

Leaving words by Ian Mobsby, June 2015.

There is so much I want to say, but have honed things down to a few words.

Being part of the Moot community and serving it has been the focus of my entire ordained life so far. It started when I was ordained a Deacon with Moot in the Parish Church of St Matthew Westminster along side Fr Peter where Fr Philip was my training incumbent. I went on to becoming a Priest, Priest Missioner and then Priest in Charge of this incredible place, here in the heart of the City of London.

There have been some hilarious stories along the way. Gareth Powell has been involved in many of them in the early years. For a whole year I used to do gorilla impressions with my lips when swinging the incense like so – no one told me for a year, until I was priested where all the mooters in the congregation did monkey impressions back. For my first Eucharist I had to do the whole bells and smells thing in front of then Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams, who walked into the service. I had three quotes of Rowan in my homily so looked like the biggest creep in the world!!

The Moot community over the years has helped me to grow, and also face the challenge of depression and broken relationships in more recent years. I have grown from working and discussing theology and life with many over the last 13 years, where Moot has become a bit of a clergy factory, which has got to be one of the unexpecteds.

Against all the odds, Moot in all its uniqueness has survived in difficult circumstances of lack of finances, complex politics but a deep drive to see Moot through to sustainability. It has not been a perfect journey, there have been a number of burst tyres, roadside assistance, and changes of engine, but it has matured never the less.

I give thanks to the founders, who enabled Moot to be happen. For Mike and Carey Radcliffe, Graham and Bethan, Sim and Fiona and their families, James Fraser, Peter Rundell and others who helped in the birthing of this crazy thing called Moot. Thank you for coming back today.

There have been an enormous number of people who have helped to shape this community and my life in those 13 years, Aaron Kennedy, Vanessa, Tim Dendy, Pete and Julie Johnson, Gareth, (thanks for your

friendship and for your homily this evening). Ciara, Jonny Spoor, David Harris, Linda Davies, Ruth Tudge, Michaela, Caz, Lou, Elizabeth Mowbray and Elizabeth Foy, Rosie, Martin Saunders, Kat Spall, Jonathan Mosedale, Chris, Steffan, David and Melody Frere, Emily Richardson, Lindsay and Peter, Richard Trouncer, the Matthews, Liz and Justin, the list is endless. Thank you Mooters for your companionship, laughter and joy in the good times, and shared tears and hugs in the bad.

I also want to thank Bp Richard Chartres who ordained me and gave permission for Moot to start at St Matthews Westminster, which he had no duty to do, but gave us permission to try something out. I also give thanks to Martin Sargeant for his support and challenge over the years. I think I have become a better priest out of what we all know have not been easy times.

Moot has become an internationally renowned new monastic community, that has always punched above its weight. Very much a small but significant missional community in the mixed economy of the Diocese of London. You have time now to regroup and reconnect with what God wants of Moot, through exploring again your shared aspirations or charisms.

I do thank God for the opportunity to journey with you Mooters into the mysteries that are God with a sense of calling to what has been called New Monasticism.

So I leave knowing God is before me, and very much in the mix with you as a community here. I have absolutely no idea what is going to happen to me next, other than what the Bp of Woolwich has charged me. To become Priest to a small parish in South London, plant a new monastic community, and assist the Diocese and Episcopal area by fulfilling the duties of a Parish Mission Enabler. I am very grateful that I am going with friends – thanks to Marc and Sam for wanting to be involved in founding something new south of the river.

I have four appeals though for you mooters to reflect as you move forward and as I leave you.

Firstly, keep your eyes fixed on God, Community and being a Café is not an end in itself, but relationship to and with God is the key, and do dig deep with the ROL that successive participants birthed out of prayerful

discernment. Remember you are the inheritors of this missional community, you are not starting from scratch, and that in time you will be passing this onto others.

Secondly, remember Church is not just about you, and instead the Kingdom of God is concerned with the many people out there who do not know God, that need hope, justice and kindness in an ever dark, intolerant and uncaring society.

Thirdly, remember that Christian discipleship and community is about space we all need to grow up, face ourselves and avoid playing out our stuff as transference and projection at others. This can kill community and any sense of mission to others. There is a need for leaders, boundaries, accountability and structures. Communities and individuals who do not want this are at risk of being naïve and actually unhealthy cults. I know this because part of my conversion experience was the Nine O'clock Service in Sheffield in 1990s that become a cult. As someone more famous than I has said, there is no such thing as a fully inclusive and sustainable equal community, as these then get manipulated by influential and sometimes charismatic individuals who take authority rather than are given it through transparent and accountable structures.

You now have a strong GCC and Standing Committee, a great staff team with Anita, David and Vanessa, Effie and Serena so I know that Moot will go from strength to strength.

Fourthly, your Vision Day was an amazing coming together and I can see how much good this has done, for you who took part, who are the future of Moot. Build on this vision together undistracted as you build community, leaving behind the things that have not been great, building on what has been achieved.

The one biblical text that has stayed with me for 13 years, and leads me onto what's next in the opening words of the letter of St Paul to the Hebrews:

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set

before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

So thank you for being the pretty unique community that is Moot, and may God's blessing and loving kindness sustain you all the days of your life. I am sure Moot led by God and sustained by you, will continue to break new ground as an important flagship fresh expression of church in the Church of England.

Ian Mobsby 28th June 2015