**General Synod (House of Laity) Election Address**

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**Who am I?**

To the electors, I know there are some things you would like to know about me. I am Dr. Addy Lazz-Onyenobi, blessed with four adult children, three married and have four grand-children. My Doctorate is in ‘Decision -making in the upper echelon’ with special reference to Women, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and participation. I taught at the University of Manchester for over 25 years. Served as a magistrate for 22 years sitting on Manchester and Salford Bench, helping to dispense justice with fairness and equity.

**Church involvement**

I am a cradle Anglican, born into a staunch Anglican family. In fact, my mother was the first woman to be licensed as a Lay Reader, in the diocese of Lagos, Nigeria. My entire family now attend Church of England. I have been an active member of St Edmund’s Whalley Range since our relocation from London 28 years ago. A long-standing member of the PCC and have served as the Safeguarding Officer and a Church warden for many years. I am a Licensed Reader and a Lay Canon of Manchester Cathedral and have just been elected as the Lay Chair of Manchester South and Stretford. I am the Mother’s Union Hulme Deanery Leader. I have also been an active member of the Diocesan Synod and the Diocesan Board of Education.

**Why am I standing?**

As a member of the General Synod since 2013, one of the Lay representatives of Diocese of Manchester, I had played an active role in its affairs by serving on various committees; Revision committee, the Vice Chair of Committee for Minority Ethnic Anglican Concerns (CMEAC), the Lay member on Provincial Panels and Clergy Discipline Tribunals, a Trustee of Queen Victoria Clergy Fund (QVCF), member of CNC Oversight group. As a member of the Archbishops Anti-Racism Task Force, which was set up to make bold changes to ensure greater racial equality in the Church of England and the report ***From Lament to Action***, we produced has inspired me to take a more active role in the wider leadership of the Church of England, as I am very passionate about equality, diversity, inclusion and participation.

Simplification: I support the continued debate about how we can make our structures more understandable. They might not be inspiring but they do cover issues for our parishes and form a framework for the Church as a whole.

I have great concern for the social and spiritual well-being of our young people and will like to see the Youth Council re-instated as the Church is hoping to become ‘younger, simpler and humbler’ because I believe firmly that Children and young people are not only the church of tomorrow but are the church of today.

I will like to see mission and discipleship placed at the centre of our decision making, thus helping the church becoming more outward looking and relevant.

I will like to see a more welcoming and inclusive Church regardless of race, gender, disability, sexuality or wealth, that recognises and celebrates the diversity of gifts that all bring to the Church and allowing space for growth and development. In Galatians 3: 28, St Paul makes it clear that we are all one in Christ. The church of England faces many issues and changes in the years to come and we must find new mission-shaped ways to address them. In particular, the publication of Living in Love and Faith (LLF) that is being looked at the moment, to be presented and debated during the next synod, in 2022. I hope we can model holding together different viewpoints, without losing sight of the need for equality. We can agree to disagree, so long as we live in love with one another.

The Church had fallen tragically on racial justice, hence one of the recommendations of the Archbishops’ taskforce report is to have a Racial Justice Officer (RJO) in each Diocese. However, the response of the Archbishops’ Council to this, is disappointing. I hope they will look at this again!

Clergy wellbeing is paramount, that is why as Trustees of Queen Victoria Clergy Fund, we make sure that dioceses benefit from the fund to support clergy that need it, amongst other support they are given. Having said that, we can still do more.

Those of us that were members of the last general synod voted unanimously for General Synod to commit to carbon net zero by 2030. The recent reports highlight that we must do more. So, how is this going to be achieved. This will need to be thought through properly.

With my experience, skills and my knowledge of the diocese and parishes, I strongly believe. I still have a lot to contribute, as I have been doing since. Also, I want to ensure that not only the voice of the Diocese of Manchester is heard but my voice as a black woman from the northern province who have an unfinished business to take care of, and who is committed to a Church that is inclusive and representative of all its constituents.

Thank you for taking the time to reading this and hope you will consider giving me your first vote to enable me to continue my journey of faith and dedication. Please feel free to contact me either by email or call me. My email address is; addylazz@yahoo.com or 07736686417