

Thoughts on the Daily Word

10th Week of Year. Tuesday 9th June. Readings: 1 Kings 17:7-16; Psalm 4; Matthew 5:13-16.

We have moved into extraordinary times indeed. As a child of the post war baby boom, I have never really known insecurity. Our lives were always overshadowed by the threat of nuclear holocaust and constantly surrounded by stories of the deprivation of World War Two, nevertheless it was a story of ever-increasing comfort and expectation. Despite seeing ever more familiar tv pictures of hunger and the human suffering caused mainly by war it never seemed likely to happen to us. That fact that it could probably encouraged us to support all kinds of charities attempting to alleviate starvation and disease. In our first reading we have a poor woman with a child preparing her last meal and being invited to share it with a foreigner. This is a world where our god is bigger than your god! Sound familiar? Her god is Baal, the god of storms, sworn enemy of Israel's god. Yet she offers Elijah her last food and water because she has recognised that his god, who has dried everything up, is bigger than hers. Elijah sees more faith in her than all of Israel and shares the gift of life with her. He has gone to Sidon to escape his killers and brings her what she needs for life. Jesus echoes this story by telling his disciples to be salt and light to the world. Salt of the earth is the basis on which the communal food was cooked, and light allowed that food to be shared among the poor even in the caves and dark times. We Christians face the challenge of building community, being salt and light to the world.