

Do's and don'ts for ECS Cathedral Visits

The ECS [European Cathedral Singers] is well on its way to becoming a first class musical choir. In keeping with this standard we should give attention to the way in which we conduct ourselves in the cathedrals we visit. We are, after all, ambassadors of our Diocese and RSCM NW Europe. And we would like to be able to return to these cathedrals in the future! So please remember you are in a cathedral and act appropriately.

Some specific points:

Robes apparel and the like...

Please ensure all robes, whites (surplices, collars and cuffs and men's white neck cloths) are **clean and ironed** before our first Evensong. We have all travelled a long distance, but we do not need to look as if we have just fallen out of a suitcase. Ladies: if your gown are not ankle length, please do not wear trousers. It looks odd and, please, no handbags. All valuables can be left in lockers in Norwich or locked away in Portsmouth. Wear dark, preferably black, soft soled shoes, so that our processions are as quiet as possible. Hoods are worn for Matins and Evensongs, but not for the Eucharists. **No whites in cathedral before or after the service.** Cassocks/gowns are normally to be worn for rehearsals when in the stalls [you will be instructed if this is not the case].

Music folders, copies &c...

Please **organise your music** according to the services. This makes finding it more efficient. In the practices we shall identify items by title and when they are to be used. In the services, please have only the music for the service, in the correct order and in a folder. Use original copies [unless specific permission has been sought for photocopies]. If you are using photocopies, make sure they are stuck together as a booklet or are kept in plastic sleeves in a binder. No loose sheets during practices or the services. No stack of sheets with a staple in one corner. This means that all music must be in order before the first practice. If it is not, the music must be put in order before joining the practice. This may sound severe, but one or two disorganised people can cost the time and patience of everyone. Organise in advance and it is not a problem. Do not forget pencils and erasers. Please, do not sort your music during the readings or prayers of the services. It is a distraction and does not create a good impression for the clergy or the congregation and more importantly, it is not conducive to good worship.

After all that, we are sure ECS will make the right impressions and that our visits will be both enjoyable and rewarding.

Martin van Bleek, Edward Seymour & Graham Look