



Youth Ministry
Report to General Assembly
September 2019 to June 2020
August 9, 2020

“You Give them Something to Eat”

Mark 6:37

Diocesan Youth Ministry serves youth and young adults by providing faith studies, prayer gatherings, liturgical celebrations, rallies, events and activities organized and designed to encourage the spiritual journey of today’s youth and young adults.

Youth Ministry is an objective from the Pastoral Plan, 2013 Congress, which indicated the need to renew Youth involvement in our Parishes and Diocese.

Diocesan Youth Ministry team is structured to provide youth leadership throughout the various deaneries during the academic school year. Pope Francis Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation (Christus Vivit, 243) tells us “the Community and Parish has an important role in the accompaniment of young people and forming Disciples. It is a collective responsibility of accepting, motivating, and encouraging and challenging them.”

Deaneries of Sydney, Glace Bay /New Waterford, Inverness, Northside/Victoria and Richmond are led by Norma Blinkhorn, Youth Ministry Coordinator with Anne Stubbart and Nick Vince as CBRM Youth Ministers.

Guysborough and Pictou are led by Kevin Henderson, Youth Minister.

Deaneries of Antigonish and St.FX are overseen by Cathy Walsh, Youth Ministry Consultant.

Update on Youth Ministry September 2019 – June 2020

Steubenville Atlantic (July 2019) – One of the Youth Ministers organized and took a group of youth from CBRM to Steubenville Atlantic in July 2019.

ALPHA September 2019 – Training was provided to youth ministers and interested parishioners at Our Lady of Fatima in September 2019. This training resulted in ALPHA being offered in Holy Family, Sydney Mines; Our Lady of Fatima, Sydney River; Holy Cross / St. Anne, Glace Bay; and Guysborough/Pictou.

Youth Group and Alpha at St. Anne’s and Holy Cross started to meet weekly.

Alpha youth training, youth program and Holy Spirit Retreat led by Kevin Henderson in the Pictou Deanery.

Youth program and Alpha at Our Lady of Fatima and Holy Rosary Parishes came together for Alpha and Youth Program. Youth from last year's confirmation group were trained as youth leaders and helped in facilitating this year's program.

We had meetings in Port Hawkesbury to set up and plan for their Holy Spirit Day for the Alpha Youth Program at St. Joseph's Parish in Port Hawkesbury.

175th Diocese Anniversary (September 2019)

Youth ministry staff attended and participated in the 175th anniversary. They also attended Dr. Ann Jamieson sessions as professional development.

Pictou Deanery- (September 2019 – December 2019) Youth served in the ministries at Mass at various Deanery Churches. Youth volunteered at Shepherd's Lunchroom.

Cape Breton University Chaplaincy (September 2019 to March 2020)

CBU Chaplaincy – Two of the youth ministers were present at CBU Chaplaincy to offer the ministry of being present and available to international students new to campus.

Through the Chaplaincy at CBU Nick Vince assisted the Chaplain Fr. Doug MacDonald, with events such as Mass for Shut-Ins, meals, masses, prayer services, private prayer and reflection, yoga, Community Care Closet and etc.

Through the Chaplaincy at CBU Anne Stubbart assisted Sr. Catherine MacFarlane with chaplaincy events on Tuesday.

Social Justice Project Under One Umbrella Event – (October 2019) -The Community comes together to help those in need by providing services and resources that they may not be able to access. The services included Medical, Optical, Dental, Haircuts, income tax preparation and etc. With the aid of local volunteers, businesses, and donors a large collection of donated clothing and home items, are collected and distribute at the event. A hot turkey dinner is also provided free of charge. Confirmation students, youth and adults from our youth groups came to together as a group representing the Diocese to lend their volunteer services. They assisted with welcoming, sorting clothing, carrying large totes from vehicles to tables, and whenever they were needed. Our youth were wonderful ambassadors.

Alpha Experience at St. Benedict's Parish, Halifax – (October 2019) -Norma Blinkhorn and Anne Stubbart attended the Alpha Training at St. Benedict's Parish and Divine Renovation Ministries in Halifax, as professional development.

Day of Reflection and Visioning – (October 2019) – A gathering was organized by Debbie Aker and hosted at St. Joseph's Parish in Port Hawkesbury. Youth Ministry staff attended the day of reflection and Visioning as professional development. Charlene Peters was the facilitator.

Young Adults Supper with Bishop Dunn (October 2019) – Invitations were issued to Young Adults in the Diocese to join Bishop Dunn for dialogue and dinner. This event was held at Holy Family Parish in Sydney Mines on October 2, 2019.

First Spiritual Exercises (October 2019) – A time of Ignatius Prayer was offered to youth and young adults in the CBRM area. It was held at Our Lady of Fatima for 5 consecutive weeks. Group was led by Norma Blinkhorn and Winnie Odo.

Family Movie Night – (November 2019) – Deacon Shawn Bigley and his wife held a family Movie night at St. Anne's parish in Glace Bay.

Youth Teaching Mass at Our Lady of Fatima – (November 2019) -Fr. Patrick O'Neill at Our Lady of Fatima hosted a youth teaching mass for young people to gather and learn about the individual aspects and history of the mass in an engaging and educational manner. Following the Mass, the congregation was invited to a praise and worship pizza party social in the hall.

Indigenous Heritage – (November 2019) -Anne Stubbart took her youth group to Membertou Heritage Museum to meet with Jeff Ward and his aunt to learn about the indigenous heritage and to make dream catchers.

Holy Spirit Alpha Weekend, Debert, Nova Scotia – (November 2019) - Coordinator of Youth Ministry attended the Holy Spirit Alpha weekend as professional development. The weekend was hosted by St. Benedict's parish in Halifax. Approximately 160 young adults were in attendance.

Hip-Hop Challenge for Climate Change at CBU – (November 2019) - Anne Stubbart, Father Doug MacDonald, and Sr. Catherine MacFarlane attended an evening at CBU to learn about Hip-Hop Challenge for Climate Change.

PAUSE Advent Retreat for Parents & Youth at Holy Family Parish, Sydney Mines, (December 2019) -Parents and youth were invited to attend an advent retreat led by Father Jim Oliver at Holy Family parish in Sydney Mines.

Advent Retreat for Parents & Youth at Our Lady of Fatima, Sydney River (December 2019) – Parents and Youth were invited to attend an advent retreat led by Claudia, Bert and Janelle Aucoin. The afternoon consisted of prayer reflection, food, and prayerful music led by Pat Moore. This event was not organized by youth ministry but youth and families were invited to attend.

Inter-Faith Symposium Our Lady of Fatima (December 2019) - This event was open to those interested in learning more about inter-faith communities. The speakers included Dr. Sheira, Jane Hanfinally, Sr. Margie Gillis, Dr. Pushpa Rathor, Barbara Weeinberg, and Dr. Maureen Sohall. The event was held at our Lady of Fatima. It was a success and ended with a beautiful meal. Youth Ministry staff attended this event as professional development and assisted with setup and decorating.

Christmas Pageant at Long-Term Care Unit in New Waterford-(December 2019) - Anne Stubbart took her youth group to the Long-Term Care Unit at the New Waterford Hospital, and they put on a Christmas Pageant for the residents.

Family Concert Holy Family Parish, Sydney Mines (December 2019) -A variety Christmas concert and play was held at Holy Family Parish in Sydney Mines. The faith formation children and confirmation youth assisted with the event. Over 300 youth and family members attended the concert and play. The event raise \$3,500.00 for faith formation and funds will sponsor two children through chalice.

Community Cares Social Justice Project (December 2019) -Norma Blinkhorn assisted Sr. Claudette Gallant with shopping, wrapping, and delivery of gifts for young adults at Community Cares who were in need.

Advent Coffee House – (December 2019) Our Lady of Fatima hosted a coffee house on December 12, 2019 for high school students and young adults. It was a time of prayer, song, trivia, worship and togetherness.

Coldest Night of the Year Walk –(January 2020) – organized by Pictou deanery. The event raise over \$1,500 for roots for youth shelter.

Planning & preparations for Winter/Spring Events (January 2020) - budget preparation and planning, coordinating, and preparing for spring and summer events. Coordinator of Youth Ministry Norma Blinkhorn was also involved in the preparations and planning for the installation of New Bishop.

Youth Group, Confirmation & Alpha meetings (January 2020) Weekly youth groups, confirmation and alpha meetings began at Ste. Anne & Holy Cross parish in Glace Bay, Holy Family parish in Sydney Mines and Our Lady of Fatima in Sydney River. Groups were cancelled March 2020 due to COVID 19.

Mental Health Piolet Project (January 2020) – On January 25, 2020 youth ministry and a team of leaders on the Northside organized a mental health awareness event at Holy Family Parish in Sydney Mines. A retired social worker Allan MacDonald led the evening on “How change affects our Lives.” John Ratchford shared his personal story on how change affected his life. The evening was open to confirmation youth, parents, and anyone interested in learning more about mental health. The evening was well received and over 90 youth and adults attended.

Youth Mass for Shut-Ins – (February 2020) Youth from the Diocese were invited to attend the taping of Mass for Shut-Ins one week as part of their confirmation service and to come together as a visible grouping of young people attending mass in their community.

Presentation on the Eucharist – (February 2020) Youth Minister Anne Stubbart planned and presented a presentation on the Eucharist for Holy Cross Confirmation Class.

Installation of New Bishop (February 2020) Coordinator of Youth Ministry & Consultant of youth ministry were involved in setting up, decorating, and hospitality for the installation of the New Bishop. They also organize youth to welcome new Bishop.

Chrism Mass Meetings (February 2020) – Youth Minister Anne Stubbart attended meetings to discuss planning for the Chrism Mass in April.

Hope Comes Home Conference (February 2020) – Norma Blinkhorn and Anne Stubbart attended the Hope Comes Home National Youth Ministry Conference and Director Days. Some of the presenters were Katie Prejean McGrady, Isabel Correa, Mark Gillies, Fr. Con O’Mahony, Naudia Gundert, and Emily Callan. Through our keynote addresses, we heard the unpacking fruits of the Youth Synod and we were given practical ideas and knowledge into the day to day ministerial life. We are called to be Jesus to young people on the road to Emmaus, to be there, to love them and to hear them. The model of accompaniment was the take away from the conference.

Director Days/Retreat (February 2020)- Josephine Lombardi led the retreat on Director Days. She shared practical wisdom and insights.

Restart Youth Ministry Conference (March 2020) – Norma Blinkhorn and Anne Stubbart attended the Restart Youth Ministry Conference at Light House Church in Glace Bay.

New Obstacles (March 19, 2020) – We encountered new obstacles as there was no physical contact with people. Churches and their building were closed due to COVID 19.

Mental Health & Addictions (March 25, 2020) – Due to the request on the evaluations of the Mental Health Piolet Project, youth ministry and a team of leaders on the Northside organized an event on Mental Health & Addictions. Event was cancelled because of COVID 19.

New Reality (March 19 to May 31, 2020) – During the pandemic youth ministry viewed online material to assist youth during the self-isolation process. They prepared packages to distribute to Youth Group for Holy Week. The packages consisted of a Catholic Youth Bible, pen, a wooden cross, activity booklets and Easter treats. Youth ministers stayed in touch with youth and their families through texting, emails and Facebook.

Youth Ministry team viewed online resource kit by Divine Ministries and Katie Prejean McGrady's webinar for helping youth through Covid-19.

Coordinator of Youth Ministry posted faith based resources such as movies, devotionals, prayers, pictures, and inspirational quotes on Youth Ministry Face book page.

Youth ministry team took part in the online presentations for preparing and presenting an Online Alpha Sessions. Some of the webinars included building an effective prayer team, how to run Alpha online, how to launch Alpha online, how to launch a comprehensive online Alpha, empowering and developing leaders using Alpha, online Alpha boot camp, online Alpha core team boot camp, real people Virtual Alpha and Alpha builder new resources.

Youth ministry took part in Bishop Robert Barron webinars such as Understanding the Real Presence of the Eucharist, 5 ways to bring your parish to life, and outreach to the unaffiliated.

Norma Blinkhorn, Kevin Henderson, Cecille Miller and Debbie Aker attended Weekly Zoom Meetings as a support and share group during COVID 19. The group shared insights, wisdom, resources and challenges.

As ongoing professional development youth ministry team attended the following webinars during the pandemic:

- 1) Mission in time of Pandemic, Dan O'Rourke, Father James Mallon, Kevin Burgee, and Father Michael Leclerc
- 2) Helping Catholic Dioceses ministering in the New Reality
- 3) Parishes responding to COVID 19
- 4) Text in Church, Tyler Smith
- 5) Leading kids and youth through uncertainty, Laura O'Rourke, Mike Tanner, and Matt Regitz
- 6) How to do digital Easter, Archbishop Mancini, Fr. James Mallon and Fona O'Reilley
- 7) Learning how to use zoom and host a meeting
- 8) New Evangelization Summit – U Evangelize, Peter Burak, Fr. Justin Huang, Michael Dopp, Sherry Weddell, and Nicky Gumbell

- 9) Imaginative Apologetics, Holly Ordway
- 10) Making sense of the Triduum in a World Apart, Dr. Anne Jamieson
- 11) 30 day retreat “Ascending with Ignatius” with Father Mark Thibodeaux.
- 12) Laudato Si, “A plan for a better world”, Stefanie DuPont & Rebecca Rathlione
- 13) Development & Peace Webinar, Sr. Aurea Cormier, Andrea Dsouza and Sr. Giorgette Gregory
- 14) Grandparents, Divine Renovation

Reading material as ongoing professional development included;

- 1) Christus Vivit, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Francis
- 2) Helping Teens with Stress, Anxiety and Depression by Roy Petitfils
- 3) The Art of Forming Young Disciples by Everett Fritz
- 4) Experts in Humanity, Josephine Lombardi
- 5) Our Father, Josephine Lombardi

Respectfully Submitted;

Norma Blinkhorn/Coordinator of Youth Ministry
Diocese of Antigonish

Youth Spring Rally (April 2020) – The Spring Youth Rally was to be held on April 26, 2020 at St. Leonard’s Parish in New Waterford. Nick Vince & Janelle Aucoin were going too led the retreat day with prayer, and talks on the Eucharist. Father Ray was going to end the day with a teaching mass. Event was cancelled due to COVID 19.

Respectfully Submitted by;

Norma Blinkhorn/Coordinator of Youth Ministry

