

Thoughts on the Daily Word

16th Week of Year. Tuesday 21st July. Readings: Micah 7:14-15,18-20; Psalm: 84; Matthew 12:46-50.

Intercession is a beautiful word. It means literally being in the space between. To stand in that space between can be dangerous, depending on the context. I remember returning to my classroom after lunch break one day to find a fight going on between two of my 16-year-old pupils. One had completely lost control and was throwing chairs and desks at the other, anything that he could get a hold of. I had to stand between them while sending for help and trying to calm the enraged boy, without success. He wasn't trying to hit me, but I had to deflect the blows from the other boy. Very scary and it eventually took three adult men to grapple the boy to the floor. I have never forgotten that and many other instances, as a teacher, of being an intercessor. Trying to bring calm or peace to a potentially dangerous situation. We usually don't think of the prophets or even Jesus as being intercessors but that is the role that they took on, often with tragic consequences for themselves. We don't usually think of our Christian vocation as being that of an intercessor. And yet in prayer and action we take on the suffering of our world, deflecting its evil consequences. Its symbol of course is the cross itself, Jesus taking on himself the sin of the world. Being a brother or sister of Jesus is being like Mary, interceding to God for a suffering world, standing at the foot of the cross while Jesus takes on our pain and suffering.