

# Ten Encounter Scripture Reflections Suitable for Spring Term

*It is important to use this Encounter early on when any groups are starting and at the beginning of a term as a reminder, to introduce and reinforce the idea of the symbolism of the candles in Encounter*

## Jesus, Light of the World

**Props:** 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.

## When we are worried

**Props:** Pictures of worried faces (see Further Resources). Small stones and empty jar to put them in.

**Reading:** Matthew 6:34

**Comment:** (pass around the pictures). All these faces show worry. Not everyone shows when they worry, but most people worry sometimes.

Perhaps you are worried about something at the moment. There are lots of people you can talk to about being worried at school, aren't there? You can also talk to Jesus.

Worrying about things in the future can be very bad for us. Jesus wants us to know he is there for us all the time, including when we're worried.

Take a stone. Hold it, and think about something we may be worried about. One by one, let's bring our worries to Jesus, and ask him to help us not to worry, but to know he is with us all the time.



*This Encounter focuses on the healing power of Jesus and can be used each term at any time, but is 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.

Today we're going to be talking about how Jesus can heal people. Everyone needs some kind of healing, headache, or much worse. Jesus healed lots of people in the Bible. Think of people we know who are not well, body or mind, and especially remember them in the next few weeks.

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

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

### Two Encounters about listening to God's voice

**Props:** Blindfold and 2 volunteers. Obstacles on floor, e.g. books. Volunteer 1 puts on blindfold, has to get from A to B blindfolded. Volunteer 2 gives quiet instructions to blindfolded volunteer.

**Reading:** Psalm 48:14.

**Comment:** We all need help finding our way sometimes, especially when we need to choose the right way, not just the way everyone else seems to be going. If we get to know God, and we listen to His voice, He promises He will always guide us.



**Props:** In advance, prepare a very short recorded message from a person who will be well known to everyone in the room, but not present, e.g. head teacher.

**Reading:** Jeremiah 30:2

**Comment:** Tell them they are going to hear a recording of someone they know well. Can they tell who it is? Play recording. How did they know who it was? Because we have heard their voice many times. The Bible says God speaks to us. Last week we thought about how God can guide us, but how can we tell if it's His voice we hear? By getting to know Him and listening to His voice often. The Bible is full of words God has spoken to people, and He still speaks to people today. Shall we be quiet and listen together for a moment?

***This Encounter can be used any time, but is especially good near Valentine's Day***

**Props:** 'Love is' pictures to pass round.

**Reading:** 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

**Comment:** I wonder what your ideal husband or wife would be like?

Not what they look like, but the way they might love you. This is how the love of God is described.

Imagine you knew someone who was like all these things all the time!

That's what God's perfect love is like.

***This Encounter is especially good to use during Lent***

**Props:** Card with the word SORRY printed on it (see Further Resources).

**Reading:** Acts 3:19

**Comment:** Quietly pass around the card. Ask them if they have ever had to say sorry for something. Tell them you have. Tell them the verse today reminds us that we all do things that don't put a smile on God's face. These things are called 'sin'. Read the verse again. The Bible reminds us to 'repent', which means to say sorry to God and mean it! The verse also says we will be forgiven by God if we do this. We are in a time of year Christians called Lent, which Christians use as a special time for saying sorry. We can say sorry quietly to God now. (At the end of a short time of silent confession, say, 'Thank you God that you have forgiven us'. Invite them to repeat this a few times).

## Three Encounters towards Easter

**Props:** None.

**Reading:** Luke 24:36

**Comment:** Is there anything you would find hard to do on your own? For me it's..... doing a service, thinking of new ideas for Encounter. Maybe you don't like being on your own in the dark. Make a circle and ask everyone to think of something they find hard to do on their own. Say the scripture verse, and repeat it several times. Tell the children Jesus said this after he died to his friends, and came back to earth in a way that means he can always be with us. He is still there with us when we don't want to be alone. He says, 'Peace, be with you' to us today. During the next two Encounters, we will be thinking some more about what happened to Jesus and his friends that first Easter.

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**Prop:** A cross, a large book and a globe,

**Reading:** John 3:16

**Comment:** Have you ever wondered why Jesus had to die on Good Friday? He didn't have to die, he chose to die. This verse from the Bible tells us something about it.

Use the large book on one hand. This represents all the bad things we've ever done, or sin, remember from the Encounter about Lent? It can sometimes be hard to move it and we need someone to take it off us. The other hand represents Jesus, who came to earth to live a perfect life to take the 'sin' off us (move book onto other hand). Now we can enjoy forgiveness from all the wrong things. Jesus gave his perfect life to say 'sorry' to God for us. Now we can enjoy complete forgiveness and freedom! Come back next week and hear the rest of the Easter story, it didn't end on Good Friday!

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**Prop:** Things that look old and worn out e.g. old slipper, pan, cracked pottery etc. Things that speak of new life e.g. bulb starting to push up, chicks, lambs, branch with buds, etc.

**Reading:** Luke 24: 1-6a

**Comment:** Pass around worn out things. These look worn out don't they? That's what Jesus' body was like after he died on a cross. His friends were so sad his body was in the tomb.

Pass around the signs of new life. These things all help us at Easter to remember the new life that is all around us. When some of Jesus' friends went to the tomb, they got the most amazing surprise! Read passage The angels told Jesus' friends he had been given a new life! The new life of Jesus was offered to anyone who believes this story. Life that will last for ever, even when our bodies are worn out and lifeless.