

# Holy Saturday

Let There Be Light

March 31, 2018

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## **Easter Fire:**

This evening we go back to the basics. We start our Easter vigil by gathering in the dark to light a fire. Human's relationship with fire is as primal as it gets, it extends back two million years, before we even were fully humans. Fire warms us when we're cold. Fire cooks our food when we're hungry. Fire protects us from predators. Fire bakes our pots and our bricks. Fire enabled us to leave our homeland and inhabit every corner of our earth. We begin our Easter vigil by gathering round this fire, to recognize and bless it, to carry it into our sacred space, that it might light our lives once more.

**Homily:** What is light? Its not any thing, but it enables us to see all things. Light diffuses all of creation. Astronomers now believe that there is dark matter—something that neither emits nor absorbs any light. We cannot ever see it, or otherwise detect it but it must constitute 90% of the mass of the universe if our latest theories are to work. Perhaps we should call that other 10% of matter, the matter we do see, the matter we all are, perhaps we should name it “light matter”. In other words light not only enables us to see all things, light enables us to be at all. We are all literally children of the light. We are all starlight.

God creates by lighting the dark. Our world arises as a play of light and shadow. Everything, everyone both beams in the light and yet casts a shadow as well. We are not pure light. But we only have a shadow because light shines upon us. Pure darkness has neither light nor shadow.

Evening came and morning followed. The first day. On the second and third days God turns to the the stormy seas and the inky depths. He draws a line that storm and sea cannot cross. Bounding them he wroughts order from the chaos, enabling dry land to appear, providing us a place in which to live. Evening comes and morning follows

On the fourth day God creates the sun to govern the day and the moon to lighten the night. And God creates the stars, sublime stings of small pin pricks

of light strewn across the night sky. Now even the night is not pure darkness. Light illumines the dark as shadows darken the day.

On the fifth and sixth days he creates life, culminating in us, making us in his own image and likeness. Our lives too will be a play of light and shadow. Our basking in the sun is inevitably followed by shadowy sorrow and suffering. But its also true that from such affliction God wroughts meaning and purpose. Suffering teaches, say the ancient Greeks. Wisdom without suffering is like achievement without struggle. Its possible, but its easily neglected and overlooked. Where is the light of your life. What lies cast in the shadows? Who and what are the moon and stars in your darkest nights?

The other readings today tell stories of God bringing light in and through the dark. Abraham believes that he needs to sacrifice to God what he holds most dear, his miraculous new born son. But God sends an angel of light to correct Abraham's confusion over God's will. God sends Moses to his people in bondage in Egypt. He sends Moses to set his people free and lead them to the Promised Land. God inspires Isaiah to speak to his people defeated and living in exile in a foreign land to promise them that God has not abandon them, that dawn breaks on a new day. And God calls upon Ezekiel to preach over the dry bones of his people, to breathe new life into their listless dead spirits.

All culminating in the ultimate, final and decisive dawn of the light amidst the dark, victory over defeat, life over death, Jesus the crucified one, arising incandescent from the grave. Friday we accompanied Christ in his suffering and mourned his death. Today we hear of his rising to new life, not a life restored to what it was before, but a life divine beaming the light divine from which our creation dawned. Christ is indeed our light. Thanks be to God.