

Maughold and South Ramsey / Bride, Lezayre and North Ramsey: Bishop's Introductory Narrative

Dear Friend,

Thank you for considering this exciting appointment at such a crucial moment in the life of our diocese and in the life of this group of churches.

It is the hope of the Church Commissioners for the Isle of Man (our Mission and Pastoral Committee) and myself that we will form one new parish out of the two existing parishes of Maughold and S. Ramsey, and Bride, Lezayre and N. Ramsey. We have just begun the formal consultation with stakeholders.

Furthermore, we are in conversation with our Methodists and URC colleagues with a view to forming an LEP based on St Paul's Ramsey. The potential partner-denominations have already closed their church buildings and have sold or are selling them. We have invited them to worship together in St Paul's Hall, and are encouraging shared worship with the congregation of St Paul's to pave the way to a new church in the heart of Ramsey, the Isle of Man's second town.

There are many committed people in all these congregations, and I have had the privilege to get to know them better over the past year as my Chaplain and I have mostly presided at worship throughout their interregna. I know the congregations are praying for God's provision of a priest called to serve with them: someone who will pray with them, worship with them and share in God's mission with them. I know too that they are all very much looking forward to welcoming this person after what has been a relatively long interregnum of well over a year.

For these reasons, this role resonates with opportunity, and you will have some talented laypeople working with you to bring these visions to fruition.

As stated in the profile, I am also looking for the priest whom I appoint to this new parish to be the Team Leader of the Northern Mission Partnership. This is our equivalent of a Rural Dean, but with less formal authority and far less bureaucracy involved. I am looking for a senior priest with the ability to encourage others in working together across borders and boundaries to work for the Kingdom of God in our diocese, sharing in mission as they share generously in fellowship and prayer with warmth and integrity.

This is also a vital moment in the life of our diocese. We have just published our *Diocesan Strategy for Church Buildings*, which is available on our website: <https://www.sodorandman.im> Clearly, this is going to mean change for many of our parishes, and it is a significant opportunity for renewal of mission.

I join my prayers with those of the congregations and my diocesan team as we seek the priest whom the Lord is calling to this ministry in our beautiful island and diocese.

With prayers for you and with greetings in Christ,

✠ *Peter Sodor as Mannin*

**The Rt Revd PA Eagles
Bishop of Sodor and Man**