

Reflection Holy Saturday 2022

Jesus is laid in a tomb: (Malcolm Guite)

Here at the centre everything is still
before the stir and movement of our grief
which bears its pain with rhythm, ritual,
beautiful useless gestures of relief.
So they anoint the skin that cannot feel
soothing his ruined flesh with tender care,
kissing the wounds they know they cannot heal,
with incense scenting only empty air.
He blesses every love that weeps and grieves
and makes our grief the pangs of a new birth.
The love that's poured in silence at old graves
renewing flowers, tending the bare earth,
is never lost. In him all love is found
and sown with him, a seed in the rich ground.

There is an emptiness in the air this morning. It is hard to know where to look, what to say and thinking goes nowhere. Jesus is dead, laid to rest in a tomb. It is complete loss! Despite the desire to do something the ability to act isn't. What to do but look to scripture. His words come to mind now more acutely. *I have to suffer and to die* he said. Did it really have to be like this? It seems wrong to hope, but he also said *he would rise again*. Is that possible, can that really be true? Hold on to this glimmer of hope and, as the day unfolds, it will grow stronger. There is something about mystery that is beyond understanding and knowledge, it is a power which at this moment is gentle and easily overlooked. This is why the waiting, the hoping and the expectation are so important. Maybe mystery is precisely this: an awareness of the sacred, the holy, the reverence and above all the love of God which we have to allow to surround us and fill our lives until we begin to see.

Waiting (A poem for Holy Saturday)

Sabbath silence rules this garden tomb:
an earthen vessel, dark so intimate.
The stone is heavy;
life's restrained
and Lord you dream;
awaiting resurrection
when your vessel, silent coffin,
will be broken,
pouring chrism over dusty hearts,
anointing nations,
calling us to rise again.