

LESTER CARISSIMI, St Edward the Confessor, Lugano

Candidate for the House of Laity, General Synod (Diocese in Europe)

Churchwarden & Swiss Archdeacons Synod Representative (2021 – 2026)



Proposer: Robin Hall (Lay Chair, Swiss Archdeacons Synod, St Nicholas Basel)

Seconded: Maxine Wildhaber (Swiss Archdeacons Synod Representative, St Ursula, Bern)

ABOUT ME

• Parish Role

Churchwarden & Archdeacons Synod Representative for St Edward the Confessor, Lugano (2021–2026).

• Heritage & Family

Born 1968 to an English Anglican mother and Italian father. Married 35 years in a same-sex partnership; father and grandfather in a close family of five.

• Professional Life

Degree in Political Economy. Old Masters art consultant & managing director of the family business in coffee roasting.

• Cross-Cultural Depth

Vast experience in fair trade, global diplomacy, and people management across countries as distinct as Egypt and the USA.

• Ecumenical Breadth

Resident in Italy & Switzerland; deeply familiar with Anglican, Roman Catholic, and Orthodox traditions and governance.

• Contact

Email: lecrico@proton.me

I am always happy to connect with electors across Europe.

HERE I AM, LORD

This is my first step towards greater engagement with the national Church, which I take trusting in God's calling. My English mother instilled a deep sense of Christian duty and neighborly love, while my Italian father opened my eyes to a world of beauty where the Glory of God and Creation is celebrated in a full rainbow of colors.

I bring a unique combination of commercial acumen, legal scrutiny, and deep devotion to traditional Anglican worship. As your Lay Representative, my primary duty will be to listen, look, hear, and truly understand your voices, translating our shared challenges into meaningful action at General Synod.

MY PRIORITIES FOR GENERAL SYNOD

- **Parish Mission & Governance Scrutiny:** Five years as Churchwarden navigating two recruitment processes taught me where the Church's governance excels and where loopholes remain. Mission and growth at the parish level requires clear, robust Church Representation Rules that produce efficient, unified, and properly funded efforts while balancing welfare for clergy and affirming lay leadership.
- **Children & Youth Ministry:** Nurturing young disciples to build confidence in their faith is an imperative. Before joining St Edward's in 2013, I worshipped at All Saints, Milan. We chose Lugano, just over the border, when my son was 3, so that he could attend the thriving Sunday School. Having guided my son through Sunday School in to his studies in England, I pledge to champion youth rights and support every step of their Christian journey across our diocese.
- **Living in Love & Faith (LLF):** Having lived in love and faith in a same-sex partnership for over 35 years, raising our Tibetan-born adopted daughter, and welcoming our grandchild, I bring authentic lived experience to this dialogue. The debate at General Synod 2026, which sadly brought the LLF programme to a formal close, also voted to establish new working groups to oversee future theological and legal work. Having been part of our diocese's synod dedicated to LLF, I hope to be part of that conversation.
- **Independent Safeguarding & Social Graces:** I fully endorse the establishment of an Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) to act as an external regulatory body. We must embed a culture of 'Social Graces'—translating power into empathy, responsibility, and restraint.
- **Caring for Creation & Global Bridge-Building:** We need no further recommendation than the daily news to understand and act as a Church in response to the climate crisis, which is affecting the most vulnerable communities that omit almost zero net carbon.

ADVOCACY, ADVANCEMENT & RECORD OF SERVICE

What I will champion

- **Mental Health & Clergy Welfare**

I fully support Synod motions to train and equip clergy to respond in an informed, compassionate way to the mental health needs of those in their pastoral care, while ensuring robust support networks for clergy themselves.

- **Women's Ministry at All Levels**

I am an uncompromising supporter of Women's Ministry at every level of clerical and lay participation. I actively respect women's equal stature, intellectual wisdom, and indispensable contribution to the Church and wider world.

- **Inclusive Ministry**

The General Synod must remain an open platform. I will believe all individuals, regardless of gender, ethnicity, or socio-economic background, are called, valued, and empowered to work in Christ's vineyard.

- **Rich, Anglican Liturgy & Safe Havens**

I value worship rooted in the rich Anglican tradition. All who enter our churches must find a safe, welcoming haven, an oasis of peace to meet God, a place to belong and become.

My Experience & Qualifications

- **Parish Leadership & Recruitment**

5 years as Churchwarden in Lugano. Successfully led the parish through two complete chaplain recruitment cycles, financial restructuring, and post-pandemic community re-engagement.

- **Synodical & Archdeaconry Service**

Active Swiss Archdeaconry Synod Representative since 2021. Directly participated in European Diocesan Synod discussions on LLF and diocesan strategy.

- **International Business & Diplomacy**

Managing director in the coffee roasting sector and Old Masters art consultant. Broad experience in fair trade, contract negotiation, and cross-cultural relations across Europe, North America, and the Middle East.

- **Academic & Ecumenical Foundation**

Graduate in Political Economy from Bocconi University, Milan. Decades of residency in Continental Europe providing deep insight into Roman Catholic and Orthodox ecclesiastical structures.

MY PLEDGE TO THE ELECTORS OF THE DIOCESE IN EUROPE

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Together we have a Gospel to declare: the good news which Jesus our Servant King brought to all people. If elected as your Lay Representative, I pledge to be an accessible, accountable, and courageous voice at General Synod. I will listen attentively to the diverse needs of our scattered European chaplaincies, scrutinize legislation with commercial rigor, champion inclusive governance, and report back faithfully. I ask for your vote so that together we can ensure 'Thy will be done on earth as in heaven.'

I would be deeply honoured to serve as your representative. If you would like to discuss any aspect of my candidate address or share your hopes for General Synod, please contact me directly at lecrico@proton.me. I look forward to hearing from you.

Pace e Bene, in Christ's peace,

Lester Carissimi

Please give LESTER CARISSIMI your 1st Preference Vote