



The Diocese of Sodor and Man The Parish of Arbory & Castletown

Parish Profile



Together making Christ visible



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Bishop Peter writes:

I am very pleased to invite applications for the post of Priest in Charge of the Parish of Arbory and Castletown.

As you will see from the profile, this is a parish with two churches, two distinctive congregations, a balance of rural ministry at Arbory with the ancient town and harbour of Castletown, and a supportive team of ministerial colleagues within the parish, in the Southern Mission Partnership, and across the wider diocese. Sodor and Man is by far the smallest diocese in the Church of England, and we very much value the shared and collegiate nature of our ministry alongside the frequent contact that we have with each other at (for example) monthly Continuing Ministerial Development sessions and social gatherings.

Pastoral Reorganisation in the south of the diocese is currently under consideration, with a view to possible amalgamation of the Parish of Malew and Santan with Arbory and Castletown. This has not yet reached the stage of proposal, and there would of course then be a process of consultation, so it will not be a matter for the immediate attention of the new Priest in Charge of Arbory and Castletown. It may nonetheless arise in the course of the next year or so. I bring this to your attention as you consider applying for this post, and I encourage you to see this as a possible opportunity for enhanced pastoral ministry and outreach across the south of the Island. Both the Archdeacon and I are available for further discussion of this (or indeed any other) aspect of the role.

Thank you for considering this possible next step in your ministry. For my part, I commend your application, together with the people of Arbory and Castletown, to my continuing prayers.

In Christ

+ Peter Sodor as Mannin

The Parish of Arbory and Castletown, Sodor and Man.

www.parishofarboryandcastletown.org

The Bishop of Sodor and Man wishes to appoint a person as Priest in Charge to the Parish of St Columba in Arbory, and St Mary's on the Harbour in Castletown, in the Isle of Man.

What we are looking for in our new Vicar?

The Parish would welcome a person of prayer and discernment, who is also able to demonstrate:

- ♦ Leadership skills that are grounded in a firm understanding of the ministry of all believers, thereby nurturing others who seek to serve – and allowing them to develop a sense of their own identity in Christ.
- ♦ Experience of leading in the gifts and ministry of the Holy Spirit in all aspects of life, including corporately during services.
- ♦ A willingness to explore fresh aspects of mission in both communities, with a vision for church growth.
- ♦ A collaborative approach to ministry, which empowers others to lead and support church ministries and outreach.
- ♦ An ability to reveal the Gospel in a credible and engaging manner, to people of varying backgrounds and traditions.
- ♦ A naturally pastoral disposition, showing an ability to engage both with Christian and non-Christian people.

What can we offer?

- ♦ We offer a congregation who are looking forward to welcoming a new vicar;
- ♦ We offer mutual friendship, support and a helping hand in settling into our parish life;
- ♦ We are eager to show support and guidance in all aspects of community life;
- ♦ We are ready to work with our new Priest in Charge in using the commitment and variety of skills in our congregation to be partners in God's work and to continue the work of 'Proclaiming the love of Jesus in our community'.



The Isle of Man

Situated in the Irish Sea, the Island has various sea and air links to the United Kingdom and Ireland, The Island is a self-governing British Crown Dependency. As head of state, King Charles III holds the title 'Lord of Mann' and is represented by the Lieutenant Governor, his Excellency Sir John Lorimer.

Public Services

Education.

Public education is overseen by the Department of Education, Sport & Culture. Thirty-two primary schools, five secondary schools and University College Isle of Man function under the department. King William's College and the Buchan School are well-known independent schools; both are within the parish.

Health.

Healthcare is provided via a public health scheme, Manx Care, by the Department of Health and Social Care. All of these services are controlled directly by the Department of Home Affairs of the Isle of Man Government, and are independent of the United Kingdom.

Economy

The Islands economy is bolstered by its status as an offshore banking destination and has low effective rates of taxation, both personal and corporate. Insurance accounts for 22.4% of the economy whilst eGaming contributes 11.2%. Other Finance and Business Services (9.3%), Other Professional Services (7.2%), and Information and Communication Technology (6.8%) are further contributors.

Accounting for 59% of the Island's economy, company income continues to be the main driver of the Island's economy. Personal incomes represent 31% of the Island's economy.

Culture

The Isle of Man is often promoted as being influenced by its Celtic and, to a lesser extent, its Norse origins. Proximity to the UK, popularity as a tourist destination in Victorian times, and immigration from Britain have all meant that the cultures of Great Britain have been influential. Revival campaigns have attempted to preserve the surviving vestiges of Manx culture after a long period of Anglicisation, and there has been significantly increased interest in the Manx language, history and musical tradition.

Music

The music of the Isle of Man reflects Celtic, Norse and other influences from within the British Isles. A wide range of music is performed on the island such as rock, blues, jazz and pop. Classical concerts are extremely popular, and there are choirs and music groups in most Manx communities.

Manx traditional folk music has undergone a revival since the 1970s, starting with a music festival called *Yn Chruinnaght* held across the Island. This was part of a general revival of the Manx language and culture, after the death of the last native Manx speaker in 1974.

The Island's population of 85,000 enjoy a variety of cultural and recreational activities.

The Gaiety Theatre in Douglas, a restored Edwardian Music Hall, is adjacent to the Villa Marina which hosts conferences and concerts involving international orchestras and soloists. It is also home to The Manx Music Festival (The Guild), the Island's popular music and arts competition.

The Erin Arts Centre in Port Erin is also a major contributor to the cultural life of the Island.

There are many and varied sporting opportunities on the Island, which boasts a number of world-class athletes. Probably best known for the annual TT motorcycle races, the Island hosts other similar events, and the Southern 100 Road Race Course actually runs through the parish.

The rugged and vibrant beauty of the Island is perhaps the 'Jewel in the Crown', attracting visitors throughout the year. With eight picturesque harbours, four sailing clubs, and marinas in both Peel and Douglas, there is no shortage of venues for sea and beach sports.

Evidence of Celtic Christianity dating back to the 5th century, as well as various Viking forts and burial grounds, provide a rich variety of interest especially for those who enjoy 'serious' walking and hiking.

Further information on the Island and life here can be found on the following websites:

www.manxnationalheritage.im

www.locateiom.im

www.visiteisleofman.com

www.erinartscentre.com

www.gov.im



Castletown Harbour

A Diocesan Profile

The Diocese of Sodor and Man is a diocese of the Church of England and was originally and historically much larger, but now it covers just the Isle of Man and its adjacent islets. The Bishop's Office is presently in Douglas, the Island's capital city and the Cathedral is in Peel on the west coast of the Island.

Bishop:



The Rt. Rev. Peter Eagles,
Lord Bishop of Sodor and Man

Archdeacon:



The Ven Irene Cowell,
Archdeacon of Man

Cathedral Isle of Man



Churches and Parishes:

There are presently 43 churches across the Island in 15 parishes and 14 benefice.

Although the Isle of Man is not part of England, the Diocese of Sodor and Man is a diocese of the Church of England and is part of the Province of York. It is the smallest of all dioceses, and for this reason is exceptional in that it has its own bishop. It is also unique because the Bishop of Sodor and Man is an *ex officio* member of the Legislative Council of Tynwald – the Manx parliament.

The Diocese is presently linked with the Diocese of Cashel, Ferns and Ossory (Church of Ireland) in the Republic of Ireland.

Diocesan Vision

The Diocesan Vision for 2022–24 has three priorities:

- ♦ **Renewal.**
- ♦ **Faithfulness.**
- ♦ **Generosity.**

A detailed account of these priorities can be found on the [diocesan website](#).

A Parish Profile

The Parish website can be found here:

[The Parish of Arbory and Castletown](#)

Consisting of the former parishes of Arbory and Castletown, the parish is of an open and varied tradition, and is grouped with other parishes in the south of the Island, to form what is now called the Southern Mission Partnership, replacing the Rural Deanery.

The Town

Castletown was once the capital of the Island, and former home of the Lieutenant Governor and the Manx Parliament. As the name implies, Castle Rushen is the most prominent and imposing building in the town, and a feature which highlights not only the main square, but also the harbour where the river runs into a large coastal bay.

As well as King William's College and the Buchan School (independent), Castle Rushen High School and Victoria Road Primary School are also in Castletown, and within walking distance from the Vicarage (church). The local swimming pool, the small shopping centre, restaurants, library, a purpose-built medical centre and Poulson Park are also close by. There are various sporting facilities including tennis, golf and bowls.

The airport is on the edge of town and the steam train has a station in Castletown that is operational during the summer months. There is also an excellent bus service between Castletown and Douglas, and onward to the north of the Island. There are a number of housing developments in and around Castletown, and a substantial amount of government and local authority housing, including two complexes for the elderly. The 2022 census shows a population of 3,209. There are 48 names on the Electoral Roll, and approximately 30 regular worshippers.

[Castletown Commissioners Website](#)

The Church Building

St Mary's on the Harbour is a unique building, in that it began as the local national school, and later became the Sunday School which served the Garrison Church in the Town Square. The Garrison troops were guards for Castle Rushen, and the huge church building was built to accommodate troops who were not fully seated for worship. The very narrow pews, the immensity of the building and the maintenance it required, meant that the Sunday School building, and adjacent cottages on the harbour offered a much more 'cosy' option for Sunday worship.

Consecrated as the Parish Church in 1989, the building on the harbour was re-ordered ten years later, to create a flexible space with movable furniture and fittings. There is a complete catering kitchen on the ground floor, and the first floor contains a large hall with toilet facilities and a small kitchen. The unique nature of this small building means that it may be easily adapted for various uses.

The 11am Sunday Service is Holy Communion, with Morning Prayer every fifth Sunday, when the two congregations join for worship. St Mary's has a modern organ which replicates the sound of a traditional pipe organ and enjoys the services of a talented organist. Common Praise and the recent edition of Mission Praise offer a wide repertoire of hymns.

Refreshments are served in the entrance hall after worship each Sunday, and most members of the congregation linger to socialise. This space is used during the week for 'Friday Coffee and Chat', and lunch is served each Wednesday. PCC meetings, Castletown Heritage Group Lectures and various social events are held in this ground floor space, rather than the large first floor hall. It is also ideal for children's clubs and study groups, and organisations from the local community occasionally use the building. The building is easily heated, and with large and small meeting facilities, two well equipped kitchens and a small car park, St Mary's is well placed as a venue for various social or formal gatherings, and has recently begun a 'Warm Spaces' initiative.

Mission and Outreach

Over the years the church has held various mission activities, including – Through Faith Mission, Moorlands College, Share Jesus International, The Jesus Video Project, and Walk Through the Bible (both Old and New Testament versions).

The Saturday 'Messy Church' which involved both churches, was replaced by an 'After School Club' which has not yet resumed post-pandemic, but there is the potential to develop this further in the future.

Ecumenical Links

There are good ecumenical relationships with the Methodist and Roman Catholic Churches in Castletown, and St Mary's, particularly on Remembrance Sunday. This year as the Lieutenant Governor will attend, a large congregation is expected and so the service will be held in the Methodist Church. This is followed by a short procession to the Square, for prayers and the laying of wreaths in the Garden of Remembrance.

We are grateful to our Methodist friends, who in the past have made their church available to us when we have needed a larger building. For example, a Memorial Service for one of our members was held in Arbory St. Methodist Church, as St Mary's was not large enough to accommodate the anticipated numbers of people and visiting choirs.



The Villages of Ballabeg and Colby (Arbory)



The area surrounding the two villages is mainly rural, and although both Colby and Ballabeg have grown significantly since the erection of several small housing estates, the villages retain their rural character. This is possibly because there is just one road running southward through the villages from the main Castletown Road. The 2022 census records 1,899 residents in Arbory.

Arbory Primary School is situated close to the Parish Church – St Columba's in Ballabeg. A playgroup operates in the Methodist Church Hall in Colby. Secondary school children attend Castle Rushen High School in Castletown, which serves the south of the Island, and is a short bus journey from the villages.

St Columba's Church, Arbory

The present building dates from 1759 and is in good repair. There are overhead electric heaters, plus gas central heating. There are also basic toilet and kitchen facilities within the church building. The organ is a single manual pipe organ, restored in 1996. The hymn books used at present are *Ancient and Modern NS.*, *Mission Praise*, and *Junior Praise*. A small but enthusiastic music group play for the All-Age Services. There is a large burial ground surrounding the church, one of three in the South of the Island.



The Parish has a good Ecumenical relationship with the Methodist Churches in both Ballabeg and Colby. Arbory Primary School has an excellent reputation, with a register of around 200 children. There are well established links between the Church and the school, and school children take part in services for Trafalgar Day, and Remembrance and Carol Services. Both Arbory and Castletown have flourishing W.I.groups, and Scout and Guide companies.

St Columba's Church is often used for concerts and hosts the Quilliam Group Lectures twice yearly. Prior to the pandemic, a popular monthly film club was held in the local parish hall attracting around 20–30 people. It is hoped this may restart in the winter months. The church is at the centre of community life, hosting events and activities which are all opportunities for mission.



Sunday Services

1st Sunday

08.30am Holy Communion (BCP) followed by tea and toast

10.30am All Age Worship. (CW)

2nd Sunday 09.30am Holy Communion (CW)

3rd Sunday 09.30am Morning Prayer (CW)

4th Sunday 09.30am Holy Communion (CW)

5th Sunday 10.30am Joint Service with both Churches

There are currently 48 people on the Electoral Roll, with approximately 20 regular worshippers each week. Special services such as Trafalgar Day and Laa Columb Killey attract a larger congregation.



Further Information

Numbers for Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals

Electoral Roll 2022 Arbory 45. Castletown 44

Arbory	Funerals 6	Weddings 1	Baptisms 1
Castletown	5	2	1
Total	11	3	2

The Priest in Charge may occasionally be asked to officiate at weddings in the chapel at King William's College.

Expenses are paid and are shared across the parish as is the Shared Ministry Fund

There are three church wardens serving the parish, and a PCC with six elected members.

There is a supportive ministry team, including an SSM Curate plus two retired clergy and reader – all with PTO. There are also lay intercessors and people who 'meet and greet'. The Chaplain of King William's College is also resident in the parish and occasionally attends St Mary's for worship.

The Southern Mission Partnership

The Parish of Arbory and Castletown is grouped together with two adjacent parishes in the South of the Island to form the Southern Mission Partnership. The churches within a Mission Partnership work together, in new ways, to reach out to the communities they serve. One of the key aims of the Mission Partnerships is to provide a network of prayer, mutual support and the means of shared working together with a particular focus on mission.

Clergy and Readers from within the Southern Mission Partnership meet most weeks on a Wednesday morning for a time of prayer.

Other information about life and ministry is available on the [Diocesan website](#)

The Vicarage

The Vicarage is situated in the centre of Castletown, a short walk to the main square, shops and other attractions. This is a large, detached home in its own grounds. There are 4 bedrooms one ensuite, 2 reception rooms, a dining room and well equipped kitchen. There is an integral garage and separate office facility with independent access. The house has been refurbished in recent years. There is parking space for two cars.



Castletown Vicarage