

12<sup>th</sup> October 2020

## Confused

**“Ruin seize thee, ruthless King!  
Confusion on thy banners wait.”**

*Thomas Gray, The Bard*

Jigsaw saga Number 479. (Well, it seems like that ...) We've completed another jigsaw. I say "we", though this time I had absolutely no part in the enterprise, as my wife did it all. And, from time to time, she was confused!

Most of us begin a jigsaw by separating all the "edge" pieces, the ones with one straight side, building them into the four-sided framework for the jigsaw, and then filling in the rest, piece by piece. But *this* jigsaw had a trick up its sleeve, for some of the *interior* pieces also had a straight edge. So, at the start, there appeared to be more "edge" pieces than were actually required. So, momentarily at least, my wife was confused ...

We all get confused sometimes, and over things more important than jigsaws! We may be confused about what's happening to us, with disturbing thoughts, different emotions, hard decisions to be made. Such are our struggles with different offers for car insurance that we turn to *Confused.com* (though other price-comparison websites are available). The changing regulations around Covid-19 restrictions in different parts of the country can leave us confused too. Even when things are going well, we can hit a period of uncertainty. As Shakespeare says in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*: "So quick bright things come to confusion."

Confusion is a normal reaction to the pressures and decisions we face in life. When things are not at all clear, it's hard to find a way through. When panic rises in our soul, we struggle to think straight. All the more reason, then, to find a calmness that will allow us to process the confusion and work things through. In Book 2 of *Odes*, the Roman poet Horace puts it this way: *Aequam memento rebus in arduis, sevare mentem* – "When the going gets rough, remember to keep calm." If we can find that calm place, even for a moment, maybe the confusion will dissipate. And then we might find that things that are out of place – like pieces of a jigsaw that don't fit round the edges – can be fitted into the completed picture.

### **A prayer for today**

*God of peace, still my troubled soul; calm my restless thoughts.  
Grant me the serenity and clarity I seek today. Amen*

*An original reflection by © Tom Gordon*  
Also available at <https://swallowsnestnet.wordpress.com>