



Status is reachable

Gareth Doodles

• 1st

Headmaster of Dover College. Headmaster of The King's School, Worcester from September 2020.

1d •

There's much to reflect on in teaching, but as a Head it's important to share those things we think are important, remembering our humanity as we go about our different roles. Here are my five thoughts for the new term for my colleagues at Dover College, inspired by the writings of Michael Ramsey: 1) Thank each other, often and always. Thankfulness is the soil in which pride does not easily grow; 2) Take care to admit your mistakes. As time passes the habit of being critical about people and things grows more than each of us realise; 3) Be ready to accept humiliations. They can hurt terribly but they can help to keep you humble; 4) Do not worry about your status. Instead, recognise that to lead is to serve, and we're here for our pupils above all; 5) Use your sense of humour. Laugh at things. Laugh at the absurdities of life. Laugh at yourself. Through the year people will thank you. Let this thankfulness be because above all you made love real.

<https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6619707517784117248/>

David Foley replied:

Wise advice indeed. There have been a few wise Ramseys/Ramsays including Alf Ramsey the manager of England's 1966 World Cup winning team. Michael Ramsey was of course an inspirational and popular Archbishop of Canterbury. I never quite found the source of the story that one Sunday morning, he appeared at the bar of the Olive Branch pub in front of the Cathedral's main entrance and announced; "We've had a good collection this morning, the next round's on me." But it was a well-known story among Canterbury schoolboys in the early 1970s.

What I can verify is that the late Rev. Peter Jackson, resident chaplain at the Mission to Seamen in Kobe, related a wonderful narrative about his visit as a young curate to see Michael Ramsey during the latter's period as Archbishop of York (1956 – 1961). They were enjoying a walk in the garden of Bishopthorpe Palace alongside the River Ouse when a tourist boat hooted as it passed by. All those on board waved enthusiastically at the Primate of England. Peter said that Michael Ramsey returned the waves with a beaming smile and whispered quietly to him: "You know I am a tourist attraction around here".

One of the comforting aspects of this story is that one of the most senior religious figures in the life of this country was magnificently aware of his value to the tourist economy of York and doubtlessly mindful of the positive relationship between the established church and our economic success.

Times have indeed changed. The Mission to Seamen in Kobe is now the Mission to Seafarers, the Olive Branch opposite Christ Church Gate has been refurbished as The Old Buttermarket and Justin Welby has been the Archbishop of Canterbury since 2013. But, the "five thoughts for the new term" listed by Gareth Doodles surely remain a truly excellent guide to us all; student, teacher or business person.

David Foley

Dover District Chamber of Commerce