

## 16<sup>th</sup> April 2022 - Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday

Friends, as we waited together in darkness tonight, Holy Saturday, I remembered the ancient tradition that after the death of the blessed Virgin Mary, John the Evangelist - the writer of the fourth Gospel - went into the desert where he grew older and older. Occasionally he would preach to the Sunday gathering of monks when they met to share bread. The brothers would travel across the desert to hear him. He would sit in silence with tears flowing and all eyes were on him until finally he would say 'God is love.' The tears would continue to flow and he could say no more.

That is my sermon for you, 'God is love.'

After the betrayal and pain and suffering of Good Friday, and as we live with the current violence in Ukraine and the potential for worldwide destruction; the shameful famine in Afghanistan; the corruption at the heart of our political system and our collective failure to save the planet from the climate crisis, we have waited with Jesus, cold and dead in the tomb with faith that God is love.

Kara sometimes quotes, 'Be still and know that I am God' from psalm forty-six. It means, 'Be still,' 'Cease,' 'Be defeated.' Perhaps it is only when we have finally become still in the depths of darkness with all hope gone that we hand ourselves over to God as Jesus allowed himself to be handed over. Perhaps it is only when we accept that by ourselves we humans cannot save the world from war or the planet from destruction that we give ourselves and all that we are and do, to God, knowing that God is love. It is only then that we can glimpse the breadth and depth and power of the love of God which brings triumph out of death and has raised Christ to life.

Christ is risen, Alleluia! He is risen indeed, Alleluia!