

Alastair Cutting

Southwark Diocese clergy candidate

I was a jobbing parish priest for 25 years before being appointed archdeacon; the parish and its clergy remain at the heart of what I understand to be God's vision for my work and ministry in the CofE.

Synodical experience: Before coming to Southwark I was twice elected to General Synod in Chichester diocese, and I served for a time as Propoloctor for the clergy of the Canterbury Province; I was a founder of the unofficial [@GenSyn](#) twitter stream. Although synod sometimes appears to act quirkily, or receives negative press, much of synod's (often important) work goes unrecognised. Rarely are debates on complex subjects without world-class contributions from wise synod members.

Diversity: Amongst the range of radically inclusive and general broad-church parishes, this archdeaconry is blessed by including charismatics, traditional catholics and conservative evangelicals and most things in between too. I rejoice in this diversity, whilst wrestling with some of the challenges to enable this breadth through BMOs etc.

The 2015 '[World in a Diocese Report](#)' was not wrong in recognising the extraordinary richness in the make-up of our cultural and ethnic groupings in Southwark churches - and our [Anti-Racism Charter](#) helps us focus on the areas we still need to make progress on.

The pandemic: The faith sector response during lockdown has been widely recognised and valued - but our contributions are more than sanctified social work. Helping individuals meet with Jesus in person and through the sacraments remains core to our ministry. The pandemic has exacerbated areas of inadequacy in provision for mental health, social care, dementia provision and areas of disability. These too all need to come under the umbrella of inclusion in our local and national communities. Clergy wellbeing is an area I've been active in since before coming to Southwark, and remains a particular concern as we continue 'coming back'.

Global issues: Our overseas links with Zimbabwe and Jerusalem and others remind us of the value of our Anglican partnerships, and the impact of our decisions on our global Communion, whether it is through environmental and climate change COP26 conversations, or the *Living in Love and Faith* engagement process, each of which I support and continue seeking to hear minority and less audible voices.

Financial/Missional implications: With both financial income and attendance figures down in many parishes and dioceses, our next-stage plans for mission and flourishing need encouragement and resourcing. Growing the church is foundational part of the [Southwark Vision](#), so these are areas I already wholeheartedly support. The use of the Church Commissioners Strategic Development Funding has been helpful in Southwark as in other dioceses; but we need to monitor that this does not create unsustainable dependencies, or focus on models that could be too narrow to replicate in our context.

Countercultural gospel: What Jesus taught, and who he spoke to and mixed with, often had unexpected consequences for his hearers - including us today. Following him can still get us in trouble with civic and religious leaders. Christ's mercy is overflowing, but his grace is not cheap; the injunction from Jesus and Paul to sin no more and follow him remains a daily challenge of discernment and practise. Synod is one place that the church and society can still hear the challenge and transformation that following Christ today can bring.

I hope to serve and support the Diocese of Southwark and you by standing, and I would greatly value your first or second preference vote.
Please do contact me with any specific questions.

Alastair Cutting

Archdeacon of Lewisham & Greenwich since 2013
Nominated by Stanley Njoka and Tim Goode

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