

Remember grade eight? Think of all the decisions you had to make. Family and friends were pulling you in different directions. High school was always there as a silent reminder that things were changing. As a Roman Catholic you were asked to personally accept the Church and the Holy Spirit through your Confirmation. All that “grade eight stuff” is what the grade eight youth group members try to figure out. Youth group is a safe place to ask questions, look for answers and find Spirit inspired guidance. Last year we tackled issues about family relationships, social justice, internet safety as well as others. Each meeting developed from recognizing what is important in the members’ lives and showing where Jesus can be found in any and all of these. Grade eight youth group members begin preparation for becoming leaders themselves, in their schools, communities and parish. They are actively involved in planning and facilitating the Christmas Party and a Welcome party for the grade fours.

My name is Jessica St. Pierre and I have been actively involved with the youth ministry of St. John the Baptist parish for six years. This past year has been my second time leading grade eights. Leadership and volunteering have become such a major part of my life. I began volunteering with the parish youth group because I felt a call to leadership. Youth ministry has taught me to find Christ in other people and their actions, even when they don’t see Him in themselves. I have met so many wonderful people who are there to support me. I have gained experience that has helped me as a camp counselor, and a big sister. It reminds me every week that there is a reason to keep trying to make a difference. After following with a group of members for 3 years and seeing them ready to take the next step, I know I’ve made that difference.