

Revd Josias de Souza

Election Address: General Synod

Dear friends in Christ,

I am delighted to offer myself as a candidate for election to the General Synod. With 20 years of ordained ministry across three dioceses and two countries, I bring a wealth of experience in parish life, church planting, and mission work. I also previously served as a member of General Synod from 2018 to 2021 (byelection) during my time in the Diocese of Canterbury. Throughout my ministry, I have been dedicated to advancing the Kingdom of God by supporting church growth, nurturing discipleship, and fostering missional communities that embody the Gospel in practical, transformative ways.

My Journey of Ministry

I began my ordained ministry in the Diocese of Recife, Brazil, where for 12 years, I was involved in church planting initiatives, urban outreach, and youth ministry. My work there helped shape my passion for connecting faith with action, especially in diverse and multicultural contexts. After relocating to the Diocese of Canterbury, I continued my focus on mission, particularly in deprived urban settings, while serving as a member of General Synod (2018-2021). I am currently the Vicar of St Francis Church, Luton, in the Diocese of St Albans, where I've been for three years. Here, my role has involved leading the church through a time of revitalization, focusing on outreach, evangelism, and service.

A Commitment to Flourishing Communities

I have a deep desire to help create flourishing, Christ-centred communities. At St Francis, we have been transitioning from a rota-driven to a purpose-driven church, aligning all activities with the Great Commandment and Great Commission. This shift has been part of our ongoing work to develop discipleship and create space for genuine spiritual growth.

In addition, I have been involved in diocesan and ecumenical work, currently serving as an Assistant Area Dean, a governor of a local primary school, and a member of the executive committee of Churches Together in Luton. My experience working across different church traditions—from high Anglo-Catholic to Charismatic Evangelical—has given me a broad understanding of the richness of Anglican worship and the importance of unity in diversity.

Vision for the Future of the Church

I believe the Church of England is at a critical point, facing both challenges and opportunities in our mission to share the Gospel in a rapidly changing world. I will advocate for:

- **Mission and Evangelism:** Encouraging fresh expressions of church and supporting local congregations to engage meaningfully with their communities.
- **Youth and Young Adults:** Prioritizing resources and initiatives to raise up the next generation of leaders and disciples, equipping them to live out their faith in every area of life.
- **Inclusivity and Justice:** Ensuring that the Church reflects the diversity of our society and that all voices are heard and valued, particularly those from underrepresented groups.
- **Sustainability:** Promoting environmental stewardship as part of our witness to the world, while also supporting the sustainability of our parishes in terms of financial and human resources.

Why I Am Standing

I am standing for General Synod because I believe that my experience, skills, and passion for the Church can contribute to the ongoing work of renewal and mission in the Church of England. I have seen firsthand the challenges many parishes face, but I also see immense potential for growth and transformation when we step out in faith and respond to the needs of our communities.

I hope to bring a voice of hope and encouragement, one that is deeply committed to the Church's mission of "Living God's Love" and making Christ known in word and deed.

Thank you for considering me as your representative for General Synod. I look forward to serving the Diocese of St Albans and the wider Church of England with humility, passion, and a heart for God's mission.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Josias de Souza

Vicar of St Francis Church, Luton

Assistant Area Dean in Luton, Diocese of St Albans