

About...

## Nmoshka

### ...how and why it was written

I learnt the word 'nmoshka'\* when I visited my friend Laura in Bangladesh. Most people in the country greet each other with the standard Muslim greeting, but Christians and Hindu's still use the traditional Bengali greeting 'nmoshka'. It means, 'I greet the holy one I see in you'.

On the streets of Dhaka, one of the most crowded, and poorest, cities of the world, the sheer number of people is overwhelming.

And yet each one of these fifteen million faces is unique – each one of them mirrors a unique part of God's image. And this is true of every person on the planet too; even as six billion approaches seven billion - each is a unique child of God, a distinct image-bearer.

That's why for me, this greeting 'nmoshka' somehow encapsulated the struggle to love the poor not just as a concept, or once you got to connect with someone specific, but also as you scanned the faces in the crowds.

Around it grew my response to Bangladesh – its present suffering, and all that was stolen from it through British colonial oppression... its thousands of forgotten slum dwellers and its beauty.

### ...how, where and when it could be used

People respond differently to the use of words and concepts from other cultures so some may find this song more accessible than others. It is not really a song for corporate prayer or worship, but is sung in this attitude as a declaration over other people as a recognition of their worth to God.

It can be used, particularly with the PowerPoint presentation of accompanying visuals available at [www.thesanctuarycentre.org/whereworldandworshipmeet-songs](http://www.thesanctuarycentre.org/whereworldandworshipmeet-songs) , as a stimulus to inspire prayer within a standard service, or as part of a special service on poverty issues.

### ...its place on the journey to where world and worship meet

Fundamental to our valuing and prioritising of people – and particularly those in poverty and/or at a distance from us – is us recognising that they carry God's image and that they are unique and precious. Poverty is often just a statistic to us, but it never is to those living in it. And it never is to God. Nothing is more in his view than the fact each one that suffers is his child.

\* 'nmoshka' is an English phonetic spelling of the Bengali greeting – for which there is no direct English word. Interestingly, Indian culture also retains this greeting in the related word, 'namaste'.