

FRIDAY, MARCH 22

I have become a laughingstock all day long; everyone mocks me.

Jeremiah 20:7b



While living in Spain this past year, I saw a lot of medieval Christian art, perhaps more than I ever expected to in my life. One thing I've been struck by is how often the Christian figures in medieval scenes appear calm and serene, even when they are being shot by arrows or crucified upside down or holding their own severed heads. Even in the midst of great suffering, many are depicted as serenely unmoved.

As wonderful as these images are, the prophet Jeremiah is something of a relief because he is far more relatable. In the face of persecution and suffering, Jeremiah is vexed, passionate and conflicted. He doubts God; he wrestles with his people; he complains bitterly.

Biblical scholar Judy Fentress Williams puts it well in her book, *Holy Imagination: A Literary*

and Theological Introduction to the Whole Bible, when she writes, "Jeremiah exposes the inner life of the prophet who stands in the liminal space between God and God's people," and that "he is, for the most part, rejected by his people, and he has a tormented relationship with the God who called him."

I appreciate Jeremiah's witness and the opportunity to go beneath the still surface and witness the inner turmoil of a prophet. Our spirituality is enriched by a long line of prophets and thinkers who questioned and wrestled with God. Jeremiah's experience can be an inspiration for us today.

Today's readings

Psalm 18:1–7 | Jeremiah 20:7–13
John 10:31–42

In what ways can the experiences and doubts of individuals like Jeremiah serve as valuable sources of inspiration and guidance in navigating your relationship with faith, calling and community?