

# GENERAL SYNOD ELECTIONS: 2015

## DAVID ROSS BAILEY



### **My Background**

I was born in 1958 in South Africa, of British parentage. Trained at St Bede's Theological College, Umtata and the Universities of Cape Town and South Africa, I was ordained deacon in 1982 and priest in 1983 by the then Archbishop of Cape Town, Philip Russel. I subsequently served as a parish priest, a prison chaplain and hospital chaplain under Archbishops Desmond Tutu and Njongonkulu Ndungane. I was actively involved in issues of justice and reconciliation both during the struggle against apartheid and in the rebuilding of South African society after the first democratic elections in 1992.

For twenty years I was a member of the Oratory of the Good Shepherd, which has given me an insight into the religious life as well as regular fellowship with other parts of the Anglican Communion. I have always felt the need for a fellowship of prayer, discipline and study in my discipleship and ministry. For some 20 years I found this in membership of the Oratory of the Good Shepherd. Since leaving the Oratory to care for my disabled mother, I now find this in the Society of the Holy Cross.

Since February 2008 I have been a licensed priest in the Diocese of Exeter. I am also a member of Diocesan Synod, representing Plymouth City Deanery. I have been a member of the Diocesan Board of Education and am at present a member of Bishop's Diocesan Council and the Plymouth Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Committee. I have attended two sessions of General Synod as an observer in order to deepen my knowledge of the Church of England and its structure and government.

### **What I hope to do if elected.**

My experience of the wider Anglican communion will, I believe, enable me to take an active and constructive role in General Synod and bring a fresh perspective on issues being debated. I have a passion for mission in its widest sense and issues of justice. I believe that the Church needs to play a prophetic role in society. This must include the protection of the poor, the vulnerable and the marginalized. I will welcome the opportunity to assist General Synod in doing this.

I will be approachable and open to suggestions by all, especially the people of the Diocese of Exeter and its clergy, whom I hope to represent. I would ensure a wide input of ideas from a broad range of people.

### **Legislation and Mission**

As General Synod is principally a legislative body I would make it my duty to study carefully draft legislation to ensure that it is workable, achieves its aims and promotes the unity of the Church and her carrying out the mission of God.

The Church is called to proclaim afresh to each generation the faith uniquely revealed in the Holy Scriptures and set forth in the catholic creeds. Proclaiming the faith afresh to the present generation should not involve adapting the Church's teaching to fit in with the current fashions of society, but rather showing that the Gospel offers new and radical priorities and emphases that challenge those of the world.

The contemporary Church needs to engage with an increasingly secular and hostile society. It is important that General Synod plays a role in equipping Christian leaders, both ordained and lay, to meet this challenge. Financial resources need to be set aside for this, and for ensuring that the Gospel message is clearly and forcefully presented in the media.

### **Children and Young People**

The Church needs to recognise that children and young people are a vital part of its membership, not merely the “Church of the future”. With nine schools, including two special needs schools and one secondary school in my parish, I am actively involved in outreach to and with children and young people. I am also a member of the Plymouth City Council’s Child safeguarding body. In my previous parish in Cape Town, South Africa, I was chair of a committee responsible for safety in schools in high risk areas and also chair of the management committee of a place of safety for orphaned and abandoned children. For the past five years I have been a school governor and member of a children’s centre advisory board. This gives me a wealth of experience and insight into issues facing children and their parents both in the Church and in the wider society. I believe that this will enable me to assist the work of General Synod in the vital area of the Church’s work with children and young people.

### **Clergy and Mission**

I believe that clergy are key agents for mission. I would therefore be an advocate for clergy on general synod to ensure that they are trained, resourced and equipped for mission in a manner that takes account of the unique nature of the priestly vocation.

General synod is going to discuss how vocations to the ordained ministry are to be increased. I have much experience in encouraging people to discern their vocation and will be able to support this. Another area for critical debate is the absolute seal of the confessional. I have a strong commitment to the absolute seal of the confessional but also to finding ways of maintaining this without compromising the safety of children and vulnerable adults.

In the light of the above, may I ask you to help me by giving me your first preference vote. If you have any questions or comments, please do contact me, my contact details are given below.

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