

ELIJAH & THE WIDOW

1 KINGS 17:8-15

After some time, however, the brook ran dry, because no rain had fallen in the land. So the LORD said to him: "Move on to Zarephath of Sidon and stay there. I have designated a widow there to provide for you." He left and went to Zarephath. As he arrived at the entrance of the city, a widow was gathering sticks there; he called out to her, "Please bring me a small cupful of water to drink." She left to get it, and he called out after her, "Please bring along a bit of bread." "As the LORD, your God, lives," she answered, "I have nothing baked; there is only a handful of flour in my jar and a little oil in my jug. Just now I was collecting a couple of sticks, to go in and prepare something for myself and my son; when we have eaten it, we shall die." "Do not be afraid," Elijah said to her. "Go and do as you propose. But first make me a little cake and bring it to me. Then you can prepare something for yourself and your son.

For the LORD, the God of Israel, says, "The jar of flour shall not go empty, nor the jug of oil run dry, until the day when the LORD sends rain upon the earth."

She left and did as Elijah had said. She was able to eat for a year, and he and her son as




PRAYING FOR VOCATIONS

The purpose of the Elijah Cup, a consecrated chalice, is to provide a focal point for prayer. We are all aware of the need for vocations to the priesthood, the diaconate and to the religious life. But sometimes we forget just how powerful praying for an increase in vocations can be. If we pray with the faith of the widow of Zarephath, our cup will never run dry! We will always have priests to bring us Jesus in the Eucharist.

In 1 Kings 17, during a drought, Elijah tells the poor widow of Zarephath that if she makes him a small loaf of bread with the last of her flour and oil, her *"jar of flour will not go empty, nor the jug of oil run dry, until the Lord sends rain upon the earth."* In faith, the widow baked the bread and fed Elijah. For the next year, the widow, her son, and Elijah ate bread made from the bowl of flour and jug of oil.

The 2nd Vatican Counsel instructs us that it is the job of the laity to pray for and raise up vocations, and this has been echoed by Pope John Paul II in many of his teachings.



THE ELIJAH CUP

Each week at Sunday Mass the celebrant will present the Elijah Cup. After Communion, he calls a family, individual, or couple forward to receive the Elijah Cup. They receive a blessing and take the cup home, putting it in a place of honor.

Each day for a week, during prayer time (morning, bedtime or at meals), they pray for an increase and perseverance of vocations. The following Sunday they return the cup with the gifts at the Offertory.

A prayer card also travels with the Elijah Cup. Each week the family, individual, or couple that has the cup enters a thought, prayer, or scripture verse. Over time, the cards become a spiritual journal for the parish.

Praying for vocations is the most powerful way to support vocations. A vocation is a call from the Holy Spirit, a gift from God that is nurtured in prayer. When we pray for vocations, we lift up to our Father those men and women who he is calling in a very special way. We hope that those who bring the cup home will continue to pray for vocations



PRAYER FOR RELIGIOUS
VOCATIONS

Gracious and loving God,
help the men and women of our
parish to hear the call to serve your Church.

Our needs are great
and our people thirst for your presence.

Open the hearts of many,
raise up faithful servants of the
Gospel, dedicated holy priests, sisters,
brothers, and deacons,
who will spend themselves for
your people and their needs.

Bless those who are serving now with
courage and perseverance.

Grant that many will be inspired
by their example and faith.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen

Elijah Cup

Praying for Vocations



“Do Not Be Afraid.”
Elijah 17:13

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