

Rector of Castleford

I am delighted that you are considering the possibility of serving as the next Rector of Castleford. Following forward-looking and faith-filled recent changes in the benefice, this is a truly wonderful opportunity for a mission-minded and pastorally astute priest to lead the parish into the next phase of its life and mission as it seeks to tell the story of God's love in Jesus Christ.

All Saints, Castleford is a single-church urban parish within the Wakefield Episcopal Area of the Diocese of Leeds, being part of the Deanery of Pontefract. The church stands at an exciting junction, having come together some years ago and recently relinquished three of its church buildings to combine four former congregations into a united body worshipping at All Saints. To secure a positive future for the parish, the Diocese has agreed that a significant proportion of the sale proceeds from the three closed church buildings will be available to All Saints for reordering and refurbishment of the church building and parish rooms. The congregation and lay leaders now stand ready and excited to work with the new Rector to renew and revitalise the church and its mission in the town.

The church is a trusted presence in the civic life of the town and its people, and townsfolk continue to look towards All Saints to mark key events in their lives and the life of the community.

The finances are stable and the PCC is committed to increasing its share payment year on year from a modest baseline. The church building is in essentially good condition, although it does require some essential repairs and will benefit from the kind of refurbishment detailed above, realisable when the closed churches are sold. This project will be an early point of focus for the new Rector.

Churchmanship is modern Catholic, sacramental in focus, with Catholic ceremonial including vestments and incense. The liturgical year is carefully marked. Alongside this tradition, the PCC and congregation are positively aware of the opportunity to explore and develop other styles of worship to reach new groups of people, especially from the new-build housing that has been substantial in recent years.

While Castleford is historically a mining community with a significant social housing component, in recent years house ownership has increased, and growing numbers of new people have moved into the area, including people who commute to Leeds, Wakefield and other towns and cities in West Yorkshire.

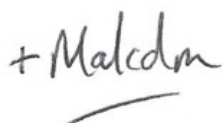
There are nine schools in the parish, offering huge potential for outreach to young people and their families, and it will be important for the new Rector to maintain and continue to develop excellent relationships with these schools, as well as with the local uniformed organisations. The church has a track record of engaging missionally with older people, including a Dementia Café and Knit and Natter sessions, and the new Rector will wish to maintain and build on these existing strengths. There are six nursing/elderly care homes in the parish.

Our Diocesan Vision is to nurture and equip confident followers of Jesus who will tell and live out the good news of Christ, grow the church and transform their communities. In appointing to this post, we are looking for someone who has a joyful and confident faith with a track record of enabling the ministries of all baptised followers of Jesus, effective ministry among children and young people, growing churches and positive community engagement. They will ideally have experience of post-industrial urban ministry and will be an inspiring leader who can work with the congregation of All Saints to develop new missional opportunities and foster whole-life discipleship.

Our particular priorities for the new Rector are:

- growing the congregation, spiritually and numerically,
- reaching out to the community in mission and evangelism, especially to young people and their families, older members of the community and the occupants of new housing in the parish,
- growing children's and youth ministry,
- developing and empowering lay leaders,
- overseeing the building reordering and refurbishment project

The new Rector will find colleagues in the deanery and in the wider episcopal area to be friendly, enthusiastic and supportive in sharing the joys and challenges of ministry. Although I may not know you by name at this point, please be assured of my prayers for all exploring this opportunity and for the discernment process to appoint the next Rector of Castleford.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, consisting of a small cross symbol followed by the name 'Malcolm' in a cursive script, with a horizontal line underneath.

Bishop of Wakefield
4th August 2025