

# Catholic Courier

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## Anniversary of synod that changed the diocese

In July of 2002, 1,100 young people from the Diocese of Rochester flocked to Toronto to see Pope John Paul II for World Youth Day. That figure represents more than twice the number who ventured to Denver for World Youth Day 1993, according to Michael Theisen, diocesan director of youth ministry.

Of the diocese's 160 parishes, 150 are now being served by a coordinator or catechetical leader who does youth ministry, Theisen said, whereas only about 15 youth ministers served diocesan parishes 10 years ago.

What sparked such significant growth in diocesan youth ministry? Many would credit the seventh Synod of the Diocese of Rochester, which took place in 1993.

"The synod had a tremendous influence on the development of youth ministry in our diocese. An amazing number of parishes identified the best possible ministry with and for youth as a priority," said Bishop Matthew H. Clark.

Yet the youth ministry boom was only one of the revolutions to emerge from the synod.

### THREE-YEAR PROCESS

The synod brought together priests, religious and laity from around the diocese to choose five diocesan priorities from a pool of 48 recommendations that had been developed over a three-year synodal process. Bishop Clark publicly committed the diocese to implementing and sup-

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