Diocese of Oxford
General Synod Casual Vacancy Elections 2024

Questions to Candidates

Voters were given the opportunity to pose questions which might be put to the candidates, relating to any matters on which they believed a representative of the diocese on General Synod might wish to express a view.

Several suggestions and suggested themes were received, and I have selected Four, as set out below.

I am now inviting all candidates (clergy and lay) to consider the questions and, if they wish, to submit written responses. No candidate is obliged to provide answers to any or all of these, but any written responses any candidate wishes to make will then be posted on the diocesan website.

Please note that if a candidate does not provide any answers, the relevant part of the website will be marked "none provided" and if a candidate chooses not to answer every question, the words "no answer provided" will be inserted for that particular question.

The website will also make clear that this is entirely optional. It is an additional opportunity for you to engage with voters if you wish to do so. I reserve the right to remove any response which might reasonably be considered offensive or prejudicial (though I do not expect that I shall need to do so).

A word limit has been set for your replies of ***120 words per question***. Additional words will be cut from the final submission but you could, of course, give a shorter answer.

Please return your completed form to doliver@wslaw.co.uk and copied to sleader@wslaw.co.uk, by **5pm on Tuesday 14 May 2024**. Your submissions will be posted on the Diocesan website, with your Election Address and Video Presentation, on Thursday 16 May 2024 at 5.00 pm.

Darren Oliver
Presiding Officer for General Synod Election
9 May 2024

Name of Candidate (please enter name in full)	**Patrick Edward Gilday**

Questions and Replies

Question 1:	What are you views on the 'Future of Church Safeguarding Report' by Professor Alexis Jay released in February 2024?
Reply: 120 word limit applies	I would broadly support the establishment of the two independent bodies proposed. I would have some questions about how 'independence' can be ensured, given the way in which power and influence continues to operate diffusely within the upper echelons of the Church,

	irrespective of formal independence or otherwise.

Question 2:	What is your position on 'Living in Love and Faith' and on the inclusivity of LGBTQ+ people in the Church?
Reply: 120 word limit applies	All Christians are one in Christ; someone's sexual orientation or gender expression makes no difference whatsoever. For too long, the Church has followed the mores and social stigmas of the day, and harmed LGBT Christians in the process. We must repent of this. Rightly or wrongly, LLF has become viewed as the "solution" to the "problem" of simultaneously honouring LGBT Christians and honouring our teaching on marriage. I do not believe LGBT Christians are a "problem"; and as someone who believes our historic teaching on marriage and sexuality to be true, I don't think our doctrine is a "problem", either. Since LLF presupposes that both are, I don't see how it will ultimately succeed.

Question 3:	Noting the Five Guiding Principles in the House of Bishop's 2014 Declaration on the Ministry of Bishops and Priests (under which the diocesan bishop can make arrangements for pastoral and sacramental provision for churches who cannot accept the ministry of bishops and priest who are women), would you support similar arrangements being made for clergy and churches on matters arising from 'Living in Love and Faith'?
Reply: 120 word limit applies	Yes, though we should undoubtedly learn lessons from the experience post-1993 and post-2014 about how this can work best – not least where congregations and clergy teams are not of one mind on the matter – and commit seriously to the work of full reconciliation and unity.

Question 4:	Bearing in mind the Diocesan Synod's March 2024 resolution endorsing the need to significantly increase our engagement with young people, families and schools, how would your membership of General Synod help with this?
Reply: 120 word limit applies	I believe strongly in Church schooling, and would support proposals to strengthen the distinctively Christian witness of our Church schools. Too many children leave CofE schools without understanding the Christian message (whether they believe it or not). Evangelism within the home has now skipped a generation – parents themselves do not know the faith and hence do not teach it to their children. I would support equipping grandparents to teach the faith to their grandchildren. Connections with children, families, and young people rely on good personal relationships – money is very secondary – and hence I believe that the parish system must be strengthened in order to support this. I

	do not believe the answer lies in more diocesan or national projects.