THE CAN OF SOUP-based on idea from CMS

Equipment: Table + large cloth, Can of soup, carrots, onions, beans, potatoes, pasta, herbs, flour, flat cap/toy tractor, seed packets, mixing bowl, bottle of water, cookbook, piece of rock, cutlery, something rainbow-coloured, leaves, conkers, toilet roll, mobile phone, laptop, photos of Tim Peake and International Space Station, bowl of soup.

*(As all the gifts are explained, items are piled up on a table, and even in the Vicar’s arms, as a visual aid for all the gifts we can be thankful for. The more you have the better! Try and keep them hidden until they need to be revealed.)*

Vicar: Can anyone tell me what we are celebrating today? Harvest. Yes, that’s right and who can tell me what reminds them of Harvest Festival. Yes Sally?

Sally: A can of soup. I’ve brought one – here. *(Come out to Vicar)*

Vicar: Really! Well it’s nice you brought it and someone will enjoy eating it but that is not really very ‘harvesty’ is it Sally? Look at all the fruit and vegetables on the table/altar.

Sally: It’s minestrone!

Vicar: Well, yes but you know what I mean. It doesn’t really represent what Harvest Festival is all about.

Sally: Well actually Vicar I think you might be wrong. This single can of soup has everything that we need to help us celebrate and thank God for at Harvest.

Vicar: Oh really? Would you like to explain why?

Sally: Well, if you insist… (*Put can on table*)

Vicar: Oh I think we’d all like to hear your reasons.

Sally: Firstly this single can contains a hearty, filling meal.

Vicar: Yes…

Sally: Everybody needs food so it’s something we should give thanks for at Harvest…

Vicar: OK….

Sally: (*Interrupting)* It’s full of vegetables like carrots, potatoes, onions and peas*….(pile onto a table)* There are also tomatoes and pasta, herbs and flour. *(do the same with every new ingredient)* Farmers (*get out a cap &/or toy tractor*) have planted the seeds (*seed packets*) and harvested the crops. Something that we should give thanks for at Harvest.

Vicar: Very good but…..

Sally: :…Chefs have created the recipe for Minestrone (*cook book*) – I’m a Mary Berry fan! - and mixed all the ingredients (*mixing bowl*) including God’s gift of water.(*jug or bottle of water).* Plus everything has been cooked to perfection because they used the knowledge and skills that God gave them. Something that we should give thanks for at Harvest.

Vicar: I agree but…

Sally: …..AND then there is the can itself. The metal comes from minerals and ores you find in the earth that God made (piece of rock). They are mined and then refined and made into steel and other metals. *(Cutlery)* We should also give thanks for all those men and women who work so hard to make our country so prosperous. And that there is work available for them to do. That’s something that we should give thanks for at Harvest.

Vicar: Well that may be so, but is that everything we give thanks to God for? I think there is much more we should be

 celebrating.

Sally: Well actually I’m not finished yet! Look at the label the bright colours can remind us of just how beautiful our world is. For example think of the rainbow & God’s promise *(something rainbow coloured)*. The label has been printed, which is another talent, and is made of paper. Who knows what paper comes from? That’s right – trees. So we can thank God for the beauty *(leaves)* and usefulness *(toilet roll)* of trees. One of my favourite trees is the Horse Chestnut because of …conkers *(conkers strung for a game.)*. I’ll give you a game after the service vicar.

Vicar: You don’t stand a chance!

Sally: Oh really – we’ll see! Anyway, to continue, there is the list of ingredients and cooking instructions on the back which reminds us of God’s gift of language and the wonder of modern communications like the mobile phone & computer *(mobile and laptop or kindle)* and even these – letters. *(Give envelope to vicar)*. It’s addressed to you! And don’t forget the barcode another reminder of the gift of technology and science in our world and the fact God has given human beings such power and cleverness. We can fly….planes *(toy plane)* and even go into space. Do you know who this is? *(show photo of Tim Peake)* That’s right, Tim Peake. And do you know what he is? That’s right, an astronaut. Can any-one tell me what this is? *(Show photo of International Space Station).* The International Space Station – you can sometimes see it going overhead on a clear night and when I see that and look at the stars I am amazed and I think that is definitely something that we should give thanks for at Harvest.

Vicar: Wow – you’ve really thought about this, haven’t you!

Sally: AND…. finally…*(bring out bowl of soup)* when we sit down to enjoy the soup itself we can thank God not only for all our senses, seeing, hearing, touching, smelling *(sniff soup)* and tasting *(have a mouthful)*…

Vicar: ….but we can thank him for the gift of life itself too. Something that we should give thanks for at Harvest …and every day.

Sally: Exactly! So that’s why I brought the can of soup. It contains everything it says on the label …. and a whole lot more! *(Give Vicar the can)*

Vicar: Well, I don’t think I’ll look at a can of soup in the same way again. It’s a wonderful celebration of our Harvest Festival, after all. *(To the congregation)* And I hope it will be a

 reminder in the months to come of what we should give

 thanks to God for every day. Amen