors & Social Activities Officers*

**Tonio Vella**  
*Public Relations Officer*

**Mark Pace & Josef Bugeja**  
*Webmasters*

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**Organists & Choir Members**