



## **Introduction**

At the moment many people are facing a tough time as jobs are being lost and the number of hours people are asked to work are being reduced. In some homes, there's a struggle to find enough money to buy food and to pay rent and the basic bills. At our harvest services on Sunday we will be collecting donations of food and toiletries for Bromley Borough Foodbank. We have also set up a JustGiving page at <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/bromleyfoodbank>.

Our bible story is about a woman who was having a tough time, but when she met Elijah, a prophet of God, her situation became turned around.

### **The bible passage is from 1 Kings 17:8-16**

*<sup>8</sup> The LORD told Elijah, <sup>9</sup> "Go to the town of Zarephath in Sidon and live there. I've told a widow in that town to give you food."*

*<sup>10</sup> When Elijah came near the town gate of Zarephath, he saw a widow gathering sticks for a fire. "Would you please bring me a cup of water?" he asked. <sup>11</sup> As she left to get it, he asked, "Would you also please bring me a piece of bread?"*

*<sup>12</sup> The widow answered, "In the name of the living LORD your God, I swear that I don't have any bread. All I have is a handful of flour and a little olive oil. I'm on my way home now with these few sticks to cook what I have for my son and me. After that, we will starve to death."*

*<sup>13</sup> Elijah said, "Everything will be fine. Do what you said. Go home and fix something for you and your son. But first, please make a small piece of bread and bring it to me. <sup>14</sup> The LORD God of Israel has promised that your jar of flour won't run out and your bottle of oil won't dry up before he sends rain for the crops."*

*<sup>15</sup> The widow went home and did exactly what Elijah had told her. She and Elijah and her family had enough food for a long time. <sup>16</sup> The LORD kept the promise that his prophet Elijah had made, and she did not run out of flour or oil.*

*(Contemporary English Version)*

The woman that Elijah met was a widow, meaning that her husband had died. There had also been no rain in the land for some time, so it was really difficult to get food. The woman was probably feeling very low and as if God had given up helping her. She was not feeling loved or precious.

Maybe you're not feeling precious or special at the moment. It's wet and cold and there's not much to look forward to. Even Christmas is not going to be as good this year, since we will be restricted in who we can meet up with. But God still loves you and thinks you're precious. Today we're going to think about how we can be reminded of this and how we can help others who are not feeling precious know that God loves them and thinks that they're precious too.

## **Activities:**

### **1. Make a flatbread**

**You will need:** 200g plain or wholemeal flour, ¼ tsp salt, 100ml/3½fl oz warm water, 2 tbsp oil, plus extra for cooking

Bread is a basic food that gives us energy to carry out activities. Flour is the main ingredient for bread and is made from wheat grown in fields. Flour and oil was the only food that the widow had left and she thought that it was going



to run out, leaving her and her son hungry and unable to survive. The type of bread that she made for Elijah was something like a flatbread, which is very easy to make as follows:

Put flour and salt in a bowl and trickle water on slowly. Mix

together and add oil. Knead for 5 minutes. Leave to stand for 30 minutes (if you have time). Divide the dough into 6. Rollout each ball of dough using a rolling pin. Heat frying pan. Rub a little oil in pan. Cook each flatbread for 2 minutes on each side. Keep cooked flatbreads warm in foil until others are cooked. ENJOY!!!!

Children, you will need to ask a grown up to do the frying pan bit for you!

**Talk about:** Where you have seen wheat or other crops growing in the fields?  
What do they need to grow?

## 2. Make bath salts

**You will need:** 3 tbsp Epsom salt, 1 tbsp coarse sea salt, 1 tbsp baking soda, 3-5 drops natural fragrance or essential oils (Lavender, Sandalwood, Peppermint, Rose, Rosemary etc.), food colouring, jam jar (or smaller jar), sticky label, pens

Nothing is more relaxing than a nice bath at the end of a day, to make you feel appreciated and precious. This recipe is easy to make, and jars of bath salts make a precious gift.

1. Mix together the salts and baking soda in a bowl. You could use a spoon or just your hands.
2. Drop in the fragrance or oil and food colouring and mix again until well combined.
3. Put the bath salts into a jar and add a label with ingredient details + instructions (put 2-4 tablespoons of Bath Salts in a bath)
4. Give as a gift or enjoy yourself 😊

**Talk about:** A gift like this would make anyone feel precious. For some people, it's difficult to afford even soap or shower gel, so bath salts are something they'd never think of getting. What makes you feel special or precious?



## 3. Who is precious to you?

**You will need:** Paper or card, pens, stickers, photos

Make a poster of people or things that are special or precious to you. Use pictures from magazines, or photos that are printed out. Decorate the paper with stickers that show how special these people or things are.

**Talk about:** what or who is precious to you?



## 4. Who is precious to God?

**You will need:** Mirror, paper or card to cover the mirror, tape, pen

We are all precious to God and can use a mirror to make a 'picture' of whoever looks into the glass.

Elijah had promised that God would make sure that the widow's flour and oil would never run out until rain came for the crops. The widow knew that she was precious to God because he looked after her in this way.

Cover the mirror with some paper or card and stick with a piece of tape.

Write on the paper 'lift the flap to see who is precious to God'.

**Talk about:** How can you be reminded that you are precious to God?



## 5. Potato printing

**You will need:** potatoes, knife, paint

This is the time of year when potatoes are harvested. Potatoes grow in all shapes and sizes. They are another basic food that gives us energy to do things. This activity uses them in a different way.

Cut potatoes in half and then cut out different shapes on each surface. Dip the shapes into paint to create a picture related to our theme.

**Talk about:** At harvest, we often think about different plants that have been grown during the year and give thanks for them. Here are some very odd shaped fruit and vegetables. I wonder if you can guess what they are.







## 6. Prayer box

**You will need: A box to decorate, stickers, pens, paper**

The widow needed some help from Elijah to remind her that she was precious to God. She was running out of food and she and her son would become hungry and ill if she did not get any help. You may know someone who is finding it difficult to know that they are precious to God. Even if you can't help them yourself, you can pray to God and ask him to send someone to help them, so that they know they are loved by God. You might also want to pray



for people you know because they are precious to you.

Decorate your box, so that you know it's full of precious things. Write the names of people, or groups of people that you would like to pray for on bits of paper and put these in the box.

Each day, take out a name and pray for that person or group of people.

**Talk about:** Sometimes it's difficult to know what to pray for. Having a box of names or groups of people can make your prayers more meaningful.

## 7. Make a donation to Bromley Borough Foodbank

**You will need: Non-perishable food or toiletries**

We are collecting donations for Bromley Borough Foodbank. These can be left in boxes located outside the Vicarage and outside the main door at St Francis' Church at any time. There's something about bringing a physical donation to a special place, which makes it more like a precious gift than making a monetary donation or leaving some items at a donation point in a supermarket (where you're not encouraged to take children at this time).

Details of items currently most needed are:

cold meat, custard, small bottles of squash, jelly, instant whip, long life fruit juice, sponge puddings, sweets, washing detergent (non-bio), shaving gel & razors, children's toothpaste & toothbrushes.

Please ensure that the items donated are well within their best before dates.

**Talk about:** What it might feel like to be hungry or not to know whether there will be enough food for today.

## **Song: Thank you Lord for this fine day**

At Harvest time, we say thank you to God for all that he has given to us, in the same way as the widow at Zarephath might have done for providing her with flour and oil. The lyrics to this song are normally:

Thank you, Lord, for this fine day (x3), right where we are

*Alleluia, praise the Lord (x3), right where we are*

Thank you, Lord, for loving us (x3), right where we are

*Alleluia, etc*

Thank you, Lord, for giving us peace (x3), right where we are

*Alleluia, etc*

Thank you, Lord, for setting us free (x3), right where we are

*Alleluia, etc*

You could make up your own verses to sing, saying 'thank you' for things that you enjoy, for example: Thank you, Lord, for chips and beans. Here's an instrumental video that you can sing along to:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0AWq8VrA2SE>

## **Messy Grace:**

This is a prayer that we say at Messy Church to ask God to always be with us, reminding us that we're precious to him and that we can show his love to others in the world.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ (hold out hands as if expecting a present)

And the love of God (put your hands on your heart)

And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit (hold hands)

Be with us all (raise arms)

Amen (drop hands)

**Next date: Friday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2020**

[www.facebook.com/MessyChurchWestWickham/](http://www.facebook.com/MessyChurchWestWickham/)