

Thought for the Day – Monday 21st June 2021

By Revd John Marshall

Another look at a mustard seed

In following the Way of Jesus. Hodder and Stoughton

This book is brought together by Michael Curry and includes essays by him and his colleagues.

I was struck reading one after our Climate Sunday service. It uses Matthew's version 13.31-32.

The writer Nora Gallagher begins with a very sad incident when her friend's husband Mark has died suddenly.

She says "I went through the rest of the week as one does: helping, cooking, gathering. I did not find God in church that Sunday. We got through Mark's memorial."

Nora and her husband fly on holiday, to the high mountains, they had an argument, but in the mountains she says "We crossed a vast snowfield. In the midst of it I knew I had found a place big enough to sink my grief and exhaustion and fear. It was resilient and wordless and full of vitality.

She goes on to recognise the signs of God in nature. She says "In the parables, the kingdom of heaven is everywhere, and is both visible and invisible."

She meditates on the parables of the mustard seed, the yeast and the pearl.

She remembers the forest fires.

"Fires burned in Canada to the north, turning the sky a foul gray. I know what it meant when people prayed for rain. If we understand the full implication of the world as not separable from us, or from God, then we understand what it means to be in what we call an environmental crisis, (and a theological crisis.)

We have pushed ourselves so far away from the world that we believe we can treat it as a kind of bottomless candy store, made for our pleasure. On our one and only planet, we are using up the resources of one and a half planets. If sin is separation from God, this is sin.

However she remembers and meditates, "God was in that hospital emergency room because Anne was there. Because the doctors and nurses were there. Because I was there. The kingdom of heaven was in that room, because human beings who are part of the earth were there. And love was there in its final, stubborn, and most heart breaking form, that we go on loving someone even after he is dead."

On being part of the world Nora Gallagher

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