



## Damian Platt

The Reverend Canon Damian Edward Platt

Vicar of Thornton-le-Fylde Christ Church | Area Dean of the Poulton Deanery

**Nominator #1:** The Reverend Canon Martin Keighley, Vicar of Poulton-le-Fylde St Chad

**Nominator #2:** The Reverend Andrew Downes, Vicar of Fleetwood St Peter and St David

I believe **remarkable things happen when we do what Jesus says**. That's what I shared with our PCC recently on a vision awayday. We were reading Luke's account of the fishermen being "astonished at the catch of fish they had taken" (Luke 5:9, NIV). Jesus told them to drop their nets into the Lake of Gennesaret. Before Jesus stepped into Simon Peter's boat they'd caught nothing all night. But after doing what Jesus said several boats started to sink due to the remarkable number of fish being caught.

During our vision awayday I tasked the PCC to repeat throughout the day the words of Jesus in response to Simon Peter: **"Do not be afraid"** (Luke 5:10, NIV). Jesus did not want the astonishment of the about-to-be-fishers-of-people to cause them to flee from him. He wanted them to join him. They were about to catch some really big fish!

Fear can be something we feel in churches. We fear the prospect of a decline in attendance, a decrease in giving, a drying-up of vocations. But when we do what Jesus says, remarkable things happen. We must not be afraid!

### **"Do not be afraid"**

On the weekend of my ordination 14 years ago, I remember being stood in front of some very important ecclesiastical and legal people in Church House and hearing the preface to the *Declaration of Assent* being read out aloud, that The

Church of England "professes the faith uniquely revealed in the Holy Scriptures and set forth in the catholic creeds, which faith the Church is called upon to proclaim afresh in each generation." Hear, hear is what I say to that! We have all we need in the scriptures and creeds. For me, nothing has changed since then. The oath I went on to make when placing my hand on a Bible and making the *Declaration of Assent* is what I firmly adhere to. I'm not afraid. Jesus tells me not to be. He is the best fisher of people I know. **When we do what Jesus says, remarkable things happen.**

If elected to General Synod, I will contribute positively, collaboratively, and faithfully. That has been my pattern of service to full-time Christian ministry over the past 26 years. So long as we do what Jesus says, remarkable things happen. On your behalf, I will encourage Synod to listen to Jesus, to do what he says. I will draw on my 11 years of experience as a regular vicar in one place to contribute to discussions, debates and decisions which seek to honour the Chief Fisher of People. He is in the business of drawing people to himself. Astonishment. Bewilderment. Commitment. I want us to see new, strong, huge nets cast deep and wide to bring in a huge catch across our parishes. **The only sinking The Church of England ought to be experiencing is when the nets are too heavy with lives transformed with faith and lives astonished leading to new vocations.**

There will be some exceptional people standing for election. A vote for me will be a vote for fearless optimism that Jesus will call to himself future net throwers if we listen to him and do what he says. Remarkable things will happen. We need not be afraid because Jesus knows where we need to put out our nets for a big catch.

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**My big interests at Synod will be vocations and vision.** I'd love to be part of encouraging more shepherds to the sheep fold and encouraging a big vision for The Church of England to do what Jesus says and see remarkable things happen.

I am the son of two remarkable conversions to faith. My parents became Christians at around the age I am now (44). Nets were put into deep water and they were hauled in. Dazzled by the grace and love of God through the cross of Christ, remarkable things happened in their lives. Since my own childhood conversion, I've sought to model being a faithful follower of Christ. Having been hugely improved as a person by being married to Lauren, the Lord continues that improvement as I watch with delight our son and daughter be superior followers of Christ than I was at their age.

I love God. I love my family. I love my church family. I love my wider-church family across Lancashire. I love to see churches full to the brim. I love to see new vocations saying “yes” to professing faith uniquely revealed in the Holy Scriptures.

Whoever you cast your vote for, be sure to cast your net where Jesus tells you to. The ocean is deep, the fish are many, and Jesus is always doing remarkable things. **Let us pray the next five years of General Synod will be filled with stories of heavy nets!**

**You are most welcome to get in touch...**

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