

I'm sure there was a lass at Scarborough Girls High School
called Sexy Jessy, who lived in the Old Town

and whose mum, Sexy-Jessy-**ma**, was not a woman to cross!

Joking apart, Sexagesima forms a trio of Sundays

sandwiched between Septuagesima and Quinquagesima,

whose Latin spelling and pronunciation loomed large

in Sunday School and confirmation classes of yesteryear.

Although I have to confess that phrases like

'Yesterday was Sexagesima, don't you know,'

didn't cut much ice in my rough school by the East Hull drain.

Quinquagesima means 50th, so next Sunday is

quinquagesima dies, the 50th day before Easter,

absolutely spot on if you do the Maths,

7 weeks, 7×7 plus Easter Day = 50.

Today, Sexagesima, ostensibly the 60th day before Easter is

actually the 57th, since there are 7 not 10 days in a week – drrr!

Last Sunday, Septuagesima, the 70th day before Easter is also wrong, since it actually was the 64th, So today should be Septima et Quinquagesima and last week Quarta et Sexagesima, quite a mouthful, which seems a bit like showing off.

Ash Wednesday is wrong too, 46 not 40 days from Easter.

46 days and 46 nights, thou wast fasting in the wild...

‘Ah, Sundays are feast days marking our Lord’s resurrection, so they don’t count,’ our nervous curate once stuttered when nine year old me annoyingly questioned the disparity. I wonder if Jesus knew that as he sweated in the wilderness; whether Mary Magdalene, aka Sexy Jessie, popped up with a picnic and a dark smile each Sunday to relieve his fast. Certainly she’d be much more fun than Satan with all his if-you-but-bow-down-and-worship-me stuff.

I blame Jesus for starting all this muddle with Maths,
because he was inflation incarnate, ridiculously profligate,
giving wedding guests at Cana 180 gallons of wine to drink,
feeding 5000 with 5 loaves and 2 fishes, 12 baskets to spare...

And then the farmer in this morning's Gospel,
75% of his seed fails, the rest yielding an incredible 100 fold.

As the rhyme goes,

Four beans in a row,

one for the rook, one for the crow,

one to rot and only one to grow.

And yet the bean that does grow feeds the whole world.

Just as you are called to be that bean,

that good seed that grows

and feeds the whole world on Christ.

Including Sexy Jessie and her not-to-be-messed-with mum.