A personal reflection. Roses experience of growing up in Jamaica and then moving to the UK.

Rose who was born in Abuka, St Ann, Jamaica remembers a childhood shaped by family, faith, discipline and the natural beauty of the island. She grew up in a large family and described life as simple: walking long distances to school, going to church several times each Sunday, and living on land full of fruit trees such as mangoes, breadfruit, oranges, and tangerines. Jamaica felt open and abundant to her, and as a child she loved the freedom of the countryside and the close-knit way everyone knew each other. Just before her 18th birthday in 1960, Rose came to live in England. Like many young people in Jamaica at the time, she had grown up hearing stories about Britain and imagined it as a place of opportunity. Rose remembers when she first arrived in England, that as she travelled on a bus through London with her aunt, she thought all the houses were factories, as they were all joined together and had smoke coming from the chimneys! The reality was much harder than she expected. At first, she struggled to understand English accents and felt isolated at school, the teachers were not very patient, they thought Rose had difficulty learning but she just needed time to process what they were saying. She was disappointed by the kind of work available to her at first and had to adjust quickly to a very different life.



Rose also faced serious challenges after arriving in England. She experienced racism and discrimination, especially in housing, where signs openly said, “No Blacks, No Irish, No Dogs.” Living conditions were cramped and difficult, and she often had to share overcrowded accommodation. She also found the cold weather and snow difficult, especially without proper heating or clothing. Despite these challenges, Rose proved resilient: she found office work, built a career, studied hard, and kept pushing back against being underestimated.

Questions:

- What is one of your favourite childhood memories?
- I wonder what difficulties you have faced?
- What do you want to be doing when you are an adult?

Task: Seed bombs

Roses describes Jamacia as an abundant way of life, enjoying the nature and freedom around her. We don’t all have a garden and not all can access a park. However most people can have a pot on the window sill or by the front or back door with some flowers in.



Consider making some seed bombs and brightening up a dull patch where you live or perhaps plant some seeds into a plant pot or a trough. As they grow ask God to help you grow up in God's ways of honesty, love and resilience. The wonderful thing about seed bombs is that they often flourish no matter when they are thrown.

Additional Questions:

- Where do you see life flourishing in your community?
- If you could move to another country which one would you chose and why?