



PRE-EVENT PRAYER & STATEMENT

PRAYER

St. John Damascene defined prayer as *“the raising of one’s mind and heart to God or the requesting of good things from God”* (CCC, #2950). Because we need to be mindful of God’s presence within the experience of CYO Athletics, prayer is an important part of what takes place at each competitive event. It is the hope that in remembering God’s presence in our program that our actions, on the competitive field and off, will reflect well upon the call of discipleship that we encounter in our baptism and in our participation in the life of the Church. We join together in prayer as competitors because in praying for the “good things” we are not praying for victory but for a fun, growth provoking competition that will incorporate performance to the best of our abilities, good health, good sportsmanship and an experience of fellowship with all who are involved.

PRE-EVENT PRAYER PROTOCOL

All competitions within CYO Athletics should begin in prayer.

Prayer for Grade School/Middle School Sports:

Creator God, as we prepare to play this (game/match),
we ask your help and blessing that we may participate to
the best of our abilities and with a true spirit of thankfulness
so that our efforts give greater glory to you.
We ask that you protect us from all injury and guide us in fair
play. Help us to respect our opponents as they are our
(sisters and/or brothers) also under Your Guidance.
For this we pray, in Jesus’ name, Amen.

Prayer for High School Sports from Knute Rockne:

Dear Lord,
In the struggle that goes on through life
we ask for a field that is fair,
a chance that is equal with all the strife,
the courage to strive and to dare;
and if we should win, let it be by the code,
with our faith and our honor held high;

and if we should lose, let us stand by the road
and cheer as the winners go by.
Amen.

While the cross country and track and field meets will begin with the “Prayer to See God in Youth Sports” prior to the start of the meet, the other sports should follow the protocol listed below.

A Prayer to See God in Youth Sports

We pray for young athletes...

Who through sports, develop important values such as loyalty, perseverance, friendship and sharing.

We pray for coaches...

Who appreciate the gifts of all players and have respect for the game, who place players before winning and value sportsmanship.

We pray for parents...

Who love their children for who they are, not for how they perform.

We pray for officials...

Who inspire fair play and protect the integrity of the competition and the participating athletes.

O God, we pray for all who participate in games and meets: May their hearts be open to see your presence in and through sports; may their minds remember the element of fun reflective of your Spirit; may their bodies reflect the gracefulness and wonder of your creation. Let all who compete be enriched by your presence on the course, in the gym, on the field, and on the track.

Adapted from the prayer by the National CYO Sports prayer cards available at
<http://www.nationalcyosports.org/>

PRE-GAME PRAYER

1. Coaches should discuss prior to gathering their teams how the Prayer will be led – designated captain(s) from each team, other players, or coach(es) leading it. If the game ahead of you is running late, you do not need to do the Prayer on the field or court, but please do it in a centrally located area – the expectation is that we do the prayer and handshake as an entire group not as separate teams;
2. Coaches should share with players and fans that a Pre-Game prayer for best effort, gratitude, health, sportsmanship and respect will take place at midcourt, midfield or home plate and that a Sportsmanship Handshake will be exchanged after the prayer prior to each game or match;
3. If there is a non-Catholic team competing in the event that day, the players will stand still, quiet and respectfully lined up on their sideline or outside their dugout as the Prayer takes place at midcourt, midfield or home plate;
4. Otherwise, teams meet at midcourt, midfield or home plate 5 minutes prior to the game and share the Prayer;
5. Players shake hands after the prayer and return to their sideline or their dugout – if a non-Catholic school is participating in the game or match, those players will meet their opponents

at midcourt, midfield or home plate for the Sportsmanship Handshake upon completion of the Prayer;

PRE-EVENT STATEMENT

In order to set the tone for friendly competition and good sportsmanship, a pre-sport event statement has been developed. It shall be the responsibility of the home team to designate a parent to read the following statement before each contest in CYO Athletics.

Champions are those that maximize their potential. We need to create the environment in which Champions are made. We will respect and support coaches and officials by remaining in the designated spectator areas. We will remember that youth participate for their enjoyment, not ours. We will remember our role as a fan and applaud good effort by all competitors. We will encourage the athletes to improve their skills, be good teammates, and play by the spirit of CYO Athletics.