

ST MARY DE CASTRO, LEICESTER

House for Duty Priest

The Bishop of Leicester seeks to appoint an experienced Priest as House for Duty Priest for this significant City Centre Church. In partnership with neighbouring congregations St Mary's is working to develop its mission and ministry in the city centre of Leicester, especially through a ministry of welcome with daily opening throughout the week.

Adjacent to De Montfort University (DMU), student accommodation blocks, and Castle Park the opportunity exists to work with the DMU Chaplain and others in building the Christian Community in that part of the city.

It is an opportunity for the best of incarnational and mission orientated Anglo-Catholic ministry and mission within a parish that has Resolutions A, B and C in place.

An Introduction to the Church

Founded in 1107, St Mary's was originally the chapel of Leicester Castle, to which was added a large south aisle to act as a parish church. St Mary's was at one time a Civic Church attended by the mayoralty, and Leicester City Council (formerly Mayor and Corporation) is Lay Rector of the Chancel. The proximity of the church to Leicester Castle in the heart of the a historic heritage area favours its use for Crown Court and other services of a civic nature. It is also a fitting venue for the annual Castle Park Festival.



St Mary's is a Grade 1 listed building and features in '1000 Best Churches' by Simon Jenkins. Such a splendid edifice entails a great responsibility for maintenance and upkeep of the fabric, and we are fortunate in having the support of the friends of St Mary's – an organisation of dedicated and generous donors with an appreciable non-congregational element. (See: www.stmarydecastro.org.uk/) Recent major projects have been the complete restoration of the Great West and South Aisle windows and the replacement of the heating system. It is hoped that a prime focus of future building development might be the creation of a proper 'Welcome Area', with much needed catering and toilet facilities.

Since July 2009, with the help of volunteers from a willing congregation, the church has operated a Ministry of Welcome with daily opening during the working week in addition to Saturday afternoons. This has attracted over 4,500 visits in a year. Our aim is to provide a space for spiritual refreshment, private prayer and devotion, and a means of requesting intercessions to be prayed at the altar. We view this as a major contribution to our mission as a city centre church. We also host activities reaching beyond conventional church services, for example the Lord Mayor's Luminaria in which members of the public with no



particular denominational affiliation can take part in an act of remembrance commemorating loved ones who have died.

St Mary's plays an active part in Churches Together in Leicester City Centre, which meets monthly for a service at members' places of worship.

The Parish is mainly non-residential due to the reconfiguration of the City Centre in the second half of the 20th century. There has been considerable growth in the provision of accommodation for students at nearby De Montfort University. These developments give rise to opportunities for future mission.

St Mary's current electoral roll is 91. Sunday morning average attendance is 40. It is mainly an eclectic congregation gathered from greater Leicester and the county beyond who are attracted by our traditional Anglo-Catholic ethos and worship. Sunday and weekday Masses use a modified Common Worship Traditional Language Order 1 Rite, celebrated in the eastward position. There is a BCP Choral Evensong every Sunday, with Benediction on the first Sunday of the month. All major feasts falling on weekdays are celebrated.



There is a Sunday School during the 11 a.m. Mass. There is a substantial serving team, a small but dedicated SATB choir, and a flourishing team of bell-ringers. Resolutions A, B and C are in place, and St Mary's is under the extended Episcopal care of the Bishop of Richborough.

A more extensive profile of St Mary's can be gathered from the updated version of a mission audit compiled in 2006 as part of the Diocese of Leicester's mission programme 'Shaped by God', (<http://sbg.dioceseofleicester.com/>).

House for Duty Role

We are seeking a Priest who will offer two days a week to the Parish in return for accommodation in the modern Vicarage adjacent to the Church. The exact way in which this is worked out will be by negotiation with the new Priest and the Parish. Presentation to the Parish is currently suspended and the appointment will be on the basis of modified Common Tenure.

The PCC will reimburse full working expenses.



Person Specification

The new Priest is likely to have:

1. Experience and proven ability
2. A commitment to developing our spiritual life through worship, teaching and example.
3. A dedication to pastoring those within and beyond the congregation.
4. A vision for St Mary's as a vibrant force at the heart of the city that is shared with others.
5. The ability to attract younger families and students.
6. A willingness to maintain and develop the civic profile.
7. The skills to develop the relationship with De Montfort University.
8. A commitment to collaboration, especially with other City Centre clergy, and other traditional catholic parishes.