

Ten Encounter Scripture Reflections Suitable for Autumn Term



It is important to use this Encounter early on when any groups are starting to introduce the idea of the symbolism of the candles in Encounter

Jesus, Light of the World

Prop: The large candle you will use for Encounter.

Reading: John 8:12

Comment: I wonder if you ever feel life is 'dark'? Perhaps you are unhappy or upset? Life feels 'dark' at these times. Look at how the candle burns brightly. Can you see what Jesus means about being the Light of the World? He is always shining brightly for you no matter how 'dark' your life feels. This candle is always burning during Encounter to remind us that Jesus, Light of the World, is always with us.

For the beginning or the end of a term or year

I am the Alpha and Omega (This Encounter can be used as a starter and a finisher).

Prop: Board game with a start, and an end.

A4 copies of Alpha and Omega (see Further Resources)

Reading: Revelation 22:13

Comment: Show board from game. Some people say they think life is like a game. There is a beginning, and an end. But life has lots of beginnings and ends, doesn't it? You are having an end and a beginning, aren't you? The end of the holidays, the beginning of the new term. Beginnings and ends are really exciting, but they can be scary too. Jesus said (read passage).

Show signs and explain Alpha first and Omega last letter of the Greek alphabet.

Jesus will always be there at the beginning and the end of everything.

We can always know he's there at our beginnings even before we are, and will be there at the end of anything too.

These Encounters can be used any time

You are wonderful!

Prop: A4 photograph of an unborn child.

Reading: Psalm 139:14-15

Comment: (Pass round the picture). This could be a photograph of any of us before we were born! The words from the Bible today tell us there isn't anything God has done and made that isn't wonderful. It says He made us. You are wonderful!

God has your name written on His hands

Prop: Large outline of very large hands, ideally on A3 paper. Something to write on them with.

Reading : Isaiah 49:16

Comment: Go round the group and ask for names. Then go to people again. Then again! Apologise that you are bad at remembering names, and eventually, write them on your hand (optional!). Remind them the Bible tells us God will never forget us, and we've got our name on His hands. Invite people to write their name on 'God's hands' (the large hands).

God's love for you never runs out

Prop: Empty perfume bottle, pass round.

This was my wife's/mum's favourite perfume. It's all gone now. I feel so disappointed when the things I like run out, don't you?

Reading: Jeremiah 31:3

Comment: God's love for you will never run out. God loves you forever.

Come to me those who are heavy laden

Prop: A bag with really heavy items inside (possibly large stones). Pass the bag around the group saying, 'I have been carrying this around today. It is SO heavy!'

Reading: Matthew 11:28-30

Comment: I wonder if there is anything that feels 'heavy' in your life, in your heart? I'm talking about things that worry us or upset us. I wonder what weighs you down? I wonder if you will give Jesus your burden?

These two Encounters focus on how the healing power of Jesus can be used any time, but they are especially helpful if one of the group or someone they know has health issues, serious or otherwise

The healing touch of Jesus

Props: Encounter soft furnishings!

Reading: Luke 6:19

Comment: Really concentrate on how soft the blanket is you're lying on, or the cushion your head is on.

We're going to be talking about healing for the next two weeks. Everyone needs some kind of healing from a headache perhaps, or much worse. Jesus healed lots of people in the Bible. Think of people we know who are not well, in body or mind, and especially remember them in the next two weeks.

Meanwhile, enjoy the soft touch, and imagine the healing touch of Jesus when you don't feel well.

Jesus heals a blind man

Props: Blindfold and various safe objects to identify in a bag, e.g. an apple, a pen, a hair brush, etc.

Reading: Luke 18:41-42 (explain there was a blind man who sat on the street begging because he couldn't work, and depended on what people gave him to live).

Comment: (Let each person who wants to be blindfolded and try to identify an object from the bag). What was it like when you had the blindfold on? Imagine never ever being able to see. I wonder what you would miss seeing the most? Imagine how the blind man felt when Jesus made him see again!

(Pebble prayers for people we know who are sick).

These two Encounters are especially helpful towards Christmas

Jesus, the greatest Christmas gift of all

Props: Baby doll wrapped with 3 layers of paper.

Reading: 2 Corinthians 9:7-8

Comment: Play pass the parcel with the doll asking for care and using gentle Christmas music. (People will probably guess what's inside, but that's OK).

Read passage. I wonder if you are looking forward to giving gifts this Christmas?

God gave us the greatest gift of all at Christmas. Jesus. This great gift of love makes us want to give good gifts ourselves. What gifts will you give from God's love this Christmas?

What made the angels sing?

Props: Lots of Christmas angels all over the room.

Reading: Luke 2:13-15

Comment: This Encounter just before Christmas could help us understand what made the Christmas angels sing like that! It must have been something really, really amazing! It was, Jesus, God's Son had been born! God had come to earth as a human baby. How amazing! Each time you see an angel in the decorations, remember how amazing the true story of Christmas really is!