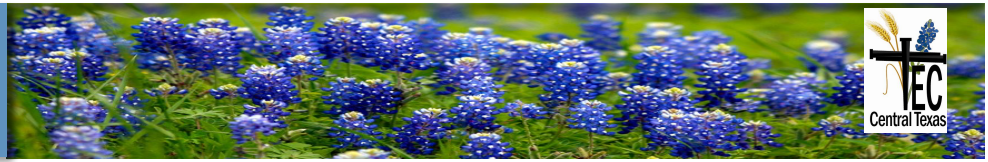


TEC of Central Texas

Mission/History/Method



Mission

Believing that the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is the core message of our Christian faith, we offer to youth and young adults the opportunity to encounter and integrate the Paschal Mystery at a time of passage through young adulthood. TEC is a recognized movement of the Roman Catholic Church, offering youth and young adults an experience of the Paschal Mystery of Jesus. Through evangelization and catechesis, this intergenerational movement facilitates spiritual growth of youth and young adults with a community of adult mentors. TEC calls forth one's goodness for service in the Church and world.

History

In the years following the Vatican II Council, Fr. Matthew Fedewa, a priest of the Lansing, Mich. Diocese, was inspired by the renewed vision of the Catholic Church and the centrality of the Paschal Mystery to design a retreat experience which would bring the essentials of the Catholic faith into clear focus for high school seniors and young adults. As a senior high teacher himself, Fr. Matt was well aware of the disenchantment of youth with the traditional retreat model. What initiated the first Teens Encounter Christ weekend was a request from a local adult faith community who asked for his help in creating a similar faith encounter for their youth as they had experienced in Catholic movements like Cursillo.

The first TEC weekends were held at a former nurses' residence hall on the campus of the Sisters of Mercy Hospital in Battle Creek, Mich., where Sr. Mary Concetta, RSM (Dorothy Gereke), the administrator of the hospital, hosted the weekends and helped to work out many of the practical details of the TEC weekend structure.

Providentially, at the request of the Diocesan Office of Religious Education, Fr. Matt was sent to attend five summer programs at Loyola University's Institute for Pastoral Studies in Chicago, Ill. Later, Sr. Concetta also attended. There he was brought under the influence of Fr. Alfonso Nebreda, SJ, highly acclaimed worldwide for his leadership in religious formation and the catechetical renewal after Vatican II. After having worked in Japan for many years, Fr. Alfonso was convinced that, due to the cultural shift of the times, ministry to youth in America had to adopt the approach of missionary catechesis, which meant that the Good News had to be presented within the context of youth culture. The second insight which Father Alfonso contributed was, "As soon as a person can act in a personal way they should be led to make a commitment by which faith becomes a human reality for them. To lead [persons] to an adult conversion and true commitment to Christ is one of the greatest challenges facing religious education." The priest believed that many youth had been sacramentalized without having been initiated into the faith vision consonant with their age and culture. Fr. Alfonso taught that there was a need to experience the core truths of the faith by persons at the time of a significant passage, such as youth moving into adulthood. Those are the times of faith crisis, and also times in which youth may opt to accept the Christian vision as the guiding norm for building their adulthood. For this reason, Fr. Matt deliberately chose to design the TEC process for those in the transition between later adolescence and young adulthood.

The first TEC weekend was held October 9-11, 1965. During the following years the movement met with great success in the Lansing Diocese, and was shared with many other dioceses, both near and far. Today 80 TEC programs are active in 59 dioceses, including several outside the United States.

In 1997, the National Manual for TEC was presented to Pope John Paul II by Archbishop Roger Scwietz, OMI (TEC Episcopal Moderator), Rev. James Brown, OAR, Rev. Matt Fedewa and Dorothy Gereke. In 2015, TEC celebrated the 50th Anniversary of its founding.

Together Encountering Christ (TEC) of Central Texas was established by a grass roots effort of many in the Diocese of Austin and TEC centers across the country. TEC of Central Texas conducted its first retreat in March of 2012. Two years prior to that first retreat, workshops and meetings were conducted to educate and train the retreat teams. The retreat was made possible with the help of the TEC Conference, the New Orleans TEC Community leadership and included team members from Louisiana, Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska and other TEC centers. TEC of Central TX is an active community that has grown in members: priests, married couples, single men and women, as well as young adults and teens. TEC of Central Texas is truly intergenerational to include high school and college students, young adults in their 20's and beyond with active members in their 60's and 70's.

TEC of Central Texas is affiliated and under the direction of the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry of the Diocese of Austin. It is guided by a core group of community members who work for the benefit of the Central Texas Community. TEC of Central Texas currently offers two retreats each year, which are staffed by a priest and a trained team of former TEC retreatants.

Method of Catechesis

TEC offers to youth and young adults the opportunity to encounter and integrate the Paschal Mystery at a time of passage into young adulthood. What the Church celebrates annually through the seasons of Lent-Easter-Pentecost and through the sacraments of initiation, TEC condenses into a three-day experience.

It provides a lived experience of the essential truths of our faith, drawing youth/young adults to a commitment to Christ and empowering them to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in our world today. Through evangelization and catechesis, this intergenerational movement facilitates spiritual growth of youth and young adults within a community of adult mentors.