

Rev Dr Vijay Kumar - Pioneer Priest, Parish of the Resurrection, Leicester

Rooted in the local church – committed to the wider Church

I am standing for General Synod because I believe the experience and voice of our local parishes should help shape the life and mission of the wider Church of England. I currently serve as Pioneer Priest at the Parish of the Resurrection in Belgrave, Leicester, a wonderfully diverse parish where people of many cultures, languages and faith backgrounds live alongside one another. Before coming to England, I served in the Church of North India. Ministry across different cultural contexts has taught me to listen carefully, build relationships and seek to discern what God is already doing among people.

At the heart of my ministry is a simple conviction: **the Church of England must continually recover its missional nature and identity.** We are not called simply to maintain our churches and institutions. We are a people sent by God—centred on Jesus Christ, confident in the Gospel, deeply rooted in our local communities, and called to proclaim and live that faith with humility and courage.

I also believe that **Christian faith is deeply personal, but never merely private.** Our confession of Jesus Christ calls us into public witness. The Gospel should be heard in our proclamation and made visible in our love, hospitality, justice, service and care for our neighbours.

This is what I am learning through ministry in Belgrave. Mission often begins with presence: opening our doors, listening to our neighbours, creating safe spaces for prayer and conversation, welcoming children and families, developing lay leadership, and building relationships across cultures and faiths. I am also learning that churches serving economically deprived communities have enormous gifts to offer the wider Church, even when their financial resources are limited.

If elected to General Synod, I would particularly seek to contribute to:

- **Mission and parish renewal** – encouraging a Church that looks outward and understands itself as sent to proclaim the Gospel and serve its communities.
- **Intercultural Church** – working towards a Church where people of different cultures and backgrounds do not simply attend together, but genuinely belong, participate and lead together.
- **Deprived and diverse communities** – ensuring that churches serving communities with fewer resources are heard, valued and enabled to flourish.
- **Shared ministry and leadership** – encouraging clergy and lay people to recognise one another as co-workers in the mission of God.

I would come to General Synod not claiming to have all the answers, but ready to **listen, learn, pray and contribute.** I would bring both my experience of the worldwide Church and what I am learning week by week through local parish ministry in Leicester. I believe the Church of England has a remarkable calling and opportunity in our changing society. **Renewing our missional identity must begin locally, but it is a calling we share as the whole Church.**

It would be a privilege to represent the Diocese of Leicester on General Synod and to contribute to our shared calling to proclaim and live the good news of Jesus Christ.