

# ENCOUNTER



## Frequently Asked Questions

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### 1. What is special about *Encounter: The Bible Timeline for Middle School*?

*Encounter: The Bible Timeline for Middle School* is an engaging and dynamic program designed to facilitate an encounter between your student and the living God found in Sacred Scripture. In this adaptation of *The Great Adventure Bible Timeline*<sup>®</sup>, author and presenter Mark Hart unpacks God's Word in a dynamic way that makes Scripture come alive.

### 2. What is *The Bible Timeline*?

*The Bible Timeline* is a revolutionary approach to Scripture that divides the Bible into twelve color-coded time periods that make the narrative thread of salvation history easier to understand. By progressing through these time periods, which are helpfully mapped out on a unique color-coded chart, you will learn the major people, places, and events of the Bible and discover how they all come together to reveal the remarkable story of our Faith. The timeline focuses primarily on the fourteen narrative books of the Bible that outline salvation history. This focus makes God's plan for our salvation as told through the Bible easy to follow, and Mark's video presentations bring it to life for your students.

*The Bible Timeline* will teach you and your students how to read and understand the Bible and will introduce the wonderful narrative of Scripture in a way that will transform your life.

### 3. Who are the authors and presenters?

#### **AUTHOR AND MAIN PRESENTER**

**MARK HART** serves as chief innovation officer for Life Teen International. A graduate of the University of Notre Dame and a twenty-six-year veteran of youth ministry, Mark is the best-selling author of over twenty books, a daily radio host on SiriusXM, and an award-winning writer and producer. One of the most sought-after speakers serving in the Catholic Church today, Mark's humor and his passion for Scripture are known around the world.

His multiple video series with Ascension—*Venture*, *Encounter*, *Altaration*, and *The 99*—have helped millions of Catholics, young and old, begin to read and study the Bible and engage the Catholic Faith in exciting and relevant new ways. A master catechist, Mark also serves as a book editor, speaking coach, publishing and marketing consultant, and a research fellow at the St. Paul Center for Biblical Theology.

Mark and his wife, Melanie, live in Phoenix, Arizona, with their three daughters—Hope, Trinity, and Faith—and a son, Josiah.

## COWRITERS

**COLIN** and **AIMEE MACIVER** teach theology at St. Scholastica Academy in Covington, Louisiana, where they serve as the campus minister and service director, respectively. Their decades of combined experience in ministry include youth ministry, Confirmation prep, speaking, training, visual art, and music ministry. Colin and Aimee have authored a number of popular programs with Ascension over the years, with *Receiving Jesus: My Guide to the Mass* and *Envision: Theology of the Body for Middle School* being two of their latest projects.

## PRESENTERS

**CHIKA ANYANWU** is a Catholic evangelist, former Confirmation coordinator/youth and young adult minister, and the author of *My Encounter: How I Met Jesus in Prayer*. Whether speaking nationally or internationally about prayer, human dignity, or being a 30-something single woman, she always puts the love and mercy of Jesus at the forefront of her message. Chika is a member of a beautiful Nigerian family, loves her coffee black, and desires sainthood for herself and you.

**FR. FRANKIE CICERO** is a priest of the Diocese of Phoenix, where he is the parochial vicar at St. Timothy's Catholic Church in Mesa. He attended St. John Vianney seminary in Denver, Colorado, and was ordained eight years later on June 16, 2018.

**ASHLEY HINOJOSA** is a doctoral student in moral theology at the University of Notre Dame. Prior to that, she received her BA in theology with a minor in pastoral ministry at the University of Dallas, an MA in theology through the Echo Program of ND's McGrath Institute for Church Life (where she served within the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston), and then went on to receive an MTS at Duke Divinity School. As a Catholic speaker and writer, Ashley has worked alongside organizations such as Life Teen, The Catholic Woman, and Ascension.

**TANNER KALINA** is cofounder of the *Saints Alive* podcast, an alumnus of FOCUS (Fellowship of Catholic University Students), and a team member of the National Eucharistic Congress. He hosts Ascension's *Envision: Theology of the Body for Middle School* series and has appeared in videos on Ascension Presents. He has also contributed video projects to FOCUS, EWTN, CatholicMatch, and YDisciple.

## 4. Who is *Encounter* designed for?

*Encounter* is designed for middle school students. The written materials and video presentations speak to the students at their spiritual, emotional, and academic levels. One goal of this program is to show students that they are not alone and that their experiences are shared by those who have gone before them in faith.

## 5. What is included in the *Encounter* program?

In the *Encounter* program, you will find a Student Workbook, Leader's Guide, and DVD set. Included in the workbook are *The Bible Timeline Chart* for Teens and a *Bible Timeline Bookmark*.

The **STUDENT WORKBOOK** provides everything students need to enter into and engage with the *Encounter* program, reinforcing the video presentations. Each lesson in the workbook has the following features:

- The Big Picture: Lesson Overview
- Opening Prayer
- Remember This! memory verse and optional *lectio divina*
- Warm Up activity
- Time Period overview and discussion
- Main content teaching
- Dive In video, discussion, and activity
- Quiz
- Biblical Character video, profile, and exercise
- Find Out More: more Bible stories for students to explore
- Living It Out: how to apply the teachings from Scripture to everyday life
- Closing Prayer

The **LEADER'S GUIDE** contains everything needed to facilitate a study group and is an invaluable resource for each group leader or facilitator of an *Encounter* study. It includes the contents of the *Encounter* Student Workbook with detailed leader's notes, lesson steps to follow, discussion questions, and additional activities.

**THE BIBLE TIMELINE CHART FOR TEENS** arranges the books of the Bible into twelve color-coded time periods, presenting the key people, places, and events of Scripture in chronological order. This innovative study aid shows how all the books of the Bible work together to tell the story of salvation history. The chart is the cornerstone of the *Encounter* program.

**THE BIBLE TIMELINE BOOKMARK** provides a quick and attractive reminder of the twelve color-coded time periods.

## 6. How many lessons are in the program? What topics are covered?

The program is divided into eight lessons. Below are brief descriptions of each lesson.

**Lesson 1: Introduction to the Bible**—This lesson helps students understand Scripture as God’s Word to them, relevant to their own lives and situations. It introduces students to *The Bible Timeline* and makes it clear that Sacred Scripture is God’s Word—and his Word to the students specifically.

**Lesson 2: Early World**—This lesson launches into the story itself, from the beginning. We begin in Eden and expand the story out into the world as it was through the Flood. We see God’s goodness and the ugly consequences of sin through the tragic story of Cain and Abel. This lesson will help students see that the story of salvation history is not in conflict with the claims of modern science.

**Lesson 3: Patriarchs - Egypt**—This lesson introduces students to the story of the Patriarchs, beginning with Abraham and continuing through Isaac, Jacob, and Jacob’s sons. These narratives help us understand how God drew a people to himself, beginning with the promises he made to Abraham.

**Lesson 4: Exodus - Desert Wanderings - Conquest and Judges**—This lesson journeys with the Israelites from slavery to freedom, and students will see that, as it turns out, it’s a long ride. The students will get a chance to consider the encounter that the Israelites, as a people, had with God as they were led out of Egypt and purified in the desert.

**Lesson 5: Royal Kingdom - Divided Kingdom**—This lesson dives into the stories of Israel’s kings. It is a chance to lead students through central figures like David and Solomon while also introducing them to the lesser-known King Josiah. The big idea is that Israel had to learn that God was ultimately their king, especially since human kings turned out to be quite imperfect.

**Lesson 6: Exile - Return - Maccabean Revolt**—This lesson journeys with the people of God through some dark times. The lesson explores the Exile in Babylon, the return of the Jews to Jerusalem under Persian rule, and the brutal time of the Maccabees under Greek occupation.

**Lesson 7: Messianic Fulfillment: Jesus and the Gospels**—This lesson is about the Incarnation, the life of Christ, and the Paschal Mystery—Jesus’ Passion, death, Resurrection, and Ascension. Students will see that God’s plan came to fulfillment in Jesus. The lesson seeks to draw students into the narrative of the Gospels with some specific stories at the forefront. While we survey the life of Christ, we take time to focus on Jesus’ temptation, the healing of the paralyzed man, and the disciples’ encounter with the resurrected Jesus on the road to Emmaus.

**Lesson 8: The Church (and Your Role In It)**—This lesson surveys what students have learned so far and then looks at the early Church, beginning with the election of St. Matthias. It emphasizes the role of the Holy Spirit in all things and considers how Pentecost launched a tremendous epic of growth, faith, miracles, and fortitude—perseverance amidst persecution. The lesson introduces students to the adventures of Saints Peter and Paul and to Priscilla and Aquila, a married couple who played a small but vital role in the early community of the Church.

## 7. How long is each session? How long is the program overall?

Lessons usually last 60 minutes, but we also include lesson plans for 45 minutes and 90 minutes in the Leader’s Guide to accommodate the needs of different groups.

Here is the suggested 60-minute lesson plan:

60-Minute Lesson Plan			
<b>STEP 1</b>	<b>Welcome— The Big Picture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Before session: set up and prepare.</li> <li>• Welcome students.</li> <li>• Call on one or two students to share briefly how their “Living It Out” plan from the previous session went.</li> <li>• Read “The Big Picture” aloud.</li> </ul>	5 min
<b>STEP 2</b>	<b>Opening Prayer</b>	Pray aloud as a group.	1 min
<b>STEP 3</b>	<b>Remember This! (memory verse)</b>	Read the memory verse aloud. Ask students to memorize it and remind them you will check at the next session.	3 min
<b>STEP 4</b>	<b>Warm Up (opening activity)</b>	Give instructions and complete the activity.	8 min
<b>STEP 5</b>	<b>Time Period Overview</b>	Review key words. Read the text aloud. Use the “If You Ask Me” prompts to lead a short discussion.	5 min

<p><b>STEP 6</b></p>	<p><b>Main Content Teaching</b></p>	<p><b>Dive In video (ranges from 6 to 13 minutes):</b> Make sure that the video and sound system are set up beforehand, and ask students to put away phones, close laptops, and avoid other distractions so that they can give their full attention to the video presentation. Play the video.</p> <p><b>Dive In text:</b> Review the key words. Read the section in the Student Workbook.</p> <p><b>If You Ask Me (discussion prompts):</b> Depending on the video length, choose one or more discussion questions and call on one or two students to share their responses.</p> <p><b>Got It? (quick quiz):</b> Complete the quiz question by question, allowing students about ten seconds to choose their response, and then review the answers aloud.</p>	<p>15–20 min</p>
<p><b>STEP 7</b></p>	<p><b>Dive In Activity (optional)</b></p>	<p><b>Option choice:</b> Choose this activity or the “Biblical Character Exercise.” Some activities may be conducted as a discussion, asking students how they will complete the exercise.</p>	<p>7 min</p>
<p><b>STEP 8</b></p>	<p><b>Biblical Character Profile</b></p>	<p><b>Biblical Character Video (5 min):</b> Make sure that the video and sound system are set up beforehand, and ask students to put away phones, close laptops, and avoid other distractions so that they can give their full attention to the video presentation. Play the video.</p> <p><b>Biblical Character Profile:</b> Read aloud the text in the Student Workbook.</p> <p><b>Biblical Character Exercise:</b> Choose the exercise or the “Dive In Activity.” Some activities may be conducted as a discussion, asking students how they will complete the exercise.</p>	<p>8 min</p>
<p><b>STEP 9</b></p>	<p><b>Find Out More &amp; Living It Out</b></p>	<p>Choose one activity to assign. Remind students that you will check in at the next session.</p>	<p>2 min</p>
<p><b>STEP 10</b></p>	<p><b>Closing Prayer</b></p>	<p>Pray aloud as a group.</p>	<p>1 min</p>
<p><b>Total Time:</b></p>			<p><b>60 Minutes</b></p>

**8. How do I preview the *Encounter* materials?**

You can preview the *Encounter* course for free at <https://ascensionpress.com/pages/encounter-the-bible-timeline-for-middle-school-free-preview>.

**9. Do I have to be an expert in *The Bible Timeline* to teach this course? What resources and support are available?**

There is a lot of information available for leaders in the Leader's Guide to help you teach the material confidently every step of the way. The program also features biblical experts who present engaging content in the videos for *Encounter*.

**10. Are online resources available? Can I purchase digital-only access?**

The entire *Encounter* program is available on our digital platform at [ascensionpress.com](http://ascensionpress.com). Here you can track students' progress, assign homework, administer quizzes, and more. Additionally, there are leader's resources on the *Encounter* homepage: [www.ascensionpress.com/encounter](http://www.ascensionpress.com/encounter).

If you're planning for a fully remote learning environment, the *Encounter* Online Course can be purchased separately.

**11. How is the Bible used in the *Encounter* program? Should I use a specific Bible?**

The Bible is the central source of learning for the *Encounter* program, and throughout each lesson students are encouraged to open their Bibles and dive into the Word. If you need Bibles for your program, *The Great Adventure Catholic Bible* is an RSV-2CE Bible that uses the same color-coded *Bible Timeline* Learning System as *Encounter* and is therefore an ideal Bible to accompany this program. It is published by Ascension and can be purchased separately.

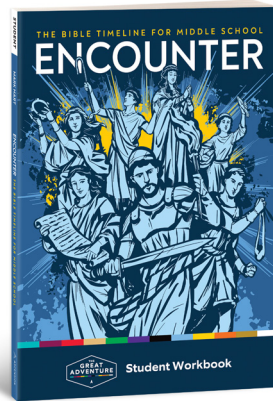
**12. What's the difference between *Encounter: Experiencing God in the Everyday* and the newly revised version, *Encounter: The Bible Timeline for Middle School*?**

The newly refreshed edition of *Encounter* features the same fast-paced humor Mark Hart brought to the original but with so much more! We've introduced eye-catching animation throughout the program, employing four different art styles to help keep your middle schoolers engaged. Each lesson still teaches the proven *Bible Timeline* Learning System, which has helped more than a million Catholics around the world to begin to read and understand Scripture. In addition to that, each lesson also has a biblical character profile, specifically chosen to illustrate a theme that will help your middle schoolers better understand how what they are learning in the Bible connects back to their daily lives. With a more in-depth Student Workbook and Leader's Guide, the new *Encounter* program is sure to help your students enter into God's Word more deeply than they ever have before.

**OLD Encounter**



**NEW Revised Encounter**



Visit [ascensionpress.com/encounter](https://ascensionpress.com/encounter) for more details.

