Thursday 2 April

Today is Thursday the 2 April, in the fifth week of Lent.

The monks of the Abbey of Keur Moussa sing: “Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.” As they sing, I listen. I listen with my whole attention, with my mind and with my heart, so that I may really hear the word of God, and keep it.

Today’s reading is from the Gospel of John.

It almost sounds as if Jesus is picking a fight here. He’s certainly not pulling any punches. He’s saying clearly how he sees things, whether or not his audience agrees, or even understands. What’s your first response to Jesus when he’s in this mood?

Jesus makes the astonishing claim that anyone who keeps his word will never see death. The Jews point out, reasonably, that the greatest people they have ever known, Abraham, and all the prophets, have all died. So if you’re someone who tries to keep Jesus’s word, what does his claim here mean to you?

At the end of this passage, Jesus says: “Before Abraham was, I am.” When Moses had encountered God in the burning bush, and asked his name, he was told it was simply “I am.” As you listen again to this passage, notice what it tells you about how Jesus understands himself and his mission.

It has been said that someone who speaks as Jesus speaks here is either mad, or bad, or truly God come to earth. Speak to this Jesus for a few moments now about what he means to you.