

## Archdiocese of Saint-Boniface

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## Youth Ministry

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## Introduction

This report is based on the 53 surveys that were completed and submitted to the Youth Ministry office for the purpose of evaluating the need for a Regional Youth Coordinator in the seven pastoral regions of the Archdiocese of Saint-Boniface. The surveys also provided insight into the question of Parish Youth Ministry within the Archdiocese of Saint-Boniface.

The following are abbreviations used in the report: **YM** refers to **Youth Ministry**, **PYM** refers to **Parish Youth Ministry**, **RYC** refers to **Regional Youth Coordinator**, **PYC** refers to **Parish Youth Coordinator** and the diocesan position is referred to as the **DCYM** or the **Diocesan Coordinator of Youth Ministry**.

When going over the results of the report several themes emerged. I will highlight these themes and include my own observations and recommendations based on the conversations and the feedback I received while I met with the pastors of each deanery.

For the position of DCYM, I have included suggestions and recommendations that I received while at the Canadian Catholic Youth Ministry Network (CCYMN) and New Diocesan Directors Orientation (NDDO) meetings in Toronto this past February. I have also included recommendations based on my experience this year as the DCYM for the Archdiocese of Saint-Boniface.

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## Statistics:

1. Of those surveyed (53 surveys), parishes with and without PYM were **equally represented**.
2. The parishes with PYM have an average attendance of **12-20** youth. One school has up to **30** youth attending YM.
3. **13 parishes** (list follows) have a PYC that organizes PYM and **3 parishes** (list follows) are actively working towards starting regular PYM.
4. Of the parishes that had a PYC, **6 parishes** (see list) indicated that they **paid** the PYC and one school paid the youth coordinator. The pay scale ranges from \$12 per hour to \$17 per hour. The other parishes depend on **volunteers**.
5. Of those surveyed, **60% indicated** that **other volunteers** also organized youth activities such as youth masses, ARISE, altar servers, music ministry and choir, and Knights of Columbus squires.
6. Of those surveyed, **35% indicated** that they have a **budget** for youth ministry in order to cover costs of resources, activities, supplies and programming. (For the parishes with paid PYC, the budget would include salaries).
7. Of those surveyed, **60% indicated** that the youth **participated in faith based programs** that were organized by Catholic groups (i.e. CSE camps or NET) and/or by Christian groups (i.e. local churches YM or Young Christians of MB). This means that youth are interested in faith based activities and programming and addresses the comment that youth aren't interested in such programs.
8. Of those surveyed, **90% indicated** that the youth also **participated in parish ministries** (i.e. altar server or choir).
9. Of those surveyed,  
**85%** communicate events to the youth through the **parish bulletin**.  
**50%** communicate events to the youth **face to face**.  
**50%** communicate events to the youth by **announcing it at the end of mass**.  
**35%** communicate events to the youth through the use of **social media**.  
**20%** communicate events to the youth by making a **phone call**.  
Less than **1%** indicated that they had **no contact** with youth.
10. Of those surveyed,  
**75%** encourage youth to attend an event **face to face**.  
**75%** encourage youth to attend an event by **announcing it at the end of mass**.  
**35%** encourage youth to attend an event through **social media**.  
**20%** encourage youth to attend an event by making a **phone call**.  
Less than **1%** indicated that they **did not encourage** the youth to attend events.

## Parishes with a PYC for YM

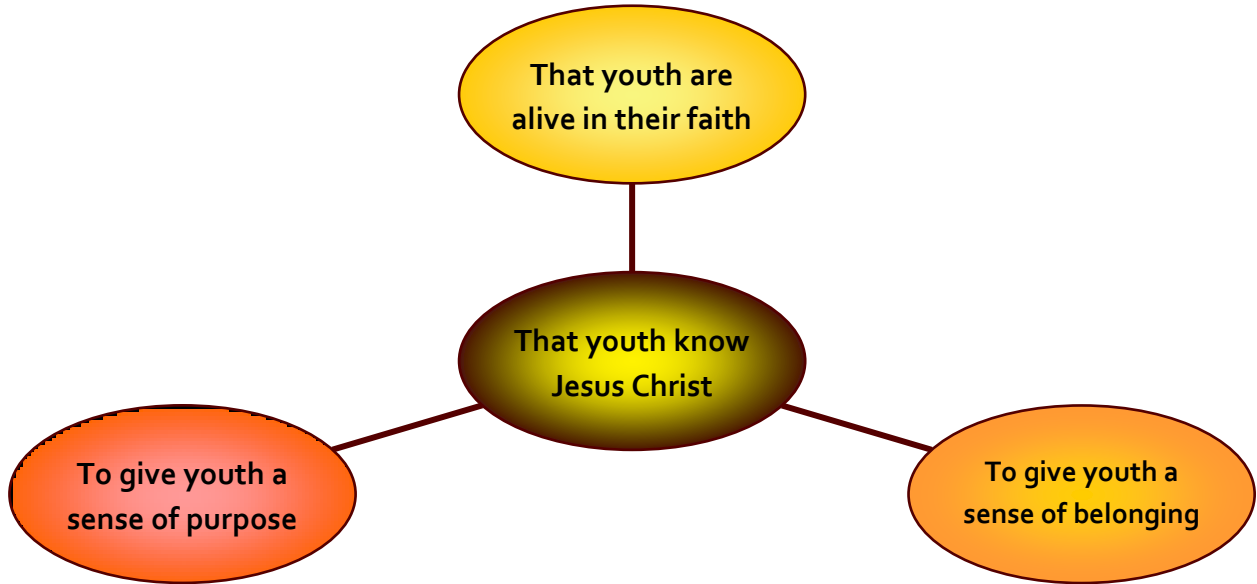
Parish	Paid/Volunteer	Coordinator	Approx. Youth #'s
La Broquerie	Volunteer	Paul Grenier	12
Steinbach	Paid	Jason Baize	(Ages 15-17) 15 (Ages 12-14) 10
Ste-Anne French	Paid	Ronda Lachance	12
Ste-Anne English		Gillian Moore	20
Lorette	Paid	Paula Granger	15
Powerview	Paid	Michelle Kotak	20
Holy Cross	Paid	Joe Madden	(2 groups, older and younger) 15
Holy Family	Volunteer	Gilles Marchildon	12
Mary Mother of the Church	Volunteer (Younger group combined with catechetical program)	Mar Lorenz Manaol Theresa Hill	(Ages 14&up) 6 (Ages 10-13) 20
St-Bernadette	Paid (combined with catechetical program)	Suzanne Lusty	10
Saint-Timothy	Volunteer	Kim Guidry	(Arise) 8 (Special event) 20
Blessed Sacrament	Volunteer	Paula Granger	8
<b>School</b>			
St-Boniface Diocesan	Paid	Maria Lique	30

## Parishes actively working towards starting regular PYM

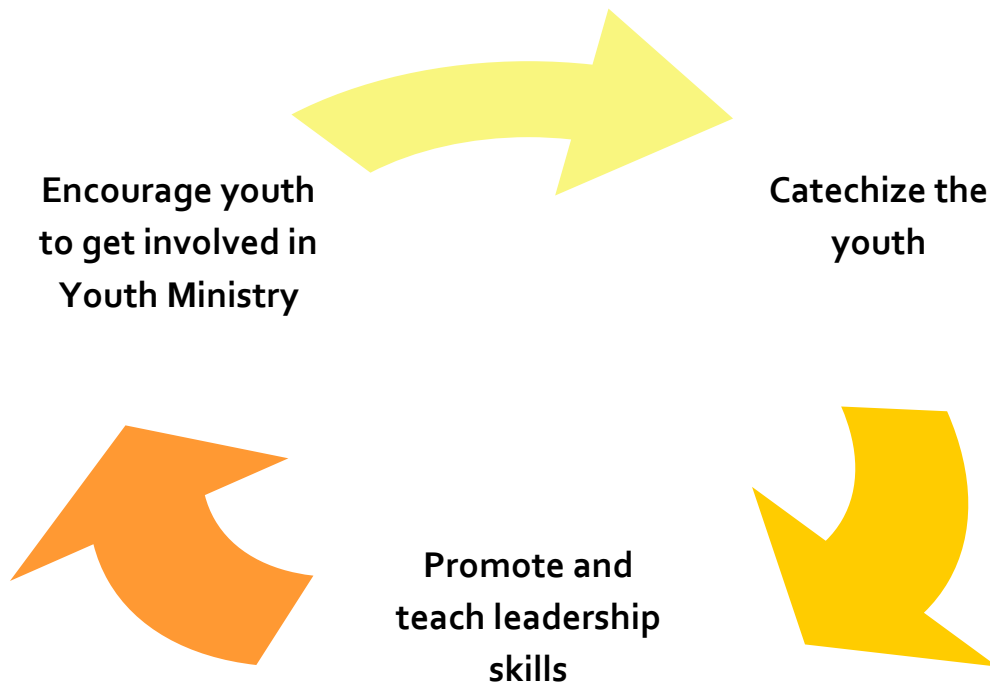
Parish	Contact person
St-Émile	Ginette Marion
Lac du Bonnet	Jennifer Pinto
St-Malo	Monique Catellier

## Priorities and challenges:

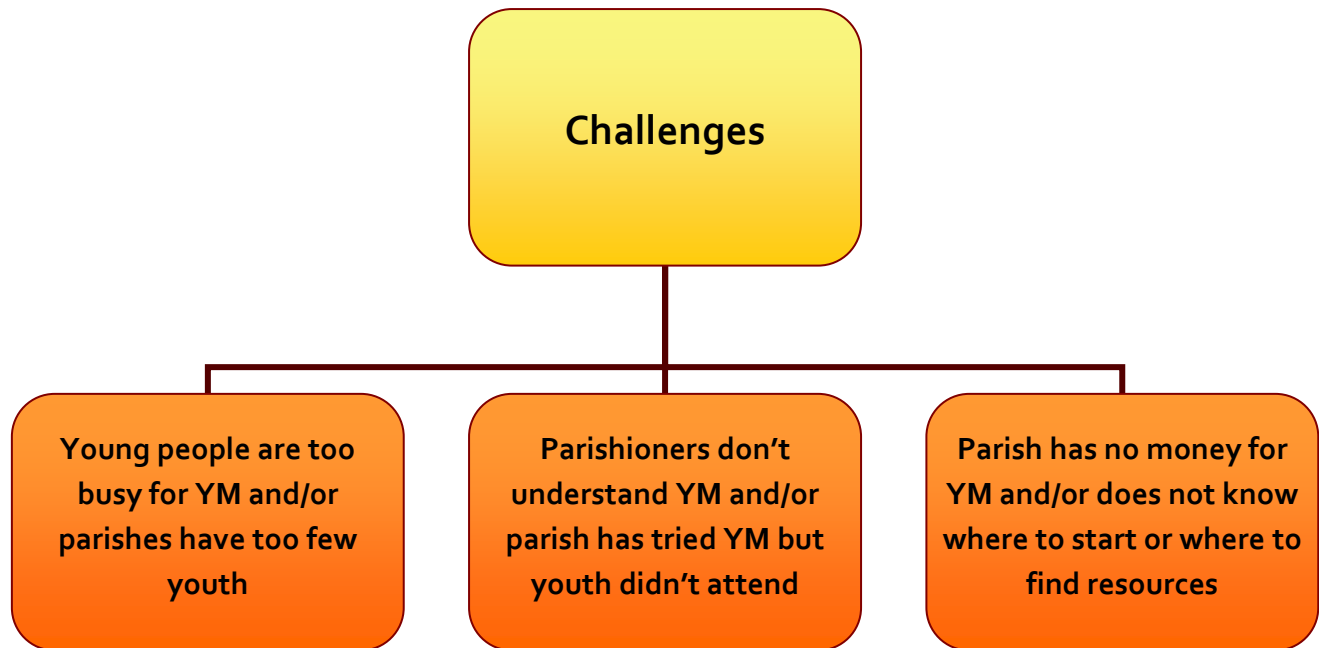
### Top hopes for PYM



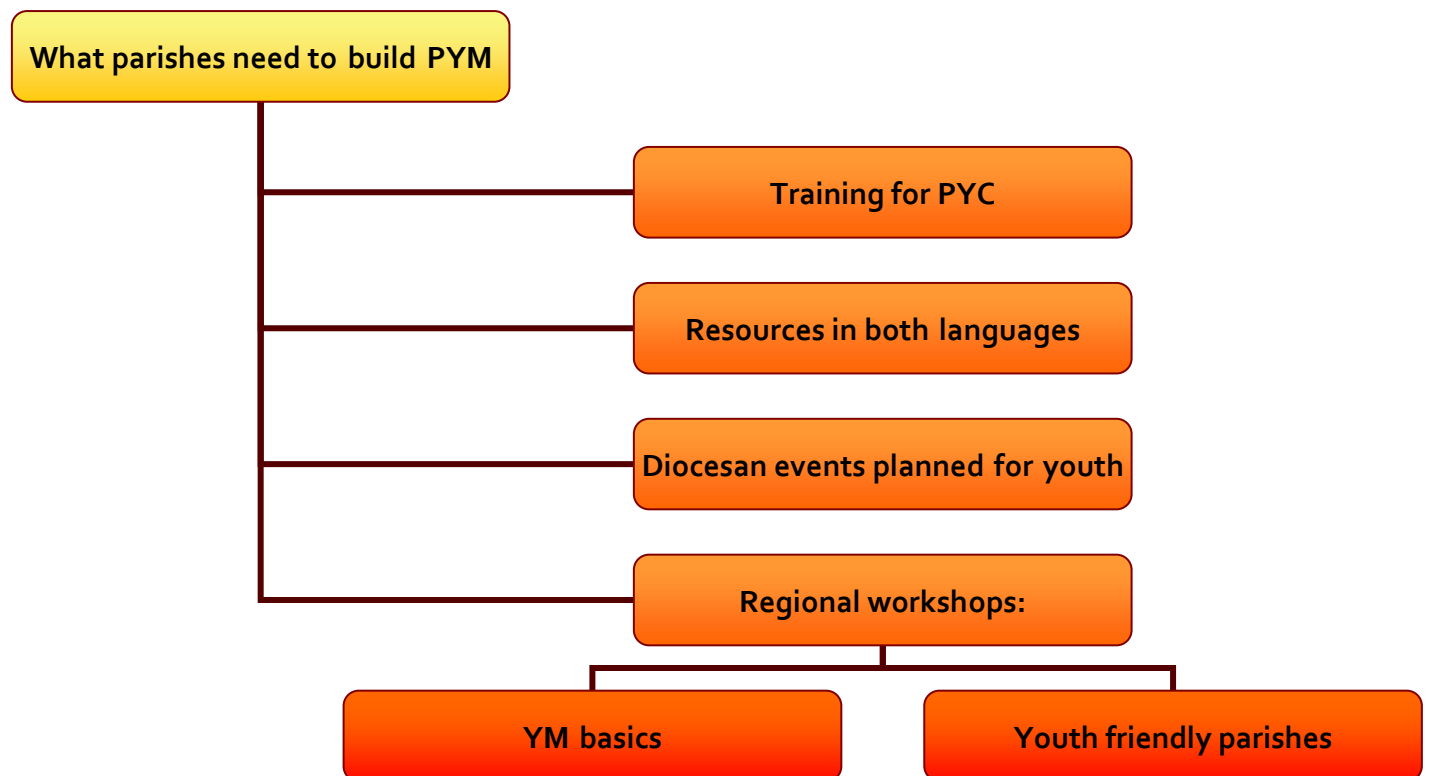
### Top priorities identified for PYM



### Top challenges observed in PYM



### Top items identified to help build PYM



## Observations and recommendations by themes:

When going over the results of the report, several themes emerged. I will highlight these themes and include my own observations and recommendations based on the conversations and the feedback I received while I met with the pastors of each deanery.

### Financing from the archdiocese

In part 3 of the survey, the participants were asked how they would apply financing from the Archdiocese towards PYM. The two most prevalent themes to emerge from the question posed are: (60% of the comments)

1. That the Archdiocese hire a **paid regional youth ministry coordinator** (RYC) for each pastoral region
2. That the Archdiocese funds **major events for youth** on both a regional and a diocesan level

The other 40% of comments included the following themes:

- That training and professional development for PYC be available
- That youth training be offered (i.e. leadership or music ministry)
- That a diocesan youth coordinator be a paid full-time position but that there be no regional coordinators
- General ideas for youth ministry events
- General financing comments (i.e. parishes paying for PYC and resources)

**Observation:** According to survey responses, several regions are in agreement that a paid regional youth coordinator would be beneficial to their pastoral region. However, not all 7 pastoral regions are ready for this step. There are some regions/parishes that have very little desire to grow PYM.

#### Recommendations:

1. That we use the Archdiocese's resources/funding within the regions where success is possible. Trying to do too much too fast could be detrimental to this initiative.
  - Once we've had success with RYC's, we could use that model and examine the possibilities for regions that currently do not desire PYM and see what can be implemented.
2. That training and support be provided by the DCYM for all the RYC's.
3. That there be ongoing communication and support between the DCYM and the RYC's.
4. That the regions that do not wish to hire a regional coordinator may still have access to those funds in order to invest them in their parishes that wish to start PYM's. That the DCYM would support these parishes.

## Support

**Observation 1:** There is a lack of support for the parishes in the Archdiocese that do have PYM and for the parishes that need help to begin and to grow PYM.

#### Recommendations:

1. That the DCYM focus on the needs of the parishes and start with those parishes that either already have PYM or want to begin and to grow PYM. This means offering:
  - resources in both French and English
  - formation and training for PYC and for RYC
  - diocesan youth events



2. That a RYC be hired where there is already PYM in a pastoral region in order to:
  - ✓ unite the region
  - ✓ initiate regional youth events
  - ✓ initiate regional workshops for PYC formation and training
  - ✓ initiate PYM for interested parishes in the region
  - ✓ organize workshops re: YM basics and Youth friendly parishes
3. That a RYC be hired where there is little or no PYM in a pastoral region in order to:
  - stimulate interest in PYM within the parishes
  - build relationships between the RYC and the families in the parishes
  - educate parishes about PYM and why it is beneficial

**Observation 2:** Some of the pastors hesitated to support PYM because they do not wish to see this initiative fall on their laps, adding to their already full list of responsibilities.

#### Recommendations:

1. That no one person is overburdened with this initiative but that a community effort is implemented. This would create an environment within which a RYC could successfully grow PYM.
2. That the Parish Pastoral Council, with the pastor, lay out a plan to involve the entire community by recruiting a few young people who are interested in this initiative and would accept to speak to the community to arouse their interest.

#### Comments:

The success of a PYM depends completely on the support of parents, pastor and parishioners:

- a. Without parent volunteers, this initiative is difficult and usually not sustainable.
- b. The pastors' support of the PYM must be visible to the community at large and the pastor would need to be present at key youth events whenever possible. His verbal enthusiasm and encouragement is important. His attendance during class visits with the RYC or the PYC in schools is a wonderful way to support PYM.
- c. Parishioners are a great moral, spiritual and financial support for PYM. Parishioners often take their cues from the parish pastor...enthusiasm is contagious.

## Parish finances

**Observation:** The parishes that have no money put aside for PYM usually don't grow the ministry. In the Archdiocese, only 35% of parishes surveyed indicated that they help finance PYM.

#### Recommendations:

1. That some financing from the parishes lays a good foundation. The Archdiocese can help by hiring a RYC to support the current PYM programs and to grow the ministry beyond what the parish alone can finance (i.e. regional events are an excellent way to pool resources).
  2. That the parishes that have no money can use the RYC to begin a program.
  3. That parish education be implemented by the RYC so that parishioners can appreciate the value of PYM and support the program spiritually and financially.
  4. That funds can be raised by the youth and by their parents with the help of parishioners.
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## Paid vs. volunteer PYC

**Observation:** Parishes that pay a PYC have longevity and continuity. Those that use volunteer PYC have programs that come and go and seem unable to sustain the program past the volunteer's involvement. Several parishes indicated that they had something in the past, but when the volunteer left, the program fell apart.

### Recommendation:

1. That an RYC be hired in order to offer the region stability, commitment and programming.
  - Volunteers are still needed in each parish; however, a paid RYC will help to ensure that the programming is sustainable, thus offering longevity and continuity beyond the volunteer's involvement.
  - The RYC will offer support to the volunteers and ensure that they are not overburdened.

## Communication with youth

**Observation:** Youth do not usually read the parish bulletin. Parishes are still using this method to communicate with youth about PYM. Parents may read the bulletin and communicate the event to the youth but that does not answer the need to communicate directly with the youth.

### Recommendation:

1. That parishes and regions need to hire a PYC or a RYC.
  - The time needed to communicate is substantial and often too big a commitment for volunteers. Some do invest the time needed; however, few want to take on this kind of commitment.
  - Personal contact to encourage the youth, either face to face and/or by phone, is essential and needs to be done as often as possible either after mass, at community events, at school if possible, and at youth events. Social media is a great tool for sending out details and for keeping an event in the forefront of the youths' minds; however, it is not usually enough to get the youth to the event.
  - Parents also need to be contacted by phone and by social media. This is a separate communication from the one the PYC has with the youth. Parents often offer more information than the youth do and can offer the PYC important details that a youth may omit e.g. he's not available because it's his weekend with his other parent, or he doesn't have a ride, or he has a music lesson.
  - Regular emails must be sent to the parents let them know what's upcoming in PYM and remind them to mark it on their family's calendar.

## Other parish ministries

**Observation:** Knowing that 90% of those surveyed indicated that they have youth participating in altar serving or choir, for example, indicates that they have youth who come to church. Involving young people in other parish ministries is a wonderful starting point.

### Recommendation:

1. That the pastor and the Parish Pastoral Council get youth involved in other parish ministries.
  - It is a great way to springboard into PYM.

- A PYC or an RYC needs to build relationships with the youth already involved in parish ministries and to find creative ways to meet the needs and interests of these youth so that they desire the fellowship and spiritual support that PYM has to offer.

## Too busy or too few

**Observation:** The youth have such full lives with sports, extracurricular activities, school and friends that youth group is not a priority for them. Also, there is a real challenge regarding the lack of youth in some parishes.

### Recommendations:

1. That parents need to get involved in helping to organize PYM.
  - If the parents value PYM, then their youth will attend. **The desire for PYM must come first from the families.**
2. That hiring a RYC to work with these parent volunteers is essential.
  - An RYC would be pivotal to this kind of regional initiative.
  - The RYC would connect with these families and build a PYM with them.
  - Where there are only one or two families interested, the parents need to organize with other neighboring parishes to start a group.
  - The RYC would organize the PYM, would lead the group, and would make sure that there are regular events for parish youth. The parents would be the “backbone” making sure that the RYC has youth to work with and that the parish is supportive of this initiative.
3. **Do not rely only on the parish bulletin.** Communicating personally with the youth and with their parents is essential.

## Youth friendly parishes

**Observation:** Parishioners that don't value PYM often don't understand why it's important. The lack of parishioner support and understanding can really affect the success of a group. Even the parishes that have an active PYM mentioned this challenge. Parishioners tend to judge where their money is going and feel that, if only 3-10 youth attend PYM, then this initiative should not be funded.

### Recommendation:

1. That parish visits by the DCYM and the RYC take place where PYM already exists and where PYM is being started.
  - This will help parishioners to understand that the success of PYM needs to be measured by the fruit that it produces (i.e. youth active in parish ministries, youth volunteering, youth participating in retreats) and not only by the numbers that attend.

## YM basics

**Observation:** Parishes who wish to build a PYM need workshops on YM basics to help prepare, support and train PYC.

### Recommendations:

1. That the DCYM prepares a “PYC bin” for each parish that wants to start PYM.

2. That the archdiocese invests in the "PYC bin" which would include, for one, the resources listed in Annex 1. This bin would be given to each new PYC after he or she attends a day of formation with the DCYM.
3. That a mentorship program be established by the DCYM to pair each new PYC with an experienced PYC.
4. That the DCYM offers regular workshops for training and support to PYC's and RYC's.
  - Workshops must be valued, relevant and useful. Professional development is crucial to personal and professional growth. The DCYM fosters an environment that would help PYC's and RYC's build relationships and create unity within the archdiocese.
5. That pastors support these PD days by making them mandatory and part of the job description for a PYC position.
6. That PYC and volunteers receive a fee for attending PD days.
7. That this fee comes from a separate budget so that their PYM is not affected by the time they invest in workshops and training (i.e. fewer hours with the youth).
8. That mileage and meals are paid for all those attending.

## Observations and recommendations by Pastoral regions:

This report is based on the 53 surveys that were completed and submitted to the youth ministry office for the purpose of evaluating the need for a Regional Youth Coordinator in the seven pastoral regions of the Archdiocese of Saint-Boniface. The following recommendations come from the replies to the surveys, the discussions I had with the pastors of each pastoral region as well as from my own experiences and observations with regards to parish youth ministry.

### Seine River

**Observation 1:** This is the most active pastoral region with youth ministry. Four of the eight parishes have PYM (La Broquerie, Ste-Anne, Steinbach and Lorette) and two parishes (La Salle and Ile-des-Chênes) are interested in initiating something.

#### Recommendations:

1. That hiring a RYC is essential to support those parishes that do have PYM by offering professional development, parent/parish education and regional events.
  - The RYC would need to support the two parishes that desire PYM. The RYC would have to build relationship with these parishes and offer youth ministry on a regular basis with the parents' support.
  - Communicating regularly with the DCYM must be implemented.
2. That the DCYM would provide resources and professional development.

**Observation 2:** The Steinbach Parish has a full time paid youth coordinator, a PYM that works really well and an active Youth for Christ community. The parish encourages both groups to work together.

#### Recommendations:

1. That the DCYM would have a meeting with the Steinbach youth ministry and Youth for Christ coordinators specifically to discuss how the Archdiocese can support their groups and involve them within the larger regional and diocesan community.
2. That regular communication between these coordinators and the DCYM is implemented so that both groups are encouraged to actively participate in any regional and/or diocesan events, training or workshops.

## Doyenné urbain français

**Observation:** This region wants support for PYM. They need guidance and training. The possibilities are good for regional events and for building strong YM in French.

### Recommendations:

1. That a RYC must be hired for this region.
2. That the RYC start with St-Eugène and St-Martyrs-Canadiens parishes.
  - St-Eugène already has a youth band for Mass. The RYC could use this as a springboard to grow PYM. The RYC would also work with St-Martyrs-Canadiens to build a PYM as there are many families attending this parish and a PYM is possible. Both parishes say money is an issue, but with a little creative fundraising they could begin to grow PYM.
  - That once the above-mentioned parishes have PYM, the RYC focus on La Cathédrale and Précieux-Sang.

NB. Some public schools still teach catechesis and a RYC should be able to visit the youth in these schools. These visits would be most successful with a parish pastor in attendance. A topic for the pastor to discuss in 15 minutes and then 15 minutes with the RYC sharing about planned youth gatherings, with handouts to take home, are effective. This visit would be best during the catechesis class.

## South Urban English Deanery

**Observation:** As of the writing of this report, I have not met with this deanery; however, I did meet with the dean. St. Boniface Diocesan High School has a youth ministry coordinator as part of staff position. Holy Cross and St. Bernadette have a paid PYC. Holy Family, Mary-Mother and St. Timothy have volunteer PYC. This area has 4 Catholic schools (Christ the King, Holy Cross, St. Boniface Diocesan and St. Emile).

### Recommendation:

1. That hiring a RYC is needed to help build and support PYM.
  - The RYC will offer support for the PYCs that are in place.
  - The RYC shall plan regional events for the parishes to help unite the regional youth.
  - The RYC shall visit the schools, with a parish pastor where possible, and start YM through the schools.
  - The RYC shall plan regional events for the school students in grades 7 and up.

## La Montagne

**Observation:** Four parishes expressed a desire to see something with regards to youth: Somerset, Manitou (already has youth retreats as well as the Passion play), St. Claude and Swan Lake (has ARISE).

### Recommendations:

1. That an RYC be hired to work with the individual parishes that would like to build PYM.
  - The RYC could offer one youth group event per parish per month. He would prepare one theme per month, and repeat it in each of the 4 parishes.
  - The RYC would have to build relationship with the parents from the parishes that desire PYM.
  - Parents would have to commit themselves as volunteers to support and help the YM for this initiative to succeed.

2. That mileage be paid due to the geography of the pastoral region.

## Kilcona

**Observation:** This pastoral region has 2 catholic schools (St. Alphonsus and St. Gerard) with grades 1 to 8. This can be an opportunity for PYM to be nurtured. Blessed Sacrament has started a PYM this year.

### Recommendation:

1. That the PYC at Blessed Sacrament be supported by the DCYM as this is a new initiative for this parish.
  - Hiring an RYC to visit the students from grades 6 - 8, with the parish pastor, can be a way to build PYM.
  - A noontime youth gathering could be implemented in each school on a monthly basis. This is one possible strategy for creating youth groups in this region.

NB. Family ministry was discussed and could be considered for this region. There are models of family ministry that can be tried. This, of course, would depend on the parishes' support and desire to grow such a ministry. This could be a pilot project with the RYC having a modified mandate. Close communication with the DCYM would be important and support would definitely have to be provided.

## Winnipeg River Deanery

**Observation:** One parish, Notre-Dame-du-Laus in Powerview, has a paid PYC and this parish has had a successful PYM for many years. Lac-du-Bonnet has expressed a desire to build PYM.

### Recommendation:

1. That it is necessary to hire a PYC for Lac du Bonnet.
  - The DCYM have to work closely with this PYC to offer training and support.
  - It would be essential to encourage mentorship between the PYCs in Powerview and Lac du Bonnet parishes as they share the same pastoral region and would well understand this area's challenges.
  - The DCYM will have to communicate regularly with the Powerview PYC to offer support and resources.

NB. This would be a challenging area for a future RYC because of the distances between parishes. I would recommend observing the La Montagne region before hiring a RYC in this region.

## Red River

**Observation:** There are no youth group activities in this region. St-Malo provided a contact person so that the DCYM can communicate with the parish. This parish has assessed the needs for YM and has expressed the desire to have a paid PYC. The other parishes expressed a preference that families be approached regarding any future initiatives rather than just the youth.

### Recommendations:

1. That it is necessary to hire a PYC for Saint-Malo.
2. That the DCYM work closely with this PYC to offer training and support.
  - The DCYM would have to work with this region to further assess each parish's possibilities.
  - The DCYM consider organising small, intimate gatherings on a per parish basis to help build links with the families and to explore their desire to initiate a ministry together.

For the position of DCYM, I include suggestions and recommendations that I received while at the CCYMN and NDDO meetings in Toronto this past February. I also include recommendations based on the experiences I had this year as the DCYM for the Archdiocese of Saint-Boniface.

## Diocesan Coordinator of Youth Ministry

**Observation:** The Archdiocese of Saint-Boniface needs a DCYM.

### Recommendations:

1. That the Archdiocese hires both a French and an English DCYM to better serve the needs of each sector. (possibility: a full time DCYM in English and a half-time DCYM in French)
2. That the DCYM works to fulfill the recommendations arising from the Youth and Young Adult Ministry Forum held in the Archdiocese in 2012. (see Annex 2).
3. That the annexes 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 be used to guide all actions and decisions that come out of the Diocesan Office of Youth Ministry.
4. That the DCYM use the form from Annex 8 to evaluate the current situation of the DCYM's office in the Archdiocese of Saint-Boniface and to help establish priorities and direction for the position.
5. That the DCYM use the current report to guide the decisions and actions taken regarding each pastoral region and the hiring of RYC's.
6. That the DCYM use Annex 9 to help with the hiring of RYC's and PYC's.
7. That the DCYM continue to collaborate with Ecumenical Youth Ministry Leaders (EYML) as well as the Archdiocese of Winnipeg and the Archeparchy of Winnipeg.
8. That the DCYM attend the annual conference for CCYMN as this is directly related to the DCYM's position and responsibilities.
9. That the DCYM makes it possible for PYC's and RYC's to attend the annual WCACYM conference as it is directly related to their ministry's position. The DCYM would need to attend as well.
10. That Spirit Day, Youth Rally and other such major events continue to be a collaborative effort between the 2 Archdioceses and the Archeparchy. That these events be evaluated on an ongoing basis and that changes be made when appropriate.
11. That the needs for Young Adult Ministry be examined and defined as to how it pertains to the DCYM's position.
12. That all forms of communication with the PYCs, the RYC's, the young adults and the youth be maintained and used effectively.
13. That resources are made available to PYCs and RYC's and that they are current and relevant.
14. That the question pertaining to YM certification program be examined and that recommendations be made accordingly.
15. That a vision for YM in the Archdiocese of Saint-Boniface be clearly defined and then articulated to all those involved in PYM.