

General Synod Elections – Diego Galanzino



Diego Galanzino

Priest-in-charge, All Saints Houghton Regis
in the Diocese of St Albans, Dunstable Deanery

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Proposer: Rev. Sally Jones, St Albans Cathedral

Secunder: Rev. David Warner, Abbots Langley

I would like to offer myself to serve the Diocese of St Albans and the wider Church of England in standing for 2015 elections to General Synod.

About Me

I am the parish priest of All Saints, Houghton Regis, where I have the great privilege to serve a diverse, friendly, and committed Christian community.

I have taken up this role in our Diocese this year. Before this, I ministered in two parishes in the Diocese of Truro. During this time I was also a representative on Diocesan Synod.

Prior to ordination I lived in London where my home church was St Botolph's without-Aldgate, a place of welcome and social action at the heart of the City. I trained for ordained ministry at St Stephen's House, Oxford, after having been influenced by the preaching and writings of the Community Theologian at St Botolph's, the Rev'd Ken Leech. At theological college I served for the Association of Ordinands and Candidates to Ministry (AOCM) standing committee and as convener for the students' first ever MAP of the local deanery, Cowley Deanery.

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Discipleship and Vocation

I am deeply committed to facilitate the spiritual growth of every member of Christ's Body so that, becoming confident in the faith, they may share the Good News of God's love within their own specific contexts. This commitment has brought me to develop and grow house and study groups tailored to the specific needs of each community I served, ranging from better understanding the Bible and aspects of the faith, to socially inspired themes. At General Synod I will support initiatives that encourage personal and corporate discipleship within the local church, both in the traditional parish setting and in the contexts of sector or pioneer ministries.

At General Synod I will wholeheartedly support measures aimed at fostering vocations to the ordained ministry, particularly among young men and women, so that more and more people may respond generously to God's call for their lives. I believe our Church needs to invest in her future by forming prayerful and confident ministers of the Gospel and of the Sacraments. Therefore, I will also promote our Church's commitment to provide solid theological learning for candidates to ministry in all its various forms, and in particular through residential training, at a time when there may be a temptation to cut corners in order to save resources.

Diversity

As an Italian immigrant to this country and as a priest in an area of the diocese that is becoming increasingly multicultural, I believe our Church should do more to engage with resident non-British communities, as well as furthering the good work taking place within ethnic minorities. Promoting mission and evangelization in these fields should not be a mere exercise in PR, but a genuine response to Our Lord who calls us to make disciples of all nations, even as a national Church. At General Synod I will support initiatives that will help our Church to be faithful to her a long-term commitment to inclusivity.

This year I have had the privilege of being part of the first cohort attending the *Shared Conversations on Scripture, Mission and Human Sexuality* organised by the Archbishop of Canterbury's Reconciliation Ministry Team (Our Diocese will participate in this facilitated process in March 2016). Here I experienced the Church of England at her best – a safe place where sharp disagreements and diversity of beliefs could be voiced, with the common aim of finding a way forward together in proclaiming the Gospel, without bitterness or infighting. At General Synod I will promote measures that will encourage our Church to be truly inclusive, affirming and welcoming towards everyone, while holding that spirit of mutual flourishing which is becoming to a community of disciples committed to living God's love.

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Social Justice

I am rooted in the Catholic (Liberal) tradition of the Church of England, and I rejoice in the great work that has been accomplished by this wing of our Church on issues surrounding social justice. More recently, I have been a volunteer of a local food bank and I have also graduated with an MA in Ethics, Religion and Society with a dissertation on the ethics concerning Christian living and poverty within the Early Church. At General Synod I will support initiatives that will encourage the Church to put service to the marginalised and the outcasts on top of the agenda, so that working with our ecumenical partners we may be faithful to Our Lord's calling and advance the common good of our society.

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The next five years will present difficult and contentious topics for debate that will question the ways in which we “do” church, our interpretations of Sacred Scripture, and our understanding of Christian ethics. I strongly believe that these debates will have to be grounded in genuine willingness to understand one-another's positions and in deep commitment to unity so that together we may discern what the Spirit is saying to the Church and facilitate her mission to our society.

Thank you for taking a little time to read this.

I hope to secure your first choice vote, and so to serve our Diocese at General Synod.