

Thought for the day – Wednesday 24th May 2023

By Revd Kit Gunasekera

The Mottisfont Oak



*In their book **Soulful Nature**, spiritual writer Brian Draper and botanist Howard Green, go on 12 outdoor retreats, walking through rural, coastal and urban landscapes, noticing abundant gifts each season brings and cultivating a deeper sense of connection with the natural world. In May, they went around about the grounds of Mottisfont Abbey in Hampshire. I was struck by a great tree they came across!*

“The Mottisfont oak is 1000 years old, give or take 200 years. It is squat with a good number of leafy branches in the summer...with a girth of around 37 feet...we struggle to take in the fact that its this old. Its trunk is gnarled like an over sized elephant’s leg. Many of its branches are scarred; some are broken off, bare or storm damaged.”

“And yet, here in May, is the wonder: that it is covered with new, fresh leaves, as new as life itself. Don’t let anyone tell you that you cannot be a continual site for new life. The experience and wisdom of older age do not have to preclude fresh seasons of growth...John O’Donohue refers to the ‘wild divinity of trees’ and I’d like to think that it calls to something of the wild divinity in us. You are a wild soul, despite it all”

“The leaves, branches and roots combine to ensure as much of the sun’s energy, and earth’s goodness, is absorbed as possible. Would that we would become as absorbent.”

- *Soulful Nature, by Brian Draper and Howard Green, Canterbury Press*

The bible says that the same Holy Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead, is given to us, to give life to us, and bring new things from us, transforming us, growing in us the fruit of the Spirit, which is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Whatever stage in life we are, whatever our experiences of life, that gift is for us. May we be absorbent and receptive like the great Mottisfont Oak!

Come Holy Spirit.

BIBLE VERSE:

Jesus breathed on His disciples and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

- John 20:22