

YOUNG ADULTS & THE CHURCH – WHAT’S ON YOUR MIND THESE DAYS?

A few weeks ago, I met with a couple of twenty-something parish young adults to get their take on the relationship of young adults to faith and church. They’re here most Sundays and I wanted to know what kept them coming back week after week even though they have demanding jobs and not a ton of free time.

As reasons for coming to Mass each week, they mentioned a sense of community (being part of something bigger and feeling supported by fellow believers), a time for reflection in the midst of a busy life, and an opportunity to find deeper meaning in life. When I asked why they think many of their peers don’t come to church regularly, they suggested busy lives, the ability of technology to create community in different ways, the feeling that the Church isn’t keeping up with the world as it is today, and a concern that the Church isn’t really listening to people their age.

The hour I spent talking with them was enlightening and encouraging and was meant to be a prelude to developing a parish outreach to young adults just as we’ve begun our outreach to parish teens in the past few months. They agreed that, just as the teens have begun their journey together with an act of service—last Sunday’s Pancake Breakfast—service would also be something that would be attractive to young adults. But even before we get to that point, I think it would be good to address the possible concern that the Church isn’t listening closely enough to young adults. This is certainly something that Pope Francis has highlighted over and over again during his papacy—the need for the Church to listen and understand where people are in their busy, complicated lives.

So for starters, I’d like to invite any interested young adults—college age thru twenty and thirty-somethings—to stop by and talk about where you are in relation to the Church and to your faith. I’ll keep time open this Thursday, May 3, at 7:00p.m. at the rectory and next Saturday, May 5 at 1:00p.m. in the Burke Center (south of the church, front door or side door). I just want to hear what you’re thinking, how you feel about Church and faith, what might help you to become more involved in the life of this parish and its outreach to the larger community. There’s no expectation of any further commitment, and if you have any questions to ask me, I’ll do my best to answer them. I’ll bring a book in case no one shows up (I don’t own a laptop or a tablet), but I’ll also be ready to welcome anyone who does. And if you’d like to talk but can’t come at those times, feel free to call (708-798-0622, ext. 2) or e-mail me at rkyfes@posjhomewood.org.

One way or another, at some point in the next few months, we’ll begin to highlight opportunities for involvement that might appeal to young adults; but before that, I’d like to hear more thoughts and ideas from you.

Fr. Bob