



Report of the Bay of Plenty Youth Working Group to Synod 2013

BoP Regional Youth Facilitator: Jo Keogan

Chairperson: Adrienne Bruce (Bishop's Chaplain)

Youth Work in the Region

Jo Keogan as the Regional Youth Ministry Facilitator (RYMF) continues to work in the Bay of Plenty and alongside her colleagues in the Diocese. With the re-structuring of lines of accountability for this role, the RYMF now reports directly to the Diocesan Youth Ministry Facilitator, Jocelyn Czerwonka and the regional committee has taken on a working group role.

The RYMF role inevitably varies during different times of the year and the period leading up to the summer holidays involves Jo in preparations for taking the Diocesan group to Parachute. This is immediately followed by planning for Top Parish and with this event being held regularly in Rotorua, some extra planning and work inevitably falls on Jo. This last year saw a local organising committee steering the games preparation very successfully.

Another significant piece of work has been around on-going oversight of the Youth Interns as they live and work in parishes in the region.

The Leadership for Youth programme for young people has been another key area of work for Jo, both in visiting and supporting young people engaging in LT4Youth, those who have trained as mentors and attending the LT4Youth camps.

Youth ministry in parishes has reached a low ebb in the last year with young people moving on to tertiary education leaving a gap in the region. Jo has been deliberately visiting Bay of Plenty parishes to engage with them and encourage someone in each parish to undertake ensuring youth ministry is a priority, especially where there are only one or two young people in a parish.

This is not easy work as it requires a response from the parish personnel who also would love to see youth ministry flourishing but struggle with the realities. To be a person of 'hope' for parishes is therefore an important part of Jo's role.

Alongside this is the strategy being undertaken of making a difference to young people – one by one. The Bay of Plenty Youth organised a very successful workshop for last year's Youth Synod with Jo's guidance.

Youth Oversight Committee

The Working Group has continued with the same members this last year, but would welcome others joining from the region. The Regional Executive continues to place youth and families ministry in the region as a high priority and the committee wish to acknowledge this encouragement. The Regional Executive again provided a \$2,000 grant towards the buses for Top Parish as an acknowledgement that our young people do not have to travel as far as the other regions.

Wider Diocesan and National Work

The Diocesan Youth staff have met together regularly and Skyped weekly whenever possible. This assists in reducing the isolation of the role.

Finally as chairperson I would like to thank Jo, Jocelyn, Jenny & Richard as Working Group members for their commitment to this ministry in the region.

Adrienne Bruce (Chairperson) 21st July 2013