

## ROBIN EASTOE



I am Team Rector of Heavitree with St Mary Steps an appointment I took up in 2008. Before that I was exclusively in the Chelmsford Diocese where I was brought up and was ordained in 1978. I served two curacies before becoming Vicar of St Francis, Barkingside, and then Vicar of St Margaret's, Leigh on Sea. I am proud to have only ever been a parish priest.

I am Area Dean of Christianity (quite a title!) and was also an area dean in Chelmsford Diocese. I am a member of Diocesan Synod. I am an assessor for the DDO, on the Board of Patronage, and I am also involved in Ministerial Development Reviews. However these things are incidental to being a parish priest, which I have been ever since ordination; I believe it is vital to have ordinary parish priests on Synod.

A big part of my ministry is to be involved in schools. As well as being a Governor in our Church Academy, I, together with other the clergy of the Team take weekly assemblies in four schools and regular assemblies in four others. We have developed a '30 minute service' which has been successful in attracting families and children.

I am married with three children in their 20's. My chief interests are watching football, cricket (I play occasionally for the Diocesan Cricket Team), reading, storytelling and listening to folk music. I also enjoy cooking though in an unadventurous way.

**Sexuality and related issues.** I would be conservative on these very difficult issues. Listening to our society, I feel the nation is very confused and missing an authority to give guidance. I see no advantage in the Church of England being more influenced by strident voices than by bible and tradition. I would be horrified if we changed the canon on marriage.

**'Trans' issues.** It must be horrible to be confused about what gender one is. Reading articles by psychologists and doctors, it seems they are equally confused about how to react to this. I see no benefit in the Church dabbling in complex psychological issues, and believe we should wait and listen.

**Schools.** Church schools are already under political pressure and are likely to be even more so in the future. This is somewhat strange since Church schools are popular, successful and good examples of the Church serving the community to the benefit of all. I would hope we would vigorously defend the Church's role in education. At the same time I believe we should also defend teachers of all faiths or none, since they are often on the receiving end of much criticism from those who regard education as a convenient political football.

**Mission.** We need to invest in mission. Heavitree parish has three large estates and it is very noticeable how few of their residents are numbered among our congregations or indeed anyone's congregations. While I rejoice in the growth of many churches, we must resource mission in the estates of our towns and cities, even if growth might be slower and less spectacular. In so many parishes there are whole areas which are untouched by any church. We must spread the love of Jesus and faith in him even when this will prove most difficult.

**Euthanasia.** We should stand firmly for the sanctity of human life, made in the divine image. In particular the elderly should be protected from being bullied into thinking their lives are a burden to family and to society.

**Five Guiding Principles.** These have enabled peace to break out in the church; we need them and should live by them. Sadly a large number of clergy and laity will have no idea what they are! They should be better taught and affirmed at all levels of church life.

**Good News.** We seem to have lost faith that the beliefs founded in the Bible, expressed in the Creeds and lived out through men, women and children for two thousand years remains Good News to today's world. I firmly believe it remains Good News.

*If you agree with some or all of the above, please consider giving me your first preference votes. Do be in touch if you want to know more about me and/or what I stand for.*

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