

## CYO ATHLETIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

#### **A. Mission**

The Catholic Youth Organization (CYO), as a component of *the Catholic Schools Office*, assists the Bishop in his teaching mission by serving, challenging, and supporting the leaders of youth formation and education who minister in parishes and in the Diocese of Toledo.

#### **B. Focus**

The Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) is an athletic program designed to be a character builder for youth. The ideals of good sportsmanship and Christianity shall be the overriding influence of the program.

CYO Athletics should be viewed as part of the faith building efforts of the participating members. These programs can be effective tools that will invite, welcome and involve any person into the life of that faith community. The inter-relationship of CYO Athletics with family life, parish life, and school life, is essential.

Total participation is a main goal of the CYO athletic program. All who have the opportunity to be on a team also have the right to participate in the game. The young person, not the athletic activity, is our key focus.

#### **C. Spiritual Formation**

All those involved with CYO (athletic directors, coaches, parents, spectators, etc.) must never lose sight of the fact that this is a Catholic Organization and that each person serves as a minister of the Catholic Church. (See "The Parish and Athletics" Outline by Fr. Jim Bacik - Appendix I).

1. The Athletic Director, as a leader in the parish, must set an example and reflect the attitude of CYO athletics as a ministry to coaches and parents.
2. The coach sets the tone and gives direction to the individual team. His/her position must also be seen in the context of ministry to youth.
3. A team prayer must be included as part of all games and practices. Prior to the start of any CYO contest, athletes from the two competing teams and their coaches will meet with game officials and together recite the official CYO Team Prayer (See Appendix II).
4. Parish athletic directors and/or coaches are encouraged to meet with the parish pastor/al leader to schedule a team Mass, Reconciliation Service, Coaches' Commissioning, etc. This would also be a good opportunity to ask the pastor/al leader how the team could be of service to the parish community away from the playing field.

#### **D. Funding**

The CYO office in the Diocese of Toledo is funded by team & player fees from each sponsored sport, gate admissions, and donations from individuals. *The "Invest In Our Youth" program is a sponsorship program in which businesses can assist the CYO funding.* The CYO Athletic program in the Diocese of Toledo does not receive any type of "outside" funding (e.g. the diocese or United Way).