

TEC AND YOUNG ADULTS

By Fr. James Brown, OAR

These are just some observations with regards to young adults and TEC.

The TEC Manual (X-45-48) gives a good overview of whom we are speaking about when we talk about young adults. This material was gathered from my 20 years of experience as Director of the Office of Young Adults. I was also one of the founding members of the National Association of Young Adult Ministry, and served on its Board for more than 10 years. I refer to this background merely as a point of reference because there are many erroneous notions rife with regards to young adults.

I find them very easy to work with once you manage to make contact with them. **Making contact is a major issue.** They tend to be very busy. Casey, who used to work with me in this ministry, said it was like ministering in a bus depot—they are always going some place.

They have a tendency to be **socially more mature**. Their relationships tend to be much firmer than High School seniors. That is a great advantage for the TEC process. The dynamic of the TEC weekend tends to be carried out with greater depth. And the relations flowing from the TEC experience is generally more lasting.

In **choosing the members of the team**, therefore, one must choose persons who can interact with their level of maturity and facilitate their involvement in the spiritual dialogue of the TEC weekend. The members of the team must be a bit more astute than when working with High School students. They must actually enjoy being with this age group and not feel intimidated by them.

I have given two workshops in the Atlanta center which is totally young adults. I have found that the TEC weekend **does not have to be changed for them**. The TEC process adapts itself to the new level called for by young adults quite naturally. Young Adults, if anything, are hungry for spirituality more, seemingly, than teenagers. And their reaction to TEC is seemingly more lasting.

In recruiting young adults, it is very important that the first group have a very good TEC. If there is a good experience, **word of mouth will sell TEC** to the community. They are much more prone to share their convictions.

It is **a mistake to shorten the TEC weekend** to accommodate them. Care should be taken that at least the major thrusts of the weekend are done well. Any adjustments that may be called for must not be done arbitrarily by the individual centers. They must be carefully researched and approved by the Spirituality Committee of the TEC Conference.