

**“I hope you don’t think I’m crazy,” she said to me....**

**“And I haven’t told my family...because they won’t believe me,  
but I felt Stan the other day...it felt like he was in our bedroom...  
I didn’t actually see him, but I could feel him....”**

**“Were you scared?” I asked...**

**“Oh no!” Helen replied...**

**“It felt good. I miss him so much,  
but it felt really good to have him back even for just a little bit”**

**Helen and Stan had been married 60+ years when Stan’s  
macular degeneration left him totally blind.**

**Helen was a determined little woman and  
she took care of Stan with love and kindness**

**But it was hard. She couldn’t leave him alone because she was afraid  
he would fall or trip in his blindness...**

**Helen had a loving and supportive family,  
they visited often and helped her out a lot,  
still, taking care of Stan was physically and emotionally hard on Helen.**

**Sometimes when I visited with them,  
she would go get her hair done or go to the grocery store quickly...  
sometimes the three of us would just sit and talk...  
sometimes Stan would nap  
and Helen would tell me things she didn’t want to burden her family with.**

**It was a month or two after Stan died when she felt his presence,  
but she wasn’t quite sure if she should tell her family about it.  
If they did think she was ‘losing it’, she worried,  
would they make her move from the condo they**

had shared together?

She didn't want to leave yet the little place they called home...

She wanted to sit at the same kitchen table where they had their morning  
breakfast together,

She wanted to sleep in the same bedroom  
they had shared for so many years....

She *wanted* to feel his presence and she was afraid if she moved,  
that maybe she wouldn't any more....

"You're not crazy. Lots of people have told me about feeling the presence of their loved one  
after they died." I told her...

and it is true...lots of people have said such things to me

and it has led me to believe that often times,

it is our hearts which perceive many of the deepest truths about life...

In his children's book, "Little Prince"

Antoine de St-Expurey put it this way:

*It is only with the heart that one can see rightly;  
what is essential is invisible to the eye.*

On that morning so long ago,

it was the ones who loved Jesus that went to his tomb...

but, as the reading tells us:

they did not yet understand what the scripture meant

'that he must rise from the dead'

And why would the scripture say that he **MUST** from the dead?

Friends...I wish I had all the answers..

I wish I could tell you what this life is about

**and what the next life will be like...**

**I wish I could tell you exactly who God is**

**and what happened so long ago...**

**Who knows: I could be right this morning!**

**One thing I do know is that I don't have THE complete answer...**

**But here is what my heart tells me now:**

**Jesus is risen because Love never ends.**

**Love is what he was...**

**Love is what he did...**

**He spent his entire life teaching the people that his Abba Daddy**

**the Lord God of the Universe,**

**was a God of Love for ALL people, bar none.**

**Jesus told the people story after story about God's Compassion....**

**A Compassion that was so large it would tend to their worse enemies...**

**He told them stories of forgiveness and mercy and non judgment...**

**He told them story after story how Divine Love is freely, unconditionally, abundantly,**

**wildly, lavishly offered to all people:**

**Jew and non Jew, women and men, children and slave,**

**Roman centurions and Jewish Sanhedrin...**

**He told them over and over again that the only thing that was required**

**is that we would accept this Love...**

**That we would open our hearts to the Amazing, Cosmic, Holy, Divine, Mysterious Power,  
Presence of Love and say yes..**

**No sacrifice of persons or animals was needed...**

**but only the sacrifice of our closed and limited hearts and  
our small and limiting minds....**

**He was killed because he loved so large...  
and through his death and his Resurrection,  
we found out that Love is larger than physical life in these bodies  
on this planet...**

**that is why he must rise...**

**because death does not, cannot destroy Love...**

**Love is that thread that connect our lives now  
with whatever happens next...**

**If we had kept reading the Gospel of John,  
we would have heard stories of Jesus appearing and disappearing  
to the ones that he loved.**

**We would have heard the story of Mary Magdalene meeting the 'gardener' after Peter and  
the other disciple go home...**

**However Jesus appeared to her that morning,  
she didn't recognize him by seeing him with her eyes...**

**but once he spoke her name,  
it was her heart that understood that he still lived,  
because she loved him...**

**What we proclaim and celebrate this morning is larger than any of us can  
ever completely rationally understand or logically explain...**

**But what we proclaim and celebrate this morning can be most assuredly known with our hearts.**

**It is our heart, that organ of divine perception, that opens our awareness to the Great Mystery of Life,  
and to the Great Ocean of Love  
that can be known NOW and  
that is beyond physical death....**

**Our hearts already know, already have, on a deep level,  
that Love that Jesus willingly gave his life for...  
Love is all of one piece...  
Love, he taught us, is the most powerful force in the cosmos...  
We are a part of that Love...  
We were created in that Love and for that love...  
and it is that Holy, Magnificent, Cosmic, Always present,  
Mysterious, Unconditional Love  
which can never be destroyed by any force on Earth....  
not even physical death.**

**As St. Paul once said in his letter to the Romans (8:38-9)  
For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present,  
nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth,  
nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the Love of God.**

**It is why he had to rise and so shall we...  
This is what we proclaim this Morning!  
this is what we celebrate and sing Alleluia!  
AND we are NOT crazy! Amen....**