



Diocese of Chester [Parish of Stockport and Brinnington]

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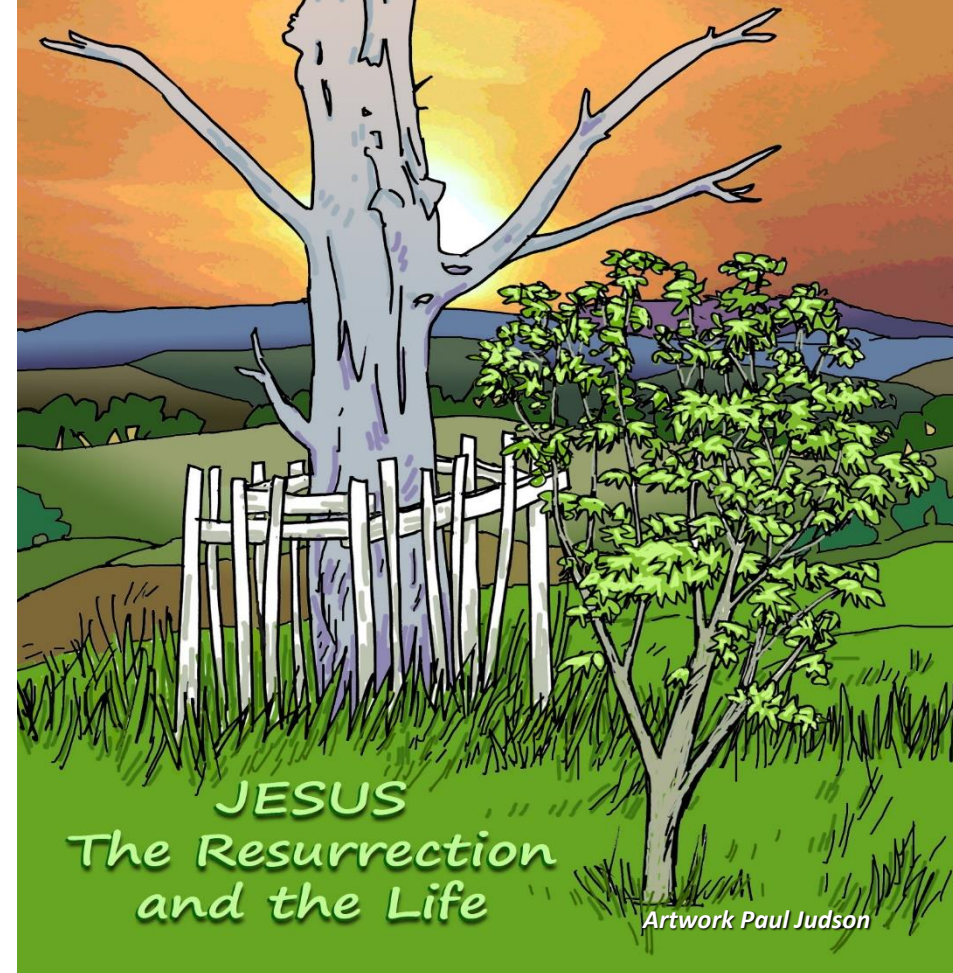
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April 2020

Parish of Stockport and Brinnington

St Mary - St Thomas - St Luke



NOTICE:
Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID-19)

To protect our congregations and visitors the decision has been taken to close St Mary's during the week. We are also instructed by the Church of England to suspend Sunday worship until further notice.

St Mary's will however be open for private prayer on a Saturday between 11am – 12 noon (for as long as we are able to do so).

Spiritual Communion - join us on facebook each Sunday starting at 10am for a short service with the Rector - at one of our three church buildings.

Wednesday 10am Service of Parish Prayer led by our lay leaders also available on facebook

St Mary's Bible Study sessions have had to be cancelled, however check out our weekly Bible Study on facebook instead.

Due to circulation difficulties we'll not printing off a large number of hard copies of the main Parish Magazine this month. We will however be producing a brief hard copy monthly newsletter which we'll distribute as widely as we're able. This will have details of Parish activity, items of interest and a simple suggested form of daily prayer for those not online.

As Easter approaches, this is a time to let the light of Christ shine His healing rays throughout the world, and throughout our community.

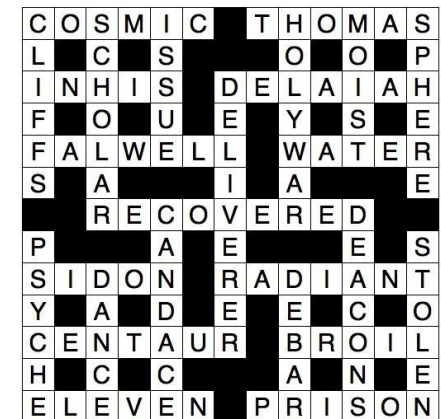
May the Lord, our Chief Shepherd and our Refuge, grant mercy and grace upon the nations of the world in this time of trouble and distress.

We would like to share with you now the following verses which remind us that we are right to trust in God:

*'Those who live in the shelter of the Most High will find rest in the shadow of the Almighty.
This I declare about the Lord:
He alone is my refuge, my place of safety;
He is my God, and I trust Him.
For He will rescue you from every trap and protect you from deadly disease.
He will cover you with His feathers.
He will shelter you with His wings.
His faithful promises are your armour and protection.'*

Psalm 91:1-4, (NLT)

For I am the Lord your God
who takes hold of your right hand
and says to you, Do not fear;
I will help you.
Isaiah 41:13 (NIV)

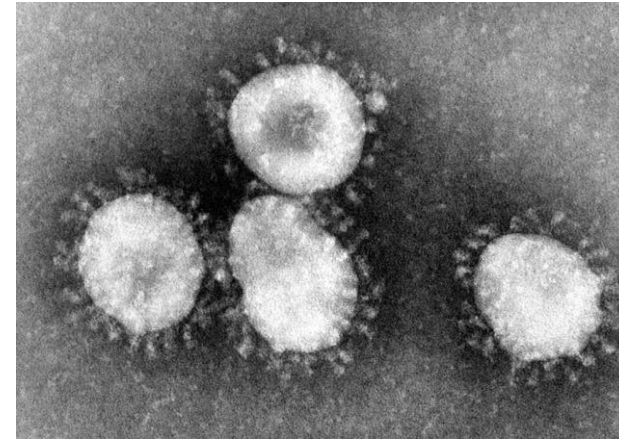


We members of the Parish of Stockport and Brinnington wish to express our deep concern and sympathy for all who live in our community at this time. We want you to know that we have committed to praying for you, and that we are looking into ways of showing our care and regard for you. This is especially true if you are among the elderly and most vulnerable in our community.

If there was ever a time to turn to God in prayer and supplication, this is it. So, we invite you to join us in praying for:

- Our Government and local authorities who bear the responsibility of confronting this challenge. They cannot afford to get their response wrong.
- WHO and all health professionals who are working to safeguard our public health.
- Industry leaders who must take huge decisions to confront this challenge to our economy.
- The leaders of our local community, who provide care and guidance for those they lead.
- Finally, let us pray for ourselves and our loved ones, for courage and endurance at this most demanding of times.

Christianity is based on hope in a God that does not fail us. We are the Easter People, and know that even in the worst circumstances, God is with us and will hear our prayers. He will answer us.



On 11th March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the coronavirus to be a global pandemic. Since its outbreak in January in Wuhan, China, the world has been slowly engulfed by fear of this invisible but deadly

threat. As the virus has spread, so have the efforts of our Governments to slow the virus. Countries are on lock down, and hundreds of millions of people have been told to stay at home. Normal life has shut down for most of us. Businesses, schools, industries, restaurants, sports, theatres and even churches have all been shut.

Every community must now deal with the crisis, in one way or another.

We won't be beaten by Coronavirus – keep a look out on our website for a Christian response to this crisis.

We'll also upload a small bundle of stories for you to read.

1 April – All Fools' Day



In years gone by, the rules surrounding April Fool were this: between midnight and noon on 1st April, everyone is 'fair game' to be made a fool of. It is the morning of the practical joke. But the aim is not just to discomfort the victim: he must be tricked into taking action himself, sent on a 'fool's errand'.

And so children would be sent to the dairy for a pint of dove's milk, or to the bookseller for *The Life of Eve's Mother*. Practical jokes on a bigger scale were played: in 1860 a vast number of people received an official looking invitation to the Tower of London that read: 'Admit the Bearer and Friends to view the Annual Ceremony of Washing the White Lions.' Precisely the same trick had been played in 1698.

Then, on the stroke of noon, tradition decrees, April Fools is finished. If anyone attempts devilry thereafter, even while the clock is still striking, it recoils on his own head. A child would then race through the sing-song formula: 'April-Fool-Day's-past-and-gone-you're-the-fool-and-I-am-none!'



5 April – Palm Sunday: Jesus at the gates of Jerusalem

Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday, when the Church remembers how Jesus arrived at the gates of Jerusalem just a few days before the Passover was due to be held. He was the Messiah come to his own people in their capital city, and yet he came in humility, riding on a young donkey, not in triumph, riding on a war-horse.

Tim Lenton looks back on the poet of the Lake District.

William Wordsworth – the 'Church of England pantheist'

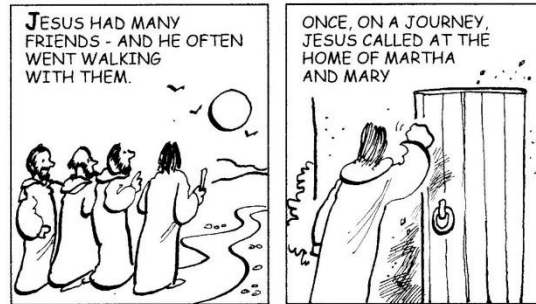
William Wordsworth, the Romantic poet always associated with the Lake District, was born 250 years ago, on 7th April 1770. He was Poet Laureate from 1843 to 1850, though he produced no new poetry during that period.

In his youth Wordsworth travelled in France and came to share the radical politics of the French Revolution. He also fell in love with Annette Vallon, by whom he had a daughter in 1792. They were kept apart by the difficult relationship between England and France, but eventually met again, and the poet supported his daughter, though he married Mary Hutchinson, a friend of his beloved sister and muse, Dorothy. He had five children with Mary, three of whom predeceased them.

Wordsworth's political views soon softened, and he never rejected Christianity. He has been described as a "Church of England pantheist" and saw himself as a people's poet. He produced *Lyrical Ballads* in 1798 with his friend Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who inspired his last great poem, *The Prelude*.

Many Christians, especially those in the Anglo-Catholic movement, deeply admired Wordsworth. During his later years and in the next generation, he was regarded as a defender of the Faith. He himself seemed content that many found his poetry helpful in trying times.

Words and Actions



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As Jesus entered the city, the crowds gave him a rapturous welcome, throwing palm fronds into his path. They knew his reputation as a healer, and welcomed him. But sadly the welcome was short lived and shallow, for Jerusalem would soon reject her Messiah, and put him to death. On this day churches worldwide will distribute little crosses made from palm fronds in memory of Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem.



9 April – Maundy Thursday: time to wash feet

Maundy Thursday is famous for two things. The first is one of the final acts that Jesus did before his death: the washing of his own disciples' feet. (see John 13) Jesus washed his disciples' feet for a purpose: "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another." His disciples were to love through service, not domination, of one another.

In Latin, the opening phrase of this sentence is 'mandatum novum do vobis'. The word 'mundy' is thus a corruption of the Latin 'mandatum' (or command). The ceremony of the 'washing of the feet' of members of the congregation came to be an important part of the liturgy (regular worship) of the medieval church, symbolising the humility of the clergy, in obedience to the example of Christ.

But Thursday was also important because it was on that night that Jesus first introduced the Lord's Supper, or what we nowadays call Holy Communion.

Jesus and his close friends had met in a secret upper room to share the Passover meal together – for the last time. And there Jesus transformed the Passover into the Lord's Supper, saying, 'this is my body' and 'this is my blood' as he, the Lamb of God, prepared to die for the

sins of the whole world. John's gospel makes it clear that the Last Supper took place the evening BEFORE the regular Passover meal, and that later Jesus died at the same time that the Passover lambs were killed.



10 April – GOOD FRIDAY: the day the Son of God died for you

Good Friday is the day on which Jesus died on the cross. He was crucified at 9am in the morning, and died six hours later, at 3pm. It is the most solemn day in the Christian year, and is widely marked by the removal of all decorations from churches. In Lutheran churches, the day was marked by the reading of the passion narrative in a gospel, a practice which lies behind the 'passions' composed by Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 – 1750). Both the St Matthew Passion and the St John Passion have their origins in this observance of Good Friday.

The custom of observing a period of three hours' devotion from 12 midday to 3 pm on Good Friday goes back to the 18th century. The 'Three Hours of the Cross' often take the form of an extended meditation on the 'Seven Last Words from the Cross', with periods of silence, prayer, or hymn-singing.

12 April – EASTER: the most joyful day of the year



Easter is the most joyful day of the year for Christians. Christ has died for our sins. We are forgiven. Christ has risen! We are redeemed! We can look forward to an eternity in His joy! Hallelujah!

Who moved the stone? Revd Tony Horsfall

'When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away.' Mark 16:4

Frank Morrison was an investigative journalist who was a sceptic when it came to religion. He decided to write a book to disprove the claims of Christ, specifically focussed on the last week of His life. However, when he came to consider the evidence for himself, he was drawn reluctantly to a different outcome than he had imagined. He found that the evidence proved the story to be true, including the fact that Jesus not only died but rose again. In the end he wrote a different kind of book called 'Who Moved the Stone?' with the first chapter entitled, 'The book that refused to be written.'

The veracity of the Christian faith is grounded on historical fact. Not only was Jesus a real person, a figure of history, but His death was real, and so was His resurrection. Examine the evidence for yourself. Read the gospel accounts openly and honestly and see what happens. The truth is there for anyone willing to consider the facts.

Easter reminds us that our faith rests on solid ground. It is why we celebrate Easter Sunday with such gusto. The Resurrection proves that Jesus was who He said He was (the Son of God) and that He did what He set out to do (save us from our sin). But more than that, it reminds us that He can deliver what He promised and help us today because He is alive for evermore.

Jesus is not a figure of history, locked away in the past. No, He is a risen Saviour who is alive today and who invites each of us to receive the gift of salvation, and to live a new life in fellowship with Him.

Mouse Makes

LABROAD
OCROSSE
RHAPPYB
DONKEYS
FSCIASC
EAHNCAO
ANEGETA
SNSPLOT
TAPALMS

DIMOURJEWSSLNPAATTCUPKJCBDR
PASSOVEROBEARRCHRISTEREE
IGNABODYKILLIAROOLOLOTSUTA
NEATTMEALGODLYELRWILLUCRT
KDISCIPLESONSUSTNNMESSIAH
EBREADWINEDXGETHSEMANEFYE
DARKNESSHTLINENAHEAVENYYD

HUGDAWN
RTOMBMG
EOOTPOE
ECDEFRL
DRNMRNK
AOEPAII
YWWLINS
SDSESGS
EASTERB
GUARDEU
SAVIOUR
PRAISEY
IDCUTKT
RIDJOYE
ICOINSL
TETREEL

DONKEY • COLT • SAT • COATS
ROAD • CROWD • CUT • PALMS
BRANCHES • KING • HOSANNA
DISCIPLES • ROOM • PASSOVER
FEAST • EAT • DRINK • BREAD
WINE • SON • MAN • BLOOD • CUP
MEAL • JEWS • PLOT • KILL • COINS
GETHESEMANE • PRAY • WILL
BETRAY • KISS • ARREST • MESSIAH
CHRIST • CRUCIFY • JESUS • CROWN
THORNS • ROBE • TREE • NAILS
CROSS • SPIRIT • DARKNESS
TEMPLE • DEATH • LOTS • DICE
TOMB • STONE • LINEN • BODY
BURY • GUARD • THREE DAYS
DAWN • MORNING • ANGEL • TELL
HEAVEN • GOOD NEWS • LORD
GOD • RAISED • JOY • PEACE
PRAISE • SAVIOUR • EASTER

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The Good News of Jesus Christ is a message so simple that you can explain it to someone in a few minutes. It is so profound that for the rest of their lives they will still be 'growing' in their Christian walk with God.

Why does the date move around so much? Because the date of Passover moves around, and according to the biblical account, Easter is tied to the Passover. Passover celebrates the Israelites' exodus from Egypt and it lasts for seven days, from the middle of the Hebrew month of Nisan, which equates to late March or early April.

Sir Isaac Newton was one of the first to use the Hebrew lunar calendar to come up with firm dates for Good Friday: Friday 7 April 30 AD or Friday 3 April, 33 AD, with Easter Day falling two days later. Modern scholars continue to think these the most likely.

Most people will tell you that Easter falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the Spring Equinox, which is broadly true. But the precise calculations are complicated and involve something called an 'ecclesiastical full moon', which is not the same as the moon in the sky. The earliest possible date for Easter in the West is 22 March, which last fell in 1818. The latest is 25 April, which last happened in 1943.

Why the name, 'Easter'? In almost every European language, the festival's name comes from 'Pesach', the Hebrew word for Passover. The Germanic word 'Easter', however, seems to come from Eostre, a Saxon fertility goddess mentioned by the Venerable Bede. He thought that the Saxons worshipped her in 'Eostur month', but may have confused her with the classical dawn goddesses like Eos and Aurora, whose names mean 'shining in the east'. So, Easter might have meant simply

'beginning month' – a good time for starting up again after a long winter.

Finally, why Easter eggs? On one hand, they are an ancient symbol of birth in most European cultures. On the other hand, hens start laying regularly again each Spring. Since eggs were forbidden during Lent, it's easy to see how decorating and eating them became a practical way to celebrate Easter.

12 April – Easter morning: the 'Other' Mary

As the traditional Easter story is rehearsed again this month, you may notice that there is one name that frequently occurs. It is that of the 'other' Mary – not the mother of Jesus, but Mary of Magdalene, who stood by her at the cross and became the first human being actually to meet the risen Christ.

That's quite a record for a woman who, the Gospels tell us, had been delivered by Jesus from 'seven devils' – New Testament language for some dark and horrible affliction of body, mind or spirit. As a result, her devotion to Him was total and her grief at His death overwhelming.

In church history Mary Magdalene became the 'fallen woman' a harlot who was rescued and forgiven by Jesus but there is no evidence to prove she was a 'fallen woman' but the contrast is sublime, Mary the virgin mother, the symbol of purity. Mary Magdalene, the scarlet woman who was saved and forgiven, the symbol of redemption. Surely, we all fall somewhere between those two extremes.

Why did Jesus die? *'God proved His love on the Cross. When Christ hung, and bled, and died, it was God saying to the world, 'I love you.'* (Billy Graham).

God showed His love for us, when Jesus dealt with the problem of our sin on the cross. *'He himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by His wounds you have been healed'* (1 Peter 2:24). Jesus died in our place to bear our sin and guilt, to pay the full penalty for our sin and to set us free from death.

In the 75th anniversary year of the liberation of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, it's appropriate to remember the story of Fr Maximilian Kolbe, a Polish priest imprisoned in Auschwitz. On 31st July 1941 a prisoner escaped from the camp and in response the authorities selected ten men to die in the starvation bunker. One of the men, Francis Gajinisdek, cried, *'My poor wife and my children. They'll never see me again!'* Then Kolbe stepped forward and said, *"I'm a Catholic priest. I don't have a wife and children and I am willing to die instead of this man."* He followed the other nine into the bunker. Remarkably he got the prisoners praying and singing hymns and transformed the atmosphere in the bunker. He was the last person to die and after two weeks he was given a lethal injection and died at the age of 47.

Jesus' death was even more amazing than this, because He didn't simply die for one man, but for every individual in the world. If you or I had been the only person in the world, Jesus Christ would still have died in our place. *'Hallelujah, what a Saviour'!!*



Passionflower

Why is the passion flower called the passionflower? This beautiful climbing plant that grows in many of our gardens, was discovered in South America by Spanish missionaries centuries ago. Drawings were sent back to Europe and in 1609 an Italian priest interpreted the flower to represent the crucifixion, otherwise known as the Passion.

The five petals and five sepals represent the 10 disciples who remained steadfast (Judas and Peter both abandoned Jesus). The corona is the crown of thorns. The stigma is the cross or nails, and the five stamens are the number of wounds Jesus received.

Don't break'em

There was a very gracious lady who was mailing an old family Bible to her brother in another part of the country. "Is there anything breakable in here?" asked the postal clerk.

The lady paused for a moment. "Only the Ten Commandments," she said politely.

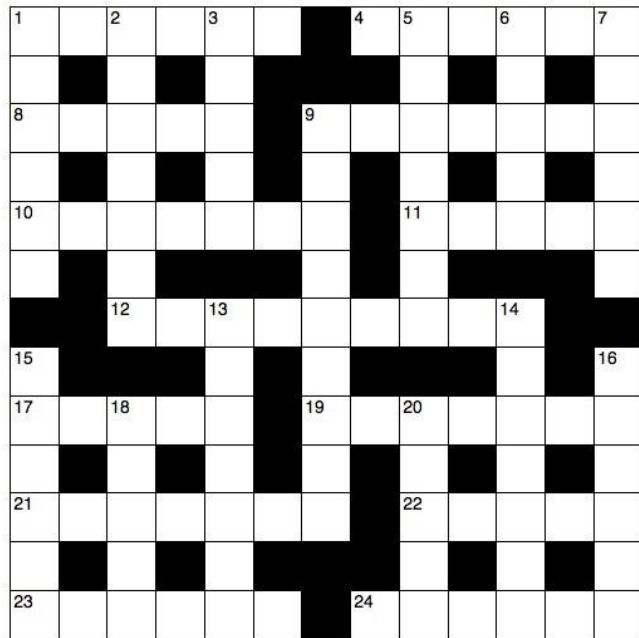
The dark cloud from which she was delivered may have been sexual, we are not told. What we do know is that the two Marys stood together at the cross, the Blessed Virgin and the woman rescued from who knows what darkness and despair.

The second great moment for her was as unexpected as it was momentous. She had gone with other women to the tomb of Jesus and found it empty. An angelic figure told them that Jesus was not there, He had risen – and the others drifted off. But Mary stayed, reluctant to leave it like that. She became aware of a man nearby, whom she took to be the gardener. She explained to Him that the body of 'her Lord' had been taken away and she didn't know where to find Him.

The man simply said her name 'Mary' and she instantly realised it was Jesus. She made to hug Him, but He told her not to touch Him because his resurrection was not yet complete. She was, however, to go to the male disciples and tell them she had met Him. She did – but they couldn't believe her.

Her words – 'I have seen the Lord' – echo down the centuries, the very beating heart of the Christian gospel.

Crossword April 2020



Across

- 1 Relating to the whole universe (6)
 4 The disciple who made the remark in 8 Across (John 20:24) (6)
 8 'Unless I see the nail marks — — hands, I will not believe it' (John 20:25) (2,3)
 9 He urged

King Jehoiakim not to burn the scroll containing Jeremiah's message (Jeremiah 36:25) (7)

10 Baptist minister and controversial founder of America's Moral Majority, Jerry — (7)

11 'Look, here is — . Why shouldn't I be baptized?' (Acts 8:36) (5)

12 Repossessed (Genesis 14:16) (9)

17 Port from which Paul sailed on his last journey to Rome (Acts 27:3-4) (5)

19 'Moses was not aware that his face was — because he had spoken with the Lord' (Exodus 34:29) (7)

21 Roonwit, C.S. Lewis's half-man, half-horse (7)

22 Grill (Luke 24:42) (5)

23 'The lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the — apostles' (Acts 1:26) (6)

24 'I was sick and you looked after me, I was in — and you came to visit me' (Matthew 25:36) (6)

Down

1 Coastal rockfaces (Psalm 141:6) (6)

2 Academic (1 Corinthians 1:20) (7)

3 Publish (Daniel 6:26) (5)

5 For example, the Crusades (4,3)

6 11 Across is certainly this (5)

7 He reps (anag.) (6)

9 Liberator (Psalm 18:2) (9)

13 Man who asked the question in 11 Across was in charge of all her treasury (Acts 8:27) (7)

14 They must be 'worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine' (1 Timothy 3:8) (7)

15 The human mind or soul (6)

16 'O Lord, while precious children starve, the tools of war increase; their bread is — ' (Graham Kendrick) (6)

18 'We played the flute for you, and you did not — ' (Matthew 11:17) (5)

20 Bared (anag.) (5)