

DIOCESE OF CHESTER  
GENERAL SYNOD ELECTION – CHESTER ARCHDEACONRY

## JOHN FREEMAN

I am standing again to represent the Diocese of Chester to continue my active participation in the activities of the General Synod. I have over the years been a member of the Revision Committees for the Safeguarding and Cathedrals Measures and a regular contributor to various debates. I sponsored a successful Private Members Motion encouraging the Church of England to pay the Living Wage to all those it employed directly.

I have been an enthusiastic member of various Diocesan Committees including Bishop's Council, the Finance Committee, Committee for Social Responsibility and am chairman of Partners for World Mission for the Diocese. In the latter role I have been a keen supporter of our link with the Church of Melanesia and have twice visited the Solomon Islands and am a Companion of the Melanesian Brotherhood. In addition, I have supported our link with the Dioceses of Aru and Boga in the Democratic Republic of Congo who are going through difficult times at the moment with outbreaks of civil war and need all our prayers for the intercommunal violence to come to an end.

Looking ahead to matters that will be coming to General Synod in the next few years are the Living in Love and Faith Report, Clergy Wellbeing and the future of the Parish System. I am a firm believer of the Church welcoming all who wish to come through its doors. It is essential that all who come to us are accepted and become full members with those of us who have been around for a long time. Many years ago, I had a summer holiday job with a newly arrived member of the Windrush Generation. We were a two man team that was an essential link in making one sixth of the country's ice lollipops. When it came to the end of August and demand dropped it was me who was made redundant. It is this spirit of co-operation we need to encourage in all our activities with those new to our communities and congregations.

The same spirit is needed as we tackle the problems before the Church today. Improving relations between the clergy, their congregations and the wider community including getting better at communicating with young people as we tackle the problems of climate change and our overuse of the world's resources. There are concerns that our long established parish system that has served the Church and Country well for over six centuries may need some rethinking. This is driven in part by changes in big cities about how the church ministers to its congregations but we must not fall in the trap of finding a big city solution that is imposed on all as our Diocese of Chester is still thriving with its long established parishes.

Thank you for reading my address, asking you for your support and vote and prayers for all the candidates in this election.

Best wishes and every blessing to you all – John Freeman

