

General Synod Election Address 2021 – Michael O'Connor

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Today I ask you to vote for me to be a member of the General Synod. I feel I have been called to this candidacy in the Church of England which has the privilege of proclaiming the Christian faith afresh in every generation, making God known in every place, and transforming lives and communities in the process.

The General Synod is there to support and enable this; it sets the policy and the rules for our Church, and I hope and pray it might provide for those things needed by the whole Church and all those individuals who form it.

On General Synod I would encourage it, led by the Holy Spirit, to:

- Strive to maintain the one Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.
- Remain true to traditional Christian values such as loving our neighbours as ourselves and seeing that each of us is made in the image of God.
- Encourage everyone in every congregation to take a full part in the life of the Church
- Develop a vision and a strategy that helps to secure understanding, ownership and engagement on the part of all God's people.
- Set out ambitious plans to care for God's earth, including working quickly towards net zero carbon emissions and modelling national, organisational and lifestyle choices which will make our lives sustainable for the future.
- Prayerfully consider proposals to change the parish system. I would like to listen to the arguments, but I think that changes, if any, to the parish system, which I believe has served many ages well, should be made extremely carefully, and after a lengthy period for consultation, reflection and discernment.

If elected, my aim is to endeavour to serve you diligently by representing our diocese through continual engagement in my parish, deanery and at diocesan synod.

About me - Born in Australia, I moved to the UK in 1975 at the age of three, went to school in Bradford, and read physics at Durham University where I met my future wife. I spend six years working in the NHS, 14 years in local government and nine years as an IT consultant working for a large multinational company. Somewhere along the way I graduated from the Open University with a Bachelor's degree in Law, and I am now a civil servant working in IT for the Crown Prosecution Service. I am proud to call Rochester my home where I have lived for over 20 years with my wife and, and more recently my son who attends school here and is a Cathedral chorister.

Please consider giving me your first or second preference vote, and I will be grateful for your prayers and support.

Thank you for taking the time to read this address. Please do get in touch if you would like to talk – Michael O'Connor 07971 708403.