

27<sup>th</sup> March 2020

## Words

**“I like good strong words that mean something ...”**

*Louisa May Alcott, Little Women*

It's hard to explain to someone who doesn't like crosswords where a lasting passion for cryptic crossword puzzles comes from - the frisson of excitement when faced with a blank grid; the sudden shout of "Yes!" when a devilish clue's been solved; sitting with an unfinished crossword for an entire morning; elaborating on how anagrams are constructed; describing the tortuous techniques of a compiler. If that makes you suspect I'm a cryptic crossword fanatic, you would be absolutely right.

In these times of 'lock-down', I'm trying to have a routine for my day: breakfast and catching up with the News; a morning in my study, writing, preparing a *Thought for the Day* and the like; and the afternoon with the cryptic crossword from the *Guardian* website – God bless them! – only interrupted by a walk with the dog or a gentle run. Each day is filled with words – written; in emails; spoken; listened to; read; thought about; and, best of all, cryptic words from the twisted brains of the *Guardian's* Pasquale, Vulcan, Imogen, Paul, Brummie and many others.

What words will matter to you today? Sorry? Thank you? Hello? I love you? You don't need a cryptic compiler for these, or to explain them, or justify them, or describe them, or twist them into shape. But you can still be excited by them. After all, for the blank page of the day that lies ahead, who needs cryptic clues to fill in the words that really matter?

### **A prayer for today**

*God of the living Word, help me to listen to what you would say to me today;  
when I hear you, help me put my words into the page of my life correctly;  
when I don't hear you, let me ponder what you might be saying;  
and when I'm stuck with a clue, let me wait with patience  
till your inspiration comes. Amen.*

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Each "Thought for the Day" is available at <https://swallowsnestnet.wordpress.com>