

Journey into the Amazon

Learning to give thanks for
God's special gifts

USPG **Harvest
Assembly**
for primary schools



Curriculum links: RE, Science, English, Geography, PSHEC



This assembly is for use during Harvest time. It is based on Luke 12:22-32 and makes links with a new Anglican community deep in the heart of Brazil's Amazon rainforest.



CURRICULUM LINKS

- **RE:** Teachings of Jesus, church, sharing, festival of Harvest
- **Science:** Keeping food, medical care, balanced diet
- **English:** Rainforest poems, letters of request
- **Geography:** Comparing localities, the Amazon, rivers, small communities
- **PSHEC:** Corporate decisions and effects, leadership, shared responsibility



PREPARATION AND MATERIALS

This assembly includes a small 'drama' near the beginning. You need to prepare a member of staff to be involved. They will be teacher 'B', while you will be teacher 'A'. You will need:

- A desk and chair
- A pencil case full of pens, pencils and equipment like a set square.





THE ASSEMBLY

1

Is there anyone here who got a new pencil case for the start of the new term? [Ask for hands up.] What is in your pencil case? [Ask a few children to say what they bought.] What does your pencil case look like – what sort of things are on the case?

2

[Sit down at the desk.] Well, you're not the only ones to have a new pencil case. I got one too! [Look very pleased with yourself and show off the pencil case.] I spent all my pocket money on it. Look I've got all sorts of things in this case. I've got a fantastic pen [hold up the pen] – this pen will mean my spelling is bound to get better. And I've got this ruler [hold up ruler], so that will help me [look uncertain while thinking how it will help] with my sums. And this pencil will mean all my drawings will be fantastic – like that man who does the drawings in the Roald Dahl books – like in *The Twits*, I really like that one – my drawings will be just as good as them. And I've got one of these [holds up a set square], I've no idea what it is but I'm sure it will make me very clever...

B: Hang on, excuse me, Mr/Mrs XXX. I think you've got a bit muddled.

A: What do you mean?

B: Well, just because you've got a nice pen, it doesn't mean you're going to be able to spell correctly.

A: Doesn't it?

B: Of course not! And just because you've got a fancy ruler, it doesn't mean you'll be better at sums.

A: Oh dear.

B: And having a fancy pencil won't mean your drawings are any better.

A: That's a shame. [Look dejected, then perk up.] Ah, but what about this? [Hold up the set square.]

B: [Look confused.] Well, to be honest, I'm not sure what that is, but I don't think it's going to make you very clever.

A: OK. Thank you, Mr/Mrs XXX.





3

Can you see what happened here? Even though my pencil case is great, it doesn't mean I'm going to be top of the class. However, it is the right equipment for the job.

4

Here's another story about some people having the right equipment for the job. I want to tell you now about some people who live in a small village in Brazil along the Amazon River. Does anyone know where the Amazon is? [Mention it's the second longest – some say the longest – river in the world.] And what is the Amazon famous for? [Piranhas, vampire bats, parrots, ant eaters.] It sounds like it might be a scary place to live, but it can be a lot of fun. There's lots of sunshine, and long grass and trees to play in, and if you're hungry you can pick berries and mangoes and other fruit. The other thing you can eat a lot of is fish. [You could show the USPG film at this point.]

5

I want to tell you now about some people who live in a village called Maria Ribeira [pronounced Maria He-bay-ra.] The grown-ups in this village catch a lot of fish. But they had a problem. Who can tell me what happens to a fish if you don't eat it and leave it outside for a long time? [Invite answers.] Yes, it goes smelly! And no-one wants to eat it. But then the people of Maria Ribeira were given a present. Can you guess what it might be? How do you stop fish going smelly? Yes, you put them in the fridge. The Anglican church in Brazil gave the community the gift of two fridge freezers. This means they can keep the fish as long as they want and always have something to eat.

6

In the same way that the pencil case is the right equipment for doing your school work, the fridge freezers are the right equipment for keeping fish fresh.





7

The freezers were a gift to the people of the Amazon from the Anglican church. The church wanted to make this gift because they care for other people – in the same way that God cares for us.



TIME TO THINK

The world around us is wonderful – whether the Amazon or our local park. God looks after the world and he has promised to look after us. In the Bible, Jesus has said he will always look after us whatever we are feeling – whether we are feeling happy or sad. [You may like to quote Luke 12:22-32.]



PRAYER

Dear Father God, thank you that you look after us. And thank you for the hope you give us in your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.



SONG

Oh, Don't Worry by Mike Burn
For words and music visit www.familyworship.org.uk/songs/dontworry



MORE FREE RESOURCES

- A short film telling the Amazon story
- Publicity poster for school noticeboards
- Classroom activities linked to the curriculum, fundraising ideas and lots more can be found online. Visit the Resources section of the USPG website and select USPG Schools.

LIFE IN GOD'S GARDEN



Imagine waking up in the morning, walking outside into the lush rainforest, and collecting fresh mangoes for breakfast that have fallen from the trees. For dinner there is fish from the Amazon served with tapioca. And there are açai berries, which are rich in minerals and in plentiful supply. This is what life is like for people in Maria Ribeira [pronounced Maria He-bay-ra], a community that emerged from the descendants of African slaves.

USPG Mission Companion Ruth de Barros, who is based in the new Diocese of the Amazon, describes this part of Brazil as 'God's garden'. She said: 'Here we have nature as it is and the people of Maria Ribeira work with that, the way God intended. You can see how God has provided everything that we need.'

But this way of life is at risk, with large corporations encroaching on land, cutting down trees and catching fish in huge quantities, attempting to monopolise resources so that historic and indigenous communities are suffering. Maintaining their traditional lifestyle has become a battle for the people of Maria Ribeira. Some years ago, large fishing corporations started depleting local fish stocks, which meant fishermen like Duca [pronounced 'Juca'; real name Manuel Célio de Castro] were struggling to feed their families and generate a little income through the sale of fish.

An unlikely solution came in the guise of two fridge freezers, which the Diocese of the Amazon helped the community to obtain. Keeping fish in the freezers guarantees food for local families and a small income from selling the surplus. The freezers are located in the nearby port of Gurupá, a two-hour boat journey from Maria Ribeira, which does not have an electricity supply.

This was how Duca first came into contact with the Anglican Church. He was so impressed that he and his family are now pioneers in a new Anglican community. They have named their church, which is yet to have a formal building, after St Peter, the fisherman.

'I have an immense love for the Anglican Church,' said Duca. 'I found a church that views people in an equal way, as partners who want happiness for everybody, without showing prejudice.'

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR HARVEST APPEAL



This is an exciting but challenging time for the new Anglican community of St Peter's, in Brazil's Amazon rainforest. Established in 2008, the church is bringing people together and inspiring them at a time when the outside world is encroaching on their traditional way of life. Big businesses are taking land and local resources. At the same time, there is a growing need for better access to healthcare and schooling. USPG Mission Companion Ruth de Barros and her husband Bishop Saulo are striving to establish the new Anglican Diocese of the Amazon. It is a vast region, where indigenous cultures and ecological systems are under threat. Ruth and Bishop Saulo need your prayers and donations to help make a difference. Please support USPG this Harvest and help us nurture communities of hope in the Amazon and all over the world.



FUNDRAISING IDEAS

Pescaria [pesk-a-rhea]

This is a traditional party game in Brazil and a variation on the magnetic fishing game. The number on the fish you catch is your prize. Each class could play its own version of the game. Ask the children to 'pay to play', eg £1. You could make it more fun by keeping the prizes a secret until all the fish have been caught.

Tips

- Ask local businesses to donate the prizes.
- Invite the children to make and decorate the fish before the game starts.

Amazing Amazon animals

Suggest the children pay £1 to come dressed as their favourite Amazon creatures for a day (toucan, parrot, piranha, otter, leaf-cutter ant, heron, anteater, harpy eagle, rhinoceros beetle, spider monkey, vampire bat). Hang paper leaves from the walls and ceilings to create your own rainforest.

USPG Fiesta

Invite parents to a Latin American-inspired party full of the fun and flavours of fiesta. For party ideas and recipes visit the USPG website or order a USPG Fiesta party pack. **Call 020 7378 5678 or in Ireland, 071 965 1998**



Anglicans in World Mission



DONATION FORM

Thank you for supporting us and helping to nurture communities of hope in the Amazon and all around the world.

1 Please count up the money raised by your school and write a cheque (made payable to USPG) for the total amount.

2 Complete the form below and send it, together with your school's donation, to USPG: Anglicans in World Mission, 200 Great Dover Street, London SE1 4YB or USPG Ireland, Gobadruish, Mohill, Co Leitrim.

We enclose a cheque for £/€ _____

Your full name (including title) _____

Position in school _____ School name _____

School address _____

_____ Postcode _____

Tel _____ We do not require a receipt.

Signature _____ Date _____

USPG keeps names and addresses of its supporters on computer for purposes of keeping them up to date with our work. Please tick here if you would prefer not to be contacted by USPG

Registered charity numbers: UK 234518/Ireland CHY 7998

Thank you for your support

51100 UNR C00 P17093

USPG: Anglicans in World Mission works in direct partnership with Anglican Churches in over 50 countries, helping to support vital church work, including healthcare, education, leadership training and action for social justice. For more information on the work USPG supports around the world please visit our website.

USPG: Anglicans in World Mission

200 Great Dover Street, London SE1 4YB

Tel: 020 7378 5678 or 0845 273 1701

Email: enquiries@uspg.org.uk

www.uspg.org.uk Registered charity number 234518

USPG Ireland

Gobadruish, Mohill, Co Leitrim

Tel: 071 965 1998

Email: uspg@ireland.anglican.org

www.uspg.ie Registered charity number CHY 7998