

General Synod Election Address.

The Reverend Canon John Sinclair

Residentially Canon - Newcastle Cathedral

Diocesan Local Evangelism Officer

Diocesan Synod
Chair of The House of Clergy



Dear Elector and Colleague,

It is a privilege to be able to stand for re-election as a Newcastle Diocesan member of General Synod.

I am indebted to Geoff Miller for proposing my nomination and to Peter Kenny in seconding my nomination.

I would be pleased to serve the diocese of Newcastle for a further term and humbly ask you to vote for me, preferably in your top three.

A bit about me

I was born in Newcastle and will be happy to die here when my time comes. I have served all my ordained life in this diocese which I love. I became a follower of Jesus Christ when I was overwhelmed by the love of God through the ministry of the Church of England in Newcastle during my preparation for marriage.

Since then I have tried to serve God and share the message of his love for all people.

I have served the church as a busy and committed lay person including training and ministering as a Reader before being selected for ordination back in 1989.

Since ordination I have spent my whole ministry serving in parishes across this diocese, including Ponteland, Longbenton,

and Newburn. I served as an Area Dean in Newcastle West before moving to Central Deanery to take up my role at the Cathedral. The past 4 years have been spent across the length and breadth of the diocese as the officer for local evangelism.

Since being elected as Chair of the House of Clergy of Diocesan Synod, I have had the rewarding role of helping shape our Diocesan Synod agendas. When chairing meetings I have attempted to create an atmosphere where all feel able to contribute and be listened to. Being a member of General Synod will, I believe help me a great deal in that task.

Motivation for standing

My motivation for standing for re-election is primarily focused on Newcastle. While I am committed to the flourishing of the Church of England, my main passion is to see Newcastle Diocese reach out with the good news of Jesus Christ in a way that is relevant and culturally acceptable across our diverse communities.

There can be a tendency at General Synod to look inwards when our energy and focus should be elsewhere. I would always support an outward focus when there are issues crying out for attention in the wider world.

Looking back

The past 5 years have been challenging and rewarding. We have dealt with major changes in our church legislation. I am honoured to have been part of the positive process which has opened the way for women and men to play a full part in episcopal ministry without reference to gender.

The journey was demanding and even frustrating at times, but as we moved towards the vote in 2014 I was acutely aware of the sense of God's hand being upon us as we talked, prayed and voted together.

I believe that the five guiding principals which are designed to hold the church in an atmosphere of mutual flourishing have paved the way for Synod to reform the way it conducts its business from a less adversarial model and toward a mutual understanding of respectful difference.

For the past couple of years I have been a member, through General Synod, of the Clergy Discipline Commission which has the responsibility of ensuring that the disciplinary arrangements are fair and that best practice is followed. I would really like the opportunity to continue that work if re-elected.

Looking forward

There are massive issues that lie before us in the Church of England and I am fully aware of the challenges we will face during the next five years and beyond.

The way we conduct our business affects the way we are seen within our country and further afield. I know that many will be watching us as we continue discussions around human sexuality. I want people to see a church which is united in proclaiming the unconditional love of God in our diverse communities.

While I am drawn towards the church's traditional teaching on human sexuality, my desire would be to have a church where all aspects of it's life and ministry were open to all, regardless of sexual orientation. My passion would be to work for a church where even those who disagree with each other would be able to remain united and focus on sharing God's love with the world.

The relational way in which we work in Newcastle gives me a great deal of confidence for the future. We need to make sure that the way we handle the Reform & Renewal process here in Newcastle is centred on our way of working. I will resist any pressure to make us fit into an ill fitting Westminster mould.

In conclusion

Change is always with us. With the present agenda there comes financial challenge and opportunity. I am sure we will do things differently but I will work hard to ensure that we change our way, in our diocese, in a way that is culturally relevant for us in the North.

We have a great diocese and if given the privilege of representing it again at a National level, I will do all in my power to make sure the voice of the North is heard.

I am optimistic by nature and whether you vote for me or not (I hope you will) I look forward to working with you for growth and outreach in our parishes throughout the diocese. Thank you for taking the time to read this address. I hope you will vote for me.

Please be in touch if you would like further information.



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