

# **GENEROUS LENT**

## **GENEROSITY IN CREATIVE PRAYER: LENT**



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# Generosity in Creative Prayer

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## About this Resource

Prayer stations are prayer activities that are designed to be set up in church for people of all ages, accompanied by creative sessions for children. Additionally, they can be used as a resource for those working with schools. They are typically interactive, inviting people to read/listen/reflect and then respond. They enable us to connect with God in creative ways, often allowing the sensory experiences of sight and touch to inspire our prayer and nurture our spiritual lives.

These prayer stations look at the season of lent through the lens of generosity enabling us to connect and reflect prayerfully on how we can grow in Christlike generosity.

This set of resources are based on the following passages:

- Jesus is Tempted in the Wilderness (*Matthew 4:1-11*)
- Manna in the Desert (*Exodus 16*)
- The Golden Calf (*Exodus 32*)
- Building the Tabernacle (*Exodus 26-30*)

Share the story! 

We encourage you to take a picture of the prayer stations each week and post to your church social media/WhatsApp so those who were absent are able to follow the journey.

# How to use this booklet

Each prayer station in this booklet comes with a cover page and an activity guide - you are welcome to print the activity guides to be part of your prayer stations, and would recommend laminating them.

# About the contributors

This resource has been compiled by Leaders of the Children and Schools Team from the parish of Chapelfields. alongside Liverpool Diocese.

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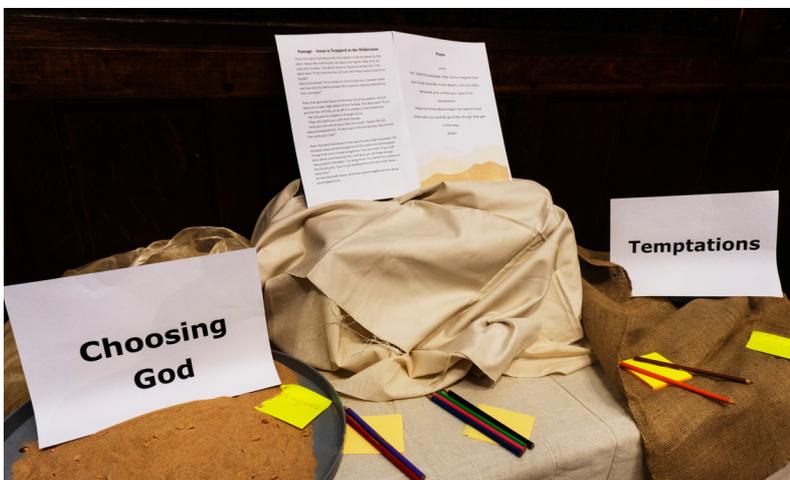
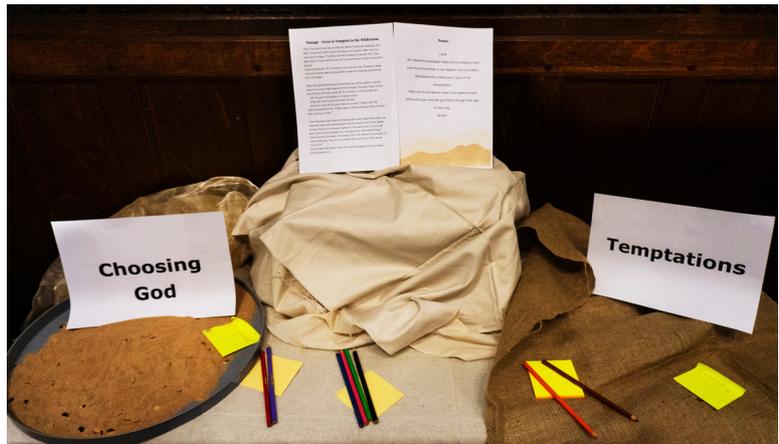
Bible Passages are taken from the Easy-to-Read version on Bible Gateway.

# Jesus is Tempted in the Wilderness

Set the scene for people to be immersed in the story of Jesus being tempted in the wilderness. Create a desert scene with the ideas below, and give people the opportunity to reflect on the things that they choose to do instead of '*choose God*'.

## You will need:

- Dust cloth
- Rocks/stones
- Greenery
- Blue cloth for river
- Trough with sand
- Table with 2 baskets
- 2 pieces of card, one with the word, '*Temptations*' and the other with the words, '*Choosing God*'
- Post-it notes



## Next:

Ask people to write down their own challenges on the '*Temptations*' card, and how they will choose God on the other card.

Print and laminate the reading and prayer on the next pages.

## Tip:

*Write some examples on the cards before you start to prompt ideas for people.*

## Passage - Jesus is Tempted in the Wilderness

Then the Spirit led Jesus into the desert to be tempted by the devil. Jesus ate nothing for 40 days and nights. After this, he was very hungry. The devil came to Jesus to tempt him. The devil said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these rocks to become bread."

Jesus answered, "It is written in the Scriptures, 'A person does not live only by eating bread. But a person lives by everything the Lord says.'"

Then the devil led Jesus to the holy city of Jerusalem. He put Jesus on a very high place of the Temple. The devil said, "If you are the Son of God, jump off. It is written in the Scriptures,

*'He has put his angels in charge of you.*

*They will catch you with their hands.*

*And you will not hit your foot on a rock.'"* Psalm 91:11-12

Jesus answered him, "It also says in the Scriptures, 'Do not test the Lord your God.'"

Then the devil led Jesus to the top of a very high mountain. He showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world and all the great things that are in those kingdoms. The devil said, "If you will bow down and worship me, I will give you all these things."

Jesus said to the devil, "Go away from me, Satan! It is written in the Scriptures, 'You must worship the Lord your God. Serve only him!'"

So the devil left Jesus. And then some angels came to Jesus and helped him.

## **Prayer**

Lord,

As I read this passage, help me to imagine how you must have felt in the desert. I am too often tempted and, unlike you, I give in to temptation.

Help me think about ways I can spend more time with you and let go of the 'things' that get in the way.

Amen

# Children's Activity Sheet

## Sugar Donut Challenge:

Begin with the demonstration below to introduce the topic of 'Temptation'.

"Eat a sugar donut without licking your lips." The challenge is difficult, and most will find it difficult to resist!

## Interactive Storytelling

Lead the children in the reading on the next page, use the items below to help illustrate the story.

You will need:

- A wooden box or large tray filled with sand & covered with a cloth
- A basket or box to contain;
- A figure to represent Jesus
- A few small figures of people
- 4 small stones
- Jerusalem (*it could be Lego or plain wooden blocks*)
- A large stone/rock to use as a mountain

Then, 'I Wonder...'

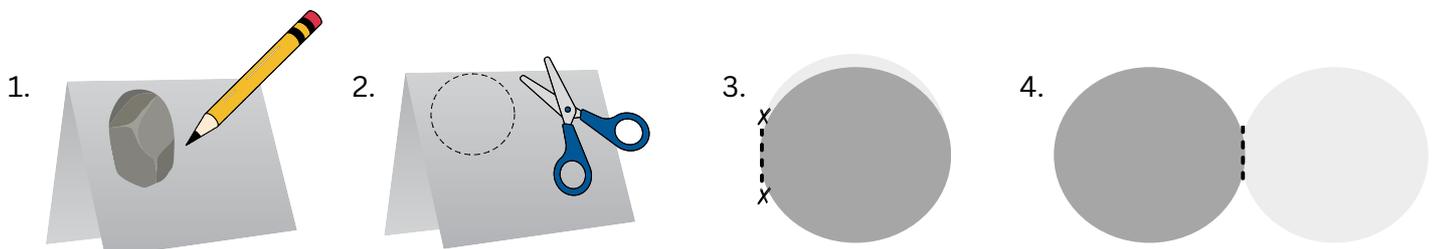
Invite the children to respond to some 'wondering' statements. Remember to be positive with all responses.

"I wonder..."

- *What it would feel like to be alone in the desert for forty days and forty nights, that's such a long time?*
- *What it feels like to be so hungry?*
- *What Jesus and God were talking about in the desert?*
- *Would you like to be alone in the desert?*
- *How Jesus felt when the evil one was near him?*
- *If it was very hard for Jesus to say NO?*
- *What it felt like when the spirit of God filled Jesus*
- *What people were thinking when Jesus told them about the Kingdom of God*

## Craft Activity

Fold a piece of card in half and draw the outline of a stone close to the folded side of the card. Cut around the shape so you create a stone shaped folded card. Invite children to write their temptations on the **front side** of the card, and **on the inside**, how they will choose God instead.



# Interactive Story

Invite the children to sit in a circle. Bring out the box and place it in front of you.

**Leader:** I wonder what might be in this box, let's look inside, I wonder what it might be?

**Take the cover off the box or the tray, move the sand about with your hand. Accept all the children's answers by saying, yes it could be that?**

**Leader:** This is my desert box, our story happens in the desert, so we need a little bit of the desert for our story today

**As you say this run your hand through the sand**

**Leader:** The desert is a wild place, with nothing to eat and no water. It is very hot in the day and your skin can burn easily, but it is very cold at night and you need clothes to keep you warm. The wind blows the sand and it can sting your eyes and your skin. The desert moves, the wind blows and moves the sand, and it changes into different shapes.

**Move the sand around in the box changing its shape and direction, swirling it about back and forth**

**Leader:** It is hard to find your way in the desert and very easy to get lost.

**Take the figure of Jesus and place at the back of the box or tray**

**Leader:** After Jesus had been baptised he was led by the spirit of God into the desert. For forty days and forty nights Jesus talked with God in the desert. He wondered where he should go. It was a very long time without food and Jesus was very hungry

**Take four small stones place them in the sand and place the figure of Jesus next to them**

**Leader:** Then the evil one came to Jesus and he said If you really are special, the son of God, then why don't you turn these stones into bread? Jesus was very hungry and bread does taste so good ...

**Move the figure of Jesus back to the back of the box away from the stones**

**Leader:** But Jesus said NO!

**Next place the building in the sand at the front of the box/tray. Place the figure of Jesus on the top of it**

**Leader:** Then the evil one came again. He took Jesus to the Holy city of Jerusalem and stood him on the top of a very high tower. He said if you really are special, then throw yourself off, God will send angels to save you. Jesus thought.... if he threw himself off the tower and the angels did save him then everyone would know who he was, and then they would all follow him.

**Move the figure of Jesus off the building back to the centre of the back of the box**

**Leader:** But Jesus said NO! You must not tempt God.

**Place the large rock in the sand and place the figure of Jesus onto it**

**Leader:** Then the evil one took Jesus to the top of the highest mountain where he could see all the nations of the world. He said, if you bow down and worship me then you could be King of all these nations, you can have them all... Jesus thought hmm! ... to be a powerful King?...

**Move the figure of Jesus back to the centre of the box**

**Leader:** But Jesus said NO ...Go away! The scripture says "You shall only worship God!"

**Move the figure of Jesus back to the front of the building**

**Leader:** Then the spirit of God led Jesus out of the desert back to Jerusalem the Holy City.

**Add a selection of other figures around Jesus.**

There he began to tell everyone the Good news about the kingdom of God.

Now read the 'I wonder...' statements.

# Manna in the Desert

Use the same desert backdrop as the first story. This station should reflect the story of how God provided for the Israelites when they were in the desert. They complained and were greedy with the Manna that God had provided for them.



## You will need:

- Dust cloth
- Rocks/stones
- Greenery
- Paper speech bubbles with 'complaining' words.
- Add a basket of popcorn kernels,
- next to it a bowl of popcorn\*
- and a bowl of popcorn that has been spoiled in some way, e.g burned, topped with dirt or soil.
- You can hang paper images of birds (Quail) above the prayer station.



## Next:

Use the mind-map to share the things God provides. Print and laminate the reading and prayer on the next pages.

## Tip:

*Laminate the speech bubbles so you can use a marker pen.*



## **Read the passage - Manna in the Desert**

They came to this place on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had left Egypt. Then the whole Israelite community grumbled to Moses and Aaron in the desert. The Israelites said to them, *"It would have been better if the Lord had killed us in the land of Egypt. There we had meat to eat. We had all the food we wanted. But you have brought us into this desert. You will starve us to death here."*

Then the Lord said to Moses, *"I will cause food to fall like rain from the sky. This food will be for all of you. Every day the people must go out and gather what they need for that day. I will do this to see if the people will do what I teach them. On the sixth day of each week, they are to gather twice as much as they gather on other days. Then they are to prepare it."*

...

Moses said to them, *"Don't keep any of it to eat the next day."* But some of the people did not listen to Moses. They kept part of it to eat the next morning. But it became full of worms and began to stink. So Moses was angry with these people.

### **Reflect**

What has God saved you from?

What has God provided for you?

How do we avoid becoming greedy and ungrateful like the Israelites were in the desert?

## Dayenu Prayer

To this day, Jewish people sing this prayer at their Passover meal to remember God's provision and mercy in their time of need.

*"If He had taken us out of Egypt and not made judgements on them; [it would have been] enough for us.*

...

*If He had supplied our needs in the wilderness for forty years and had not fed us the manna; [it would have been] enough for us.*

*If He had fed us the manna and had not given us the Shabbat; [it would have been] enough for us.*

*If He had given us the Shabbat and had not brought us close to Mount Sinai; [it would have been] enough for us.*

*If He had brought us close to Mount Sinai and had not given us the Torah; [it would have been] enough for us.*

*If He had given us the Torah and had not brought us into the land of Israel; [it would have been] enough for us.*

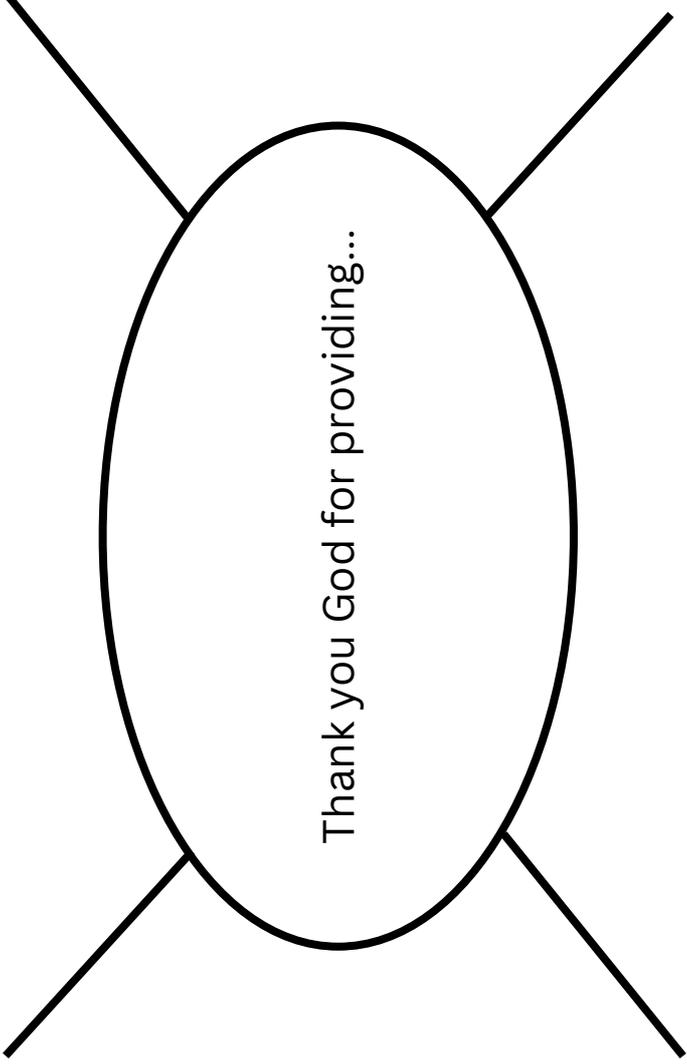
*If He had brought us into the land of Israel and had not built us the 'Chosen House' [the Temple; it would have been] enough for us."*

***Dear God,***

***Thank you for everything you have given me.  
I'm sorry for times I have taken your generosity  
for granted.***

***Help me to be grateful for what I have and look  
forward to what is to come.***

***Amen***



Thank you God for providing...

# Children's Activity Sheet

## Trust Challenge:

Use the demonstration in this video to show the children how trusting God is important.



## Interactive Story

Tell the children the story of how the Israelites escaped Egypt and began to travel through the desert, lead by Moses. Scan the QR code for a 5 minute video telling the story.



## Then, 'I Wonder...'

Invite the children to respond to some 'wondering' statements. Remember to be positive with all responses.

### "I wonder..."

- What the people thought when they saw the manna for the first time?
- How the people felt when they saw the rotting manna?
- How the people felt when they didn't have to gather any manna on the Sabbath?
- What the leaders said to Moses when he hit the rock with his stick?

## Activity

As a group, gather around a large piece of paper. Give the children coloured pens or pencils to write down or draw all of the things God has given them that they are grateful.



Thank you God for providing...



# The Golden Calf

The story of the Golden Calf demonstrates how easily we can forget the things God has saved us from, and how we can be distracted by other 'idols' instead of seeking a relationship with God. This prayer station should reflect an altar to rich and valuable items.

## You will need:

- a rich coloured cloth or material
- costume jewellery or gems
- gold coins, a chalice or an ornate candle
- 2 pieces of card shaped as tablets of stone + broken in two as the 10 commandments
- Speech bubbles that say:

*"I wonder what my idol is?"*

*"Do I put God first above all things?"*

*"What do I love the most?"*

## On a side table

- A noticeboard with
- printed out logos from familiar luxury companies, celebrities, technology, cars, brands etc.



## Activity:

How do I let go of the things I 'idolise'?

How can I spend more time with God?

## Tip:

*Laminate the speech bubbles so you can use a marker pen.*

## Passage - The Golden Calf

The people saw that a long time had passed and Moses had not come down from the mountain. So they gathered around Aaron. They said to him, *“Look, Moses led us out of the land of Egypt, but we don’t know what has happened to him. So make us some gods to go before us and lead us.”*

Aaron said to the people, *“Bring me the gold earrings that belong to your wives, sons, and daughters.”*

So the people collected all their gold earrings and brought them to Aaron. He took the gold from the people and used it to make an idol. Using a special tool, he shaped the gold into a statue of a calf.

Then the people said, *“Israel, here are your gods! These are the gods that brought you out of the land of Egypt!”*

Aaron saw all these things, so he built an altar in front of the calf. Then Aaron made an announcement. He said, *“Tomorrow will be a special festival to honour the Lord.”*

The people woke up very early the next morning. They killed animals and offered them as burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. They sat down to eat and drink. Then they got up and had a wild party.

At the same time, the Lord said to Moses, *“Go down from this mountain. Your people, the people you brought out of the land of Egypt, have committed a terrible sin. They have very quickly turned away from what I commanded them to do. They made a calf from melted gold for themselves. They are worshiping that calf and making sacrifices to it. The people have said, ‘Israel, these are the gods that led you out of Egypt.’”*

# Prayer

Dear God,

I am sorry that I let things get in the way of my relationship with you. Remind me of the joy of being saved by Jesus, and to know you close as Emmanuel (God with us). Lead me in your ways and show me your goodness.

Amen

# Children's Activity Sheet

## Tin Foil Challenge:

Ask the children to make any piece of jewellery from aluminium foil. They can keep them in their lap whilst they listen to the story.

## Interactive Story

Think and share about your favourite toys, people, superheroes etc. Ask each other "Why are they your favourite?" Then, read the story of the Israelites who forgot God, and put their own needs *before* Him.

Bring attention back to the foil jewellery the children have made. **We have made these foil idols to represent the things we put before God, and how we forget how good God has been to us.**

## Then, 'I Wonder...'

Invite the children to respond to some 'wondering' statements. Remember to be positive with all responses.

"I wonder..."

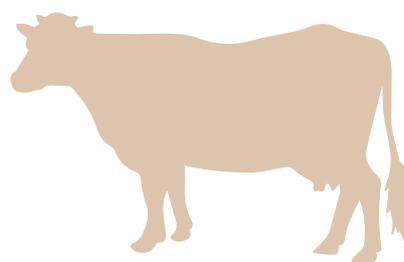
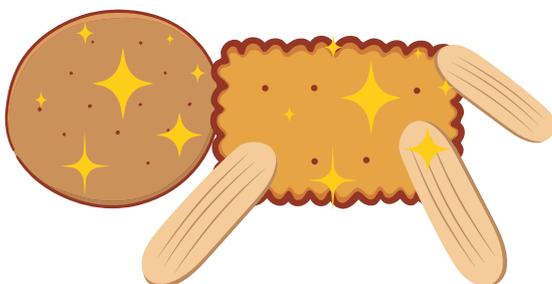
- How God felt when he saw the people making a new 'god' from gold?
- How Moses felt when he knew the golden calf was made from the gifts of gold from Egypt?
- How the people felt when Moses squashed the calf?
- How the people felt when Moses said that God would still go with them?
- What you may be doing later today and if God will go with you?

## Button Game:

- Ask for a volunteer, or do the activity as a group.
- Take 3 buttons and put them on top of your hand.
- Try and flip your hand over, catching all 3 buttons at once. It will be nearly impossible!
- Try again with 2 buttons... And again with one. It should be manageable to flip and catch one button.
- Demonstrate that we focus on ONE thing, God. When we put our faith in other things, life is hard, and we don't feel close to God.

## Activity - Make a Biscuit Golden Calf

Take paper plates, trace the shape of a calf, and have the children make the shape out of different biscuits - they can be stuck together with icing, and decorated with sprinkles and edible glitter.



# Building the Tabernacle

Use the same altar as the previous prayer station, taking away the idols and adding some robes, a cup or a cross. The prayer station should help people reflect on the place God chose to meet his people.

## You will need:

- a rich coloured cloth or material
- Speech bubbles that say:

*"What gifts has God given me?"*

*"What can I do to help build God's kingdom in this church and in our community?" & "What can I do this week?"*

- An image of the churches in your parish or deanery, cut up into many pieces to resemble a jigsaw puzzle.
- pens or pencils
- You can order a bespoke jigsaw of your church here:  
[www.yourjigsaw.co.uk/shop/](http://www.yourjigsaw.co.uk/shop/)



## Activity:

Ask people to write down their talents and gifts on the jigsaw pieces. Together we build the church!



## Tip:

*Trace an outline of jigsaw pieces onto the back of your image.*

# Prayer

Dear God,

Thank you for the gifts you have given me.

Help me to use them to please you.

Help me know I am part of your big plan, and

show me what I can give to be a blessing to

others. Let everything I do be a blessing to your

name, and to the world around me.

Amen

## **Passage - Building the Tabernacle**

“Cover the frames with gold. And make rings for the frames to hold the braces. Make these rings from gold. Also cover the braces with gold. Build the Holy Tent the way I showed you on the mountain.

"Use fine linen and make a special curtain for the inside of the Holy Tent. Use blue, purple, and red yarn and sew pictures of Cherub angels into the curtain. Make four posts from acacia wood, and cover the posts with gold. Put hooks made from gold on the four posts.

Put four silver bases under the posts. Then hang the curtain on the gold hooks. Put the curtain under the gold rings. Then put the Box of the Agreement behind the curtain. This curtain will separate the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place. Put the mercy-cover on the Box of the Agreement in the Most Holy Place.

“Put the special table you made outside of the curtain. The table should be on the north side of the Holy Tent. Then put the lampstand on the south side, across from the table.

“Then make a curtain to cover the entrance to the Holy Tent. Use blue, purple, and red yarn and fine linen to make this curtain. Weave pictures into it. Make gold hooks for this curtain. Make five posts using acacia wood covered with gold and make five bronze bases for the five posts.

# Children's Activity Sheet

## Collage of Magazine images

Together, cut out images from magazines. Use pictures of what we can give to God and make a collage with them.

## Guided Reading

Use this to start a discussion about the gifts God has already given us. Then, read the story of how God told the Israelites to build a special place where he could meet them.

Then, *'I Wonder...'*

*Invite the children to respond to some 'wondering' statements. Remember to be positive with all responses.*

*"I wonder..."*

- If everybody wanted to bring an offering to make the tent?*
- If the children brought anything to help make the tent?*
- If the people had smiles on their faces as they brought their offerings?*
- If we need a tent (or building) as a sign that God is with us now?*
- If anyone has ever shared something with you?*
- What you could do to share with other people?*
- If God smiled when the sacred tent was finished?*

## Demonstration

God has given us gifts and a purpose, he needs us to use them to help build His big tent over all the earth! If we don't use our gifts, it's like having a ball, but never throwing it...

- Pretend the ball is our gift. If we just hold onto the ball, it is useless! It's not fun, we can't play games or bounce it, and it can't do what it was made to do.
- Ask, *"What do we use a ball for?"*
- We have to let go of the ball, play with it, bounce it and have fun - just like with our gifts! The gifts you have are probably things you enjoy doing.

Ref: *Jesus said in Matthew 5:14-16*

## Activity - Create a tabernacle

Draw or print an outline of a tent shape. Using cloth, sequins and decorative craft materials, create a tabernacle for the children to take home.

# Interactive Story

Invite the children to sit in a circle.

**Leader:** Has anyone ever been camping? What did you sleep in? What colour was the tent? Did you get wet when it rained? Who owned the tent? Well, today we are going to find out about a very, very, special tent. A tent that could be made only if lots of people helped each other. Let's open the box and I'll help you to find out how it happened...

**Leader:** God wanted the Israelites to make a 'holy place'. It would be a tent – but a magnificent one – where the people could worship God during their travels through the desert. It was to be made with materials they had already or could find around them. So Moses told the people that God wanted them to find things to make the Sacred Tent. They were to bring an item as an offering. Let's see what the people offered to God...

**Leader:** The gold was used to cover the wooden posts and poles, crossbars, the Covenant Box, and the altar. The plates, cups, jars and bowls for the wine offering, the lampstand and lots of the decorations, were made from solid gold. Gold was also used in the priests' clothes.

**Give each child a copy of the Sacred Tent sheet. Invite the children to colour the posts and crossbars with yellow/gold crayons.**

**Leader:** The gold was used to cover the wooden posts and poles, crossbars, the Covenant Box, and the altar. The plates, cups, jars and bowls for the wine offering, the lampstand and lots of the decorations, were made from solid gold. Gold was also used in the priests' clothes.

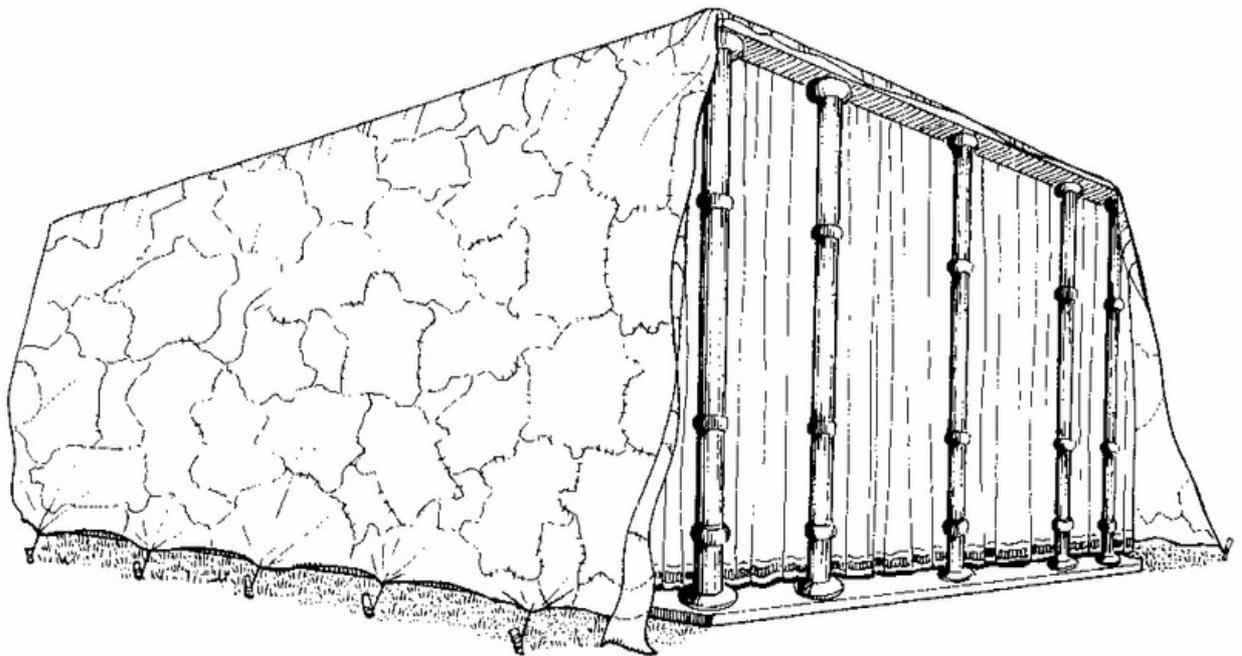
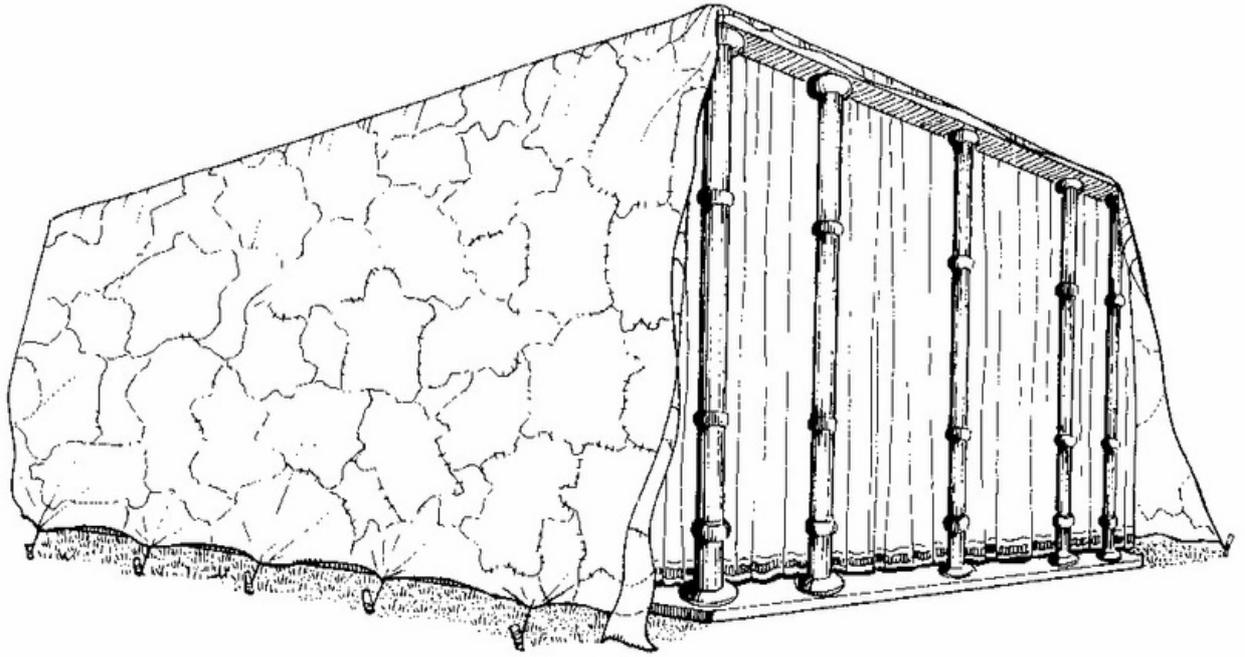
**Invite the children to colour the entrance curtain, on their sheet, using blue, purple and red.**

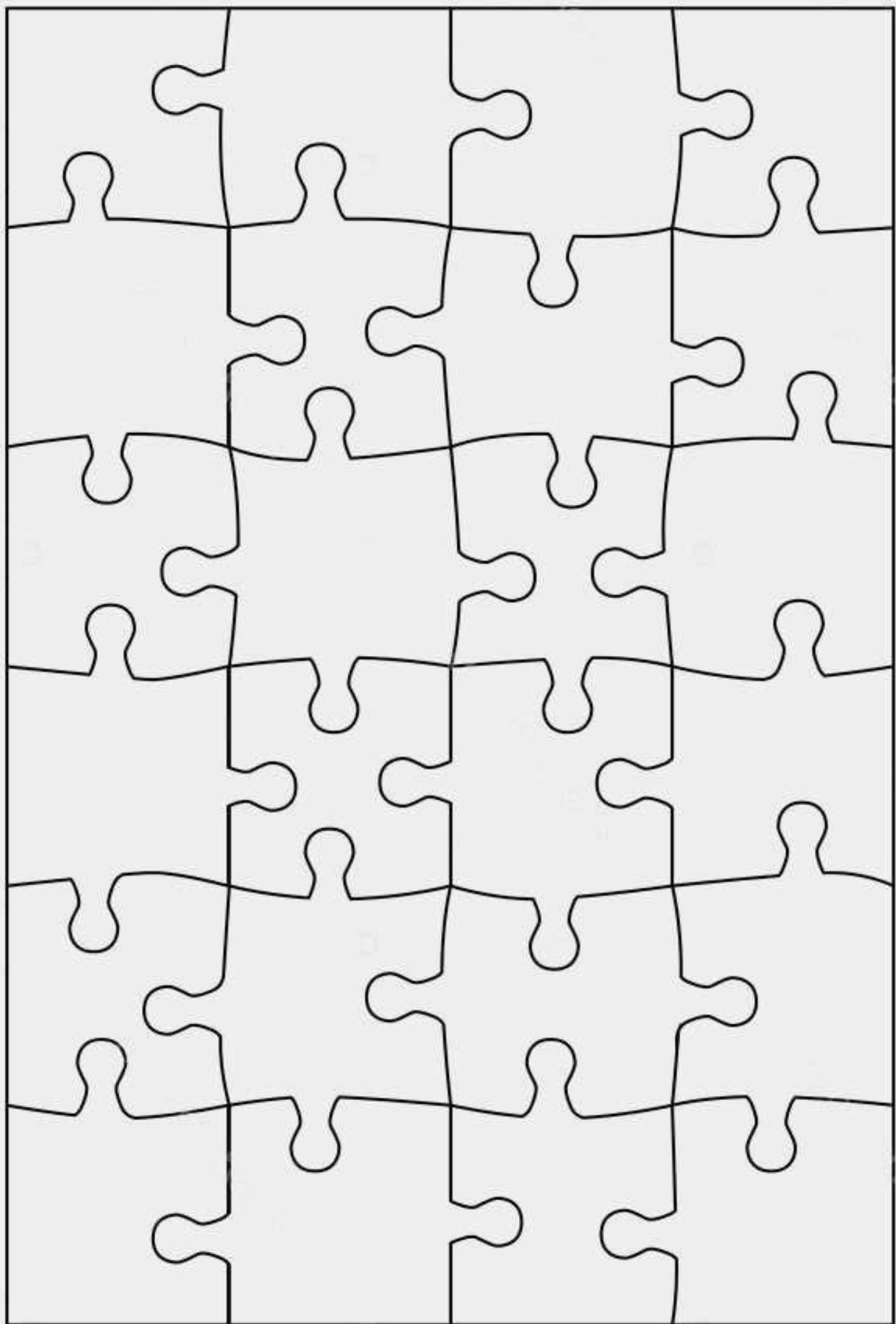
**Leader:** They made a covering for the tent from goats'-hair cloth. Two more coverings were made. One with rams' skin dyed red and the other of fine leather. These protected the tent from all weathers.

**Invite the children to colour the outer covering of the tent, on their sheet, with brown or red.**

**Leader:** Acacia wood was used to make the tent frames, curtain poles, carrying poles, the offering table and the 'covenant box'. There was oil and sweet-smelling incense on the altar during the worship time. Precious jewels were placed in the priests' 'breast piece'. There were four rows, mounted in gold. The gems included diamonds, emeralds and sapphires. God had given some people the gift of teaching; others had skills for the tent-making. So, by offering materials and sharing skills, the Israelites were a happy people, preparing and building as God had commanded them. God gave all the instructions to Moses and the people did as God commanded. Sometimes the people offered more than was needed. They wanted to show God that he was important to them. The sacred tent was a sign that God was with them, wherever they went.

**Invite the children to respond to some 'wondering' statements. Be positive with all responses.**





# Bread for Everyone

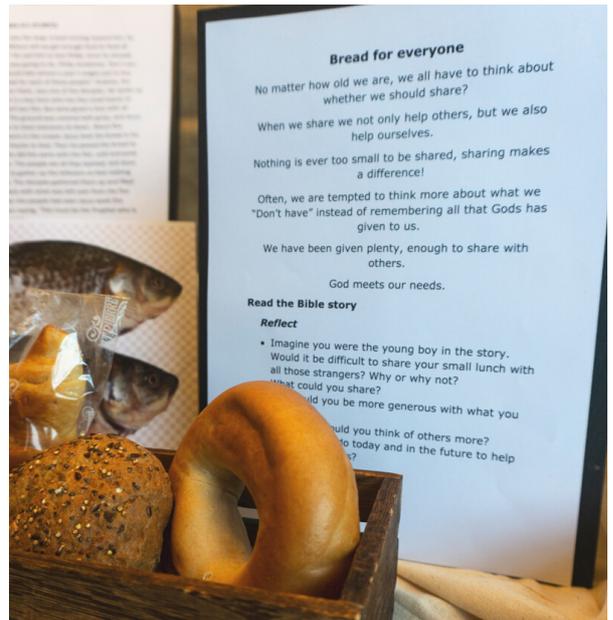
Draper the table cloth across the table, place your bread items in a basket or on a tray and encourage people to read the story and reflect on the verses.

## You will need:

- Printed copies of the Bible story
- Printed copies of the reflection card
- A selection of breads including gluten free i.e. Pitta, Naan, croissant, rice cakes, brown/white bread
- Wicker baskets
- A picture of two fish

## The Display:

- A table
- Table cloth or picnic blanket
- Picnic basket (optional)
- Small noticeboard



## Activity:

- Plain paper /pens
- Basket or a Board to display items
- Cut out fish shapes



## **Bread for everyone**

No matter how old we are, we all have to think about whether we should share?

When we share we not only help others, but we also help ourselves.

Nothing is ever too small to be shared, sharing makes a difference!

Often, we are tempted to think more about what we “Don’t have” instead of remembering all that God has given to us.

We have been given plenty, enough to share with others. God meets our needs.

## **Read the Bible story**

### **Reflect**

- Imagine you were the young boy in the story. Would it be difficult to share your small lunch with all those strangers? Why or why not?
- What could you share?
- How could you be more generous with what you have?
- What ways could you think of others more?
- What can you do today and in the future to help share with others?

# Children's Activity Sheet

In the bible reading a small boy shared what he had with Jesus.

What are the gifts, talents, time that you have that you could share?

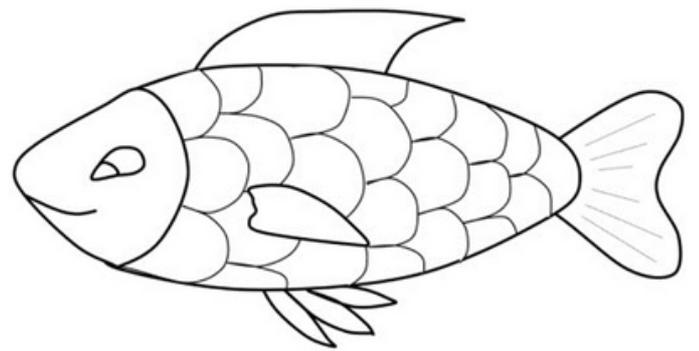
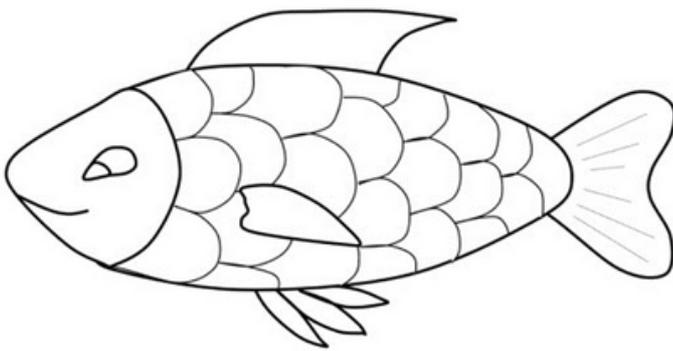
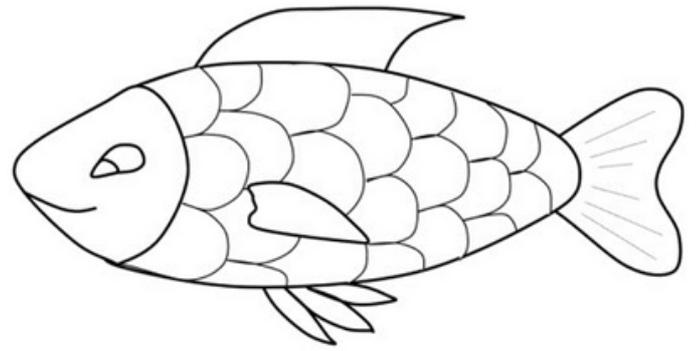
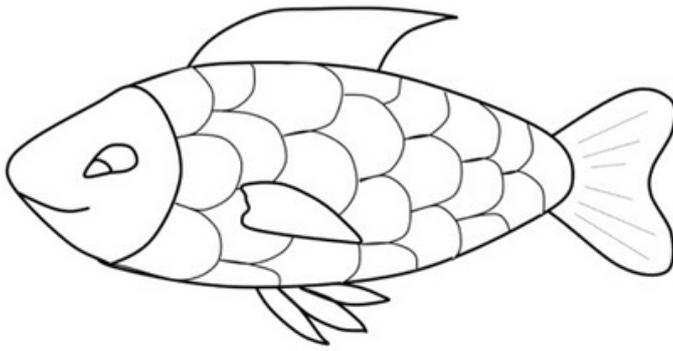
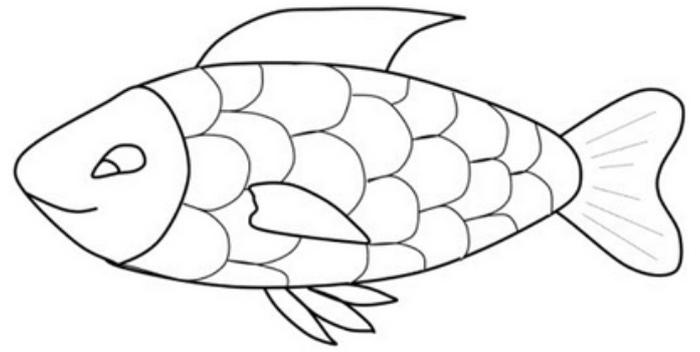
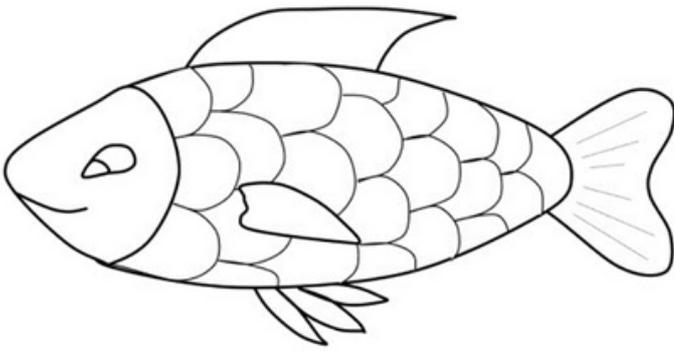
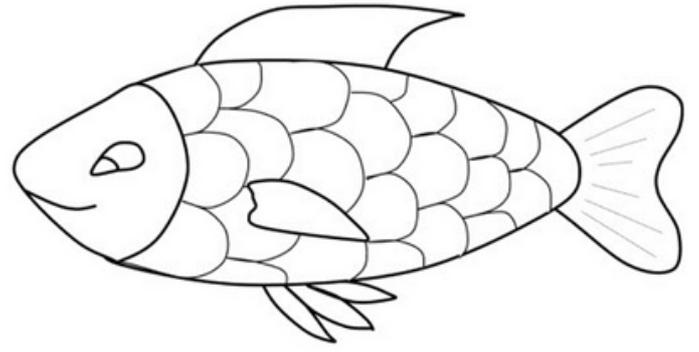
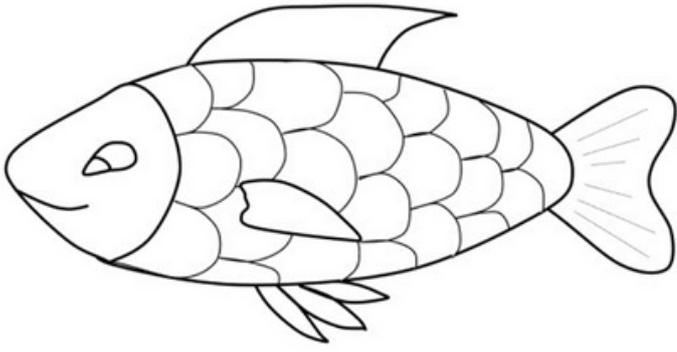
Draw a picture or write something that you can give to Jesus for him to use, something you wish to share.

Place your picture/words in the basket and then take a fish shape to remind you about sharing what you have with others.

## Prayer

Heavenly Father, we give you our abilities and strengths so that they may be miraculously increased by you. Multiply our gifts so we may share them with others and bless your kingdom.

*Amen.*



If you have any questions about the resources or would like any support, contact the Resources team at Liverpool Diocese:

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