



The 5 Minute Game Plan

A Catechesis Supplement for Youth Sports

Spring Edition - All Grades

Created by Peter Piscitello, Executive Director, CYO of Johnson and Wyandotte Counties.

5 Minute Game Plan - Spring Sports

August 1, 2013

Dear CYO Coaches,

Greetings and welcome to a new year of CYO Sports! We're thrilled you have taken the time out of your busy schedule to be involved in such a fantastic ministry; by coaching our youth and helping them to develop as persons and athletes, you are making an impact that is larger than you probably even imagine. We sincerely appreciate your efforts to this end and look forward to working with you in the coming season.

The most important part of developing any child is helping that child to grow in his or her relationship with God. With that in mind, we have created the enclosed materials. Titled *The 5 Minute Game Plan*, the goal is for this to be exactly that: a 5-10 minute supplement to CYO practices that creates a curriculum for faith formation in our CYO. We have worked our Archdiocesan schools and School of Religion programs to create a program that supplements the specific themes and curriculum addressed in your child's primary faith formation. Of course, we have also taken into account that their primary formation begins at home. On this page and the one that follows, I will provide an overview of your role as a coach, and instructions on how to implement this new requirement within your team.

First, a quick word of encouragement. We understand that the majority of our parents weren't theology majors or may not even be comfortable praying in front of a group of children. I can assure you that this program has been developed so that it can be implemented by anyone. Simply follow these instructions and you will be on your way to a truly fulfilling addition to practice each week. It's as simple as following each week's lesson in this packet.

As you may have already noticed, this packet is split into a couple of parts. First you will find an overview of the entire year that includes the theme, scripture and saint for each week. Then you will find the individual "lessons." The requirement is simple: at your team's first practice of each week, you will need to begin practice with the lesson for that week. Lessons begin with the second week of preseason and go until the end of the season for each sport. Within each lesson, you will find the following:

- Theme: based on age-appropriate themes from school and religious education curriculum
- Scripture: a weekly scripture passage based on the theme
- Saint or Topic: a relevant Saint or topic that helps convey the scripture and theme
- Discussion Question: 1-2 Questions that help connect the theme to individual and team
- Practice Plan: A tip for coaches on how to make this theme come alive during practice
- Prayer: A prayer that will close the lesson and lead into practice
- Post-Practice Prayer: A simple reminder of the week's theme and closing prayer

That's it, a full lesson that should take 5-10 minutes depending on discussion and is fully scripted. We also encourage you to involve the children by having them take turns reading the scripture each week and say the prayers. Either the head coach or assistant should usually lead the saint/topic and discussion, but you can simply read the material on the page. You can certainly take some time to prepare prior to practice if you desire, but the program is designed so that you can simply take the lesson to practice and use it without preparation. We have also

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encouraged parishes to adjust practice times so that this time is “added” to the allotted time and not a part of your hour or so of practice time. Remember that this only takes place at the first practice of each week, though following up during other practices that week is a great idea.

Again, we appreciate your time as a volunteer coach and your implementation of this new requirement. Our goal is not to add to anything to your already busy schedule, but rather to create a program that can be easily implemented each week to greatly enrich the spiritual element of practice and supplement a child’s primary faith formation curriculum. As you probably already understand, the impact that sports has on children is dramatic and can be very positive; by connecting sports to concrete topics from scripture and theology, we hope to draw parallels that can help transform lives and deepen the relationship each child has with God. We hope that you’ll find this process to be fruitful and rewarding for your children and you as a coach.

Of course, if you have any questions do not hesitate to contact your Athletic Director or our CYO Office. Our office can be reached at (913) 384-7377 or by email at admin@cyojwa.org. More information about this initiative, including lessons for all ages and seasons, is available online at www.cyojwa.org. Best wishes this season and know I will be praying for you and your team!

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter J. Piscitello". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Peter J Piscitello
Executive Director, CYO

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Season and Practice Week Number



SAMPLE PLAN WITH INSTRUCTIONS

Fall Sports Preseason Week 1

Theme: The Trinity

Scripture: 1 John 5:7-9

Scripture length may differ based on curriculum in schools (if a specific verse is required in school, entire verse was generally placed here)

Read aloud by coach or child

"And the Spirit is the witness, because the Spirit is the truth. There are three witnesses, the Spirit, the water and the blood; and these three agree. If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater; for this is the testimony of God that he has borne witness to his Son."

Saintly Example: Saint Patrick

Coach reads written script aloud to team.

Saint Patrick is most well known for his work teaching the people of Ireland about Jesus, but he also gave us important teachings about the Holy Trinity. When he was teaching people in Ireland, he used a local plant called a Shamrock to teach about the trinity. He showed that the Shamrock has three leaves, but is still one plant; just like the Holy Trinity has three persons (God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit) but is still one. The people of Ireland were so inspired by St. Patrick's teachings, they asked to be baptized and have carried their love of Jesus and Mary all over the world! St. Patrick was known as a courageous man who worked his entire life to help people grow closer to God and to know about the Holy Trinity.

Discussion:

Read each bullet point aloud to generate discussion. Try to get 2-3 answers each or more if time and participation allows.

- Explain that the sign of the cross is a constant reminder of the Holy Trinity. As we say "In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, we remember that God is three persons and are praying that He will guide us in our prayer!
- St. Patrick used the shamrock to teach people about God, what are some ways that you can show that you believe and God and teach others about God at school and during our sports season?

Coaches are encouraged to try to get different kids involved with discussion each week so that all are being included in discussions through year.

Practice Plan

- Ask the kids to remember the Holy Trinity every time they make the sign of the cross and to think about ways they can help spread the gospel like St. Patrick did.

A tip or theme for the coach to consider in order to connect theme through practice. Don't read aloud.

Prayer

- Jesus, we thank you for bringing us together as a team in this new season. We pray that during all our practices and games this year that we can put you first and remember you in all that we do. Help us to be safe and to have fun this year. We ask this as we pray together the Glory Be prayer: Glory Be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, a world without end. Amen.

Prayer can be read by coach or by child and ends "before practice" portion.

End of Practice: Remind kids about the example of St. Patrick and ask them to think about the Holy Trinity every time they make the sign of the cross. Say the following prayer to close practice: ← Reminder of theme by coach.

Our Father, Who art in heaven. Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen. St. Patrick, Pray for us!

Closing prayer read by coach or child.

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3rd Grade - Spring Sports Preseason Week 1

Theme: Liturgical Seasons

Scripture: Matthew 9:15

“And Jesus said to them, ‘Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come, when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast.’”

Feast Days and Liturgical Calendar: Just like a calendar that we use to see what month and day it is, or who's birthday is coming, the Catholic Church gives us a calendar that tells us about all the special days each year. This is called a liturgical calendar. This special calendar begins each year with Advent and helps us to grow closer to Christ by setting certain seasons and feast days. For example, the liturgical calendar tells us each spring that the forty days before Easter are called Lent, so we know when to fast and prepare for the great celebration of Easter. The calendar gives us daily feasts so we can celebrate the saints. For example, did you know that popular holidays such as Saint Patrick's Day and (Saint) Valentine's Day come from the liturgical calendar? These two days were set aside to remember these two great saints so that we can learn from them and grow in holiness. The calendar also sets aside very special days called "holy days of obligation" where we must attend Mass on a day other than Sunday to worship God and celebrate a special holiday for the church.

Discussion:

- According to the Catholic Church in the United States, there are 6 "Holy Days of Obligation." How many can you name? Do you know when they are? (Answers: Immaculate Conception - Dec. 8th; Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ - Dec. 25th; Mary, Mother of God - Jan. 1st; Ascension - Thursday of 6th Week of Easter; Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary - Aug. 15th; All Saints - Nov. 1st)
- Can you name the major seasons in the Church's calendar each year? (Answer: Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Ordinary Time)

Practice Plan: Practice learning the liturgical calendar by figuring out which season you are currently in. Then decide as a team to spend just a moment at each practice reflecting on what day it is in the liturgical calendar. Assign each team member a day you will have practice and ask them to lookup what day it is in the Church (i.e. what saint's feast or memorial). Then ask them to come to practice prepared to tell everyone what day it is and one unique thing about that day or the saint we celebrate/remember on that day. Do this at the beginning of each practice before prayer - it should take less than a minute and help everyone to remember that each day is special and holy in the eyes of God. You may want to remind kids each week or keep a backup list yourself in case they forget. This information can be found very easily online. There are even phone apps that have this simple calendar so it's with you all the time!

Prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank you for each day you give us and the blessing of the Liturgical Calendar that helps us to follow you and understand more about you and your great saints each day. May we work to always follow you and observe each day as a wonderful gift. Bless our team this day and during this season, help us to always do our best so that we can use the talents you gave each of us. Help us to be good teammates and to listen to our coaches. Amen.

End of Practice: Ask for a volunteer to go home and learn about what day it is the next day you have practice, so they can come back and tell everyone (see Practice Plan). Close with the following prayer:

- Our Father, Who art in heaven. Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

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3rd Grade - Spring Sports Preseason Week 2

Theme: The Last Supper

Scripture: Luke 22: 17-19

“And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, ‘Take this, and divide it among yourselves; for I tell you that from now on I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.’ And he took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it and gave it to them, saying, ‘This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.’”

Saintly Example: St. Thomas Aquinas

St. Thomas Aquinas was a great student and teacher who lived over 800 years ago. He was so smart and holy that we still learn a lot from him about God today. One of the things he talked and wrote about was the Eucharist, which we heard about today when we read about the Last Supper. At that supper, Jesus took ordinary bread and wine and explained to His apostles that he would make it His very own body and blood, so that whenever his followers go to Mass, we can receive Jesus Himself! This great and wonderful gift is called the Eucharist. St. Thomas Aquinas called this gift a "sacrament" and helped many to understand what a beautiful gift from God this is.

Discussion:

- The word Eucharist actually comes from the word that means "thanksgiving." How do we show God each day that we are thankful for Him?
- How do we show God we are thankful for His love by the way we compete and participate in sports? Do our actions show that we are thankful for God and His many gifts?

Practice Plan: Focus on reminding the kids that everything is a gift from God. Be quick to praise their efforts at practice and encourage them to use their talents to the best of their ability. Be positive and remind the kids to always be thankful for the gifts God has given them, especially the sacraments!

Prayer:

- Lord, you gave us the gift of yourself in the most Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist. As we remember your last supper and your death on the cross, help us to be always thankful. Thank you for the sacraments which draw us close to you, thank you for the talents you have given each of us. Thank you for our priests, parents teachers and coaches who help us to know you and use our talents to the best of our ability. We ask that you bless our practice today; keep us from harm and help us to have fun and grow in faith. Amen.

End of Practice: Remind the kids to thank God for all the gifts He has given us and to receive the sacraments often. Close with the following prayer:

- Our Father, Who art in heaven. Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen. St. Thomas Aquinas, Pray for us!

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3rd Grade - Spring Sports Regular Season Week 1

Theme: Jesus Gives His Life for Us

Scripture: John 3:16

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”

Saintly Example: St. John

St. John the Evangelist was an apostle of Jesus and wrote several books in the bible. The Gospel according to John, three letters and the book of Revelation are all said to have been written by John. He was a very holy man who was among the first apostles called by Jesus and stayed with Him until he died on the cross. In fact, on the cross Jesus tells John to take care of His mother Mary, a very special privilege! John was there to see Jesus after he rose from the dead and he went all over the world teaching people about Jesus. He knew first-hand that Jesus was the way to eternal life and he wrote all the things Jesus taught so that everyone could follow The Lord.

Discussion:

- Jesus died on the cross so that we could have eternal life in heaven. Since He gave His life for us, that must mean He loves us very much. How do we show Jesus we love Him too each day?
- Jesus also showed us how we are supposed to love each other. How can we treat our teammates in a way that shows this love and follows the way Jesus taught us?

Practice Plan: Focus on ways that kids can help their teammates and reflect Christ's love for us. This could be as simple as helping another kid during practice, helping someone up when they fall, or listening to them when they need a friend. Remind them that Jesus died for us because he loves us so much, so we are called to love each other each day.

Prayer:

- God of Love, you gave us your only Son and He died for us on the cross so that we might have eternal life. Help us to love you and to love each other as you taught. May we follow the example of St. John and follow you each day, no matter where you lead us, knowing that if we follow you we will someday know the joy of heaven. During this practice may you help us to treat each other with love by helping each other, working together to achieve our goals, and doing everything to the best of our ability. May we always encourage others and spread your message in everything that we do, just as St. John did. We ask this through Christ, our Lord, Amen.

End of Practice: Remind the kids that God gave His only son so that we might have eternal life. Encourage them to treat everyone with the same love that Jesus showed us. Close with the following prayer:

- Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever. Amen. St. John, Pray for Us!

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3rd Grade - Spring Sports Regular Season Week 2

Theme: Apostles Creed

Scripture: Luke 10:1-3

“After this the Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to come. And he said to them, ‘The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; pray therefore the lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. Go your way; behold, I send you out as lambs in the midst of wolves.’”

Apostles Creed: This week we want to review the Apostles Creed that the children have learned about in their theology or School of Religion classes. This is most often used at the beginning of the Rosary. Simply review the creed (below) and ask the kids to help read it. Do discussion questions first and then use the prayer to lead into practice.

Discussion:

- The Apostles Creed states what we believe as Catholics and Christians. Have you prayed this prayer before? When do you pray this? Do you understand what we believe?

Practice Plan: Help affirm what we believe and recite in the Apostles Creed during practice. Remind the kids in simple ways by affirming their faith. Be positive during practice and encourage kids in all they do.

Prayer: Recite together the Apostles Creed:

I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting.
Amen.

End of Practice: Remind the kids that it's important to know the Apostles Creed and be able to say what we believe in as Christians and specifically Catholics. Remembering that Christ became man when He was born of the Virgin Mary, close with the following:

- Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women, and Blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

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3rd Grade - Spring Sports Regular Season Week 3

Theme: The Apostles

Scripture: Matthew 10:1-14

“And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and infirmity. The names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him. These twelve Jesus sent out, charging them, ‘Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And preach as you go, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without paying, give without pay. Take no gold, nor silver, nor copper in your belts, no bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor a staff; for the laborer deserves his food. And whatever town or village you enter, find out who is worthy in it, and stay with him until you depart. As you enter the house, salute it. And if the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. And if any one will not receive you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet as you leave that house or town.”

Saintly Example: St. James

St. James the Apostle was one of the original apostles, called to follow Christ with his brother St. John when Jesus found them by the sea. We know that both James and John left their father Zebedee at once and followed Christ, not even stopping to get their belongings or say goodbye to family. We also know that St. James must have had a special place for Jesus, as he was one of only three apostles (along with John and St. Peter) invited up the mountain to pray when Jesus was transfigured and showed his heavenly glory. We should all follow St. James example and follow Jesus each day.

Discussion:

- St. James followed Christ immediately when he was called. Do we follow Christ when he calls us? How can we better listen to Christ and follow him each day?

Practice Plan: Encourage the kids to follow instructions from their parents, teachers and coaches, but explain to them that following Christ is even more important. Focus on following directions with the kids today and explain that it's important they are better listeners in each part of life.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, we praise you and thank you for the example of St. James. When he was called by Jesus, St. James followed immediately, help us to listen for Jesus and to follow Him as well. Bless our parents, teachers and coaches who work to help us follow Jesus and help us to be better listeners for them too. May we grow in faith and skill during this practice by listening closely to all that is asked of us. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

End of Practice: Emphasize the importance of listening to parents, teachers, coaches and most importantly, Jesus. Ask them to think about whether or not they are following Jesus and close with the following prayer:

- Our Father, Who art in heaven. Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen. St. James, Pray for us!

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3rd Grade - Spring Sports Regular Season Week 4

Theme: Pentecost

Scripture: Acts 2:1-4

“When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributing and resting on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

The Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit is the third person of the blessed Trinity, completing the Trinity along with the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit might also be called the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, the Advocate and the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit came down from heaven during the Pentecost, which takes place weeks after Easter. It remains for us in the Church here on earth to guide and to help our souls grow closer to God. Just like we ask God for help with things, we can pray and ask that the Holy Spirit is with us and guides us as we make important decisions and do things each day.

Discussion:

- In what kinds of things might we ask the Holy Spirit to guide us each day? How can the Holy Spirit help us at home? In school? On our teams?

Practice Plan: The Holy Spirit can be a tricky subject to teach, particularly for young children. Encourage the kids to ask questions of their teachers and parents so that they can more fully understand what the Church teaches about the third person of the Trinity. Encourage them to seek guidance from the Holy Spirit so that they can grow closer to God.

Prayer:

- Mighty God, from the love between you and Christ flows forth the Holy Spirit. May we pray that it comes upon us and guides us each day in all that we do. We thank you for the gift of our parents, teachers and coaches as they too help lead us and teach us about the Trinity. We thank you for the hard work of our coaches this year and thank you for all the improvements we have made through the season. Bless this practice that we might have a safe and fun time growing in the skills you have given us. Amen.

End of Practice: Encourage the kids to seek guidance each day by praying to God and asking Him for help in things big and small. Close with the following prayer:

- Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women, and Blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

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4th Grade - Spring Sports Preseason Week 1

Theme: The Sacramental Life of the Church

Catechism: CCC 1116

Sacraments are “powers that comes forth” from the Body of Christ, which is ever-living and life-giving. They are actions of the Holy Spirit at work in his Body, the Church. They are “the masterworks of God” in the new and everlasting covenant.

Saintly Example: St. Patrick

St. Patrick was a man devoted to the sacraments and worked to bring those sacraments to the land of Ireland when the people there were not faithful to God. He spent 40 years in Ireland working to convert people and build churches so the people there could worship God and receive the sacraments. When we think of St. Patrick, we probably think of the shamrock that has become popular with St. Patrick Day celebrations all over the world. Yet St. Patrick actually used this shamrock to demonstrate the Holy Trinity to people - with the three parts Father, Son and Holy Spirit. More than just a popular holiday now, his Feast day celebrates a faithful and holy man who was devoted to God.

Discussion:

- Can you name the 7 sacraments of the Catholic Church? Which ones have you received?
- How does receiving the sacraments make you a better person? A better son or daughter? A better teammate?

Practice Plan: Encourage those children who are Catholic to receive the sacraments often. Tell them to learn more about each of the sacraments and ask their parents when they can go to Mass or confession more often at their parish.

Prayer

- Heavenly Father, you give us the gift of the sacraments so that we may receive you even in the world. Through our baptism we were cleansed of original sin and committed to you, in confession we are able to be healed from our sins, and in first communion we receive your very body and blood in the Eucharist. May these gifts be for us a source of strength in all that we do. Guide us in our time at home, our school work and on this team during the season. Help us to work hard to meet our goals and perform to the best of our ability. May we help our teammates and listen to our coaches. We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen.

End of Practice: Once again encourage the children to learn more about the sacraments they have already received and those they will receive in the future. Close with the following prayer:

- Our Father, Who art in heaven. Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen. St. Patrick, Pray for us!

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4th Grade - Spring Sports Preseason Week 2

Theme: The Liturgical Calendar

Scripture: Matthew 9: 15

And Jesus said to them, "Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come, when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast."

Feast Days and Liturgical Calendar: Just like a calendar that we use to see what month and day it is, or who's birthday is coming, the Catholic Church gives us a calendar that tells us about all the special days each year. This is called a liturgical calendar. This special calendar begins each year with Advent and helps us to grow closer to Christ by setting certain seasons and feast days. For example, the liturgical calendar tells us each spring that the forty days before Easter are called Lent, so we know when to fast and prepare for the great celebration of Easter. The calendar gives us daily feasts so we can celebrate the saints. For example, did you know that popular holidays such as Saint Patrick's Day and (Saint) Valentine's Day come from the liturgical calendar? These two days were set aside to remember these two great saints so that we can learn from them and grow in holiness. The calendar also sets aside very special days called "holy days of obligation" where we must attend Mass on a day other than Sunday to worship God and celebrate a special holiday for the church.

Discussion:

- According to the Catholic Church in the United States, there are 6 "Holy Days of Obligation." How many can you name? Do you know when they are? (Answers: Immaculate Conception - Dec. 8th; Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ - Dec. 25th; Mary, Mother of God - Jan. 1st; Ascension - Thursday of 6th Week of Easter; Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary - Aug. 15th; All Saints - Nov. 1st)
- Can you name the major seasons in the Church's calendar each year? (Answer: Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Ordinary Time)

Practice Plan: Practice learning the liturgical calendar by figuring out which season you are currently in. Then decide as a team to spend just a moment at each practice reflecting on what day it is in the liturgical calendar. Assign each team member a day you will have practice and ask them to lookup what day it is in the Church (i.e. what saint's feast or memorial). Then ask them to come to practice prepared to tell everyone what day it is and one unique thing about that day or the saint we celebrate/remember on that day. Do this at the beginning of each practice before prayer - it should take less than a minute and help everyone to remember that each day is special and holy in the eyes of God. You may want to remind kids each week or keep a backup list yourself in case they forget. This information can be found very easily online. There are even phone apps that have this simple calendar so it's with you all the time!

Prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank you for each day you give us and the blessing of the Liturgical Calendar that helps us to follow you and understand more about you and your great saints each day. May we work to always follow you and observe each day as a wonderful gift. Bless our team this day and during this season, help us to always do our best so that we can use the talents you gave each of us. Help us to be good teammates and to listen to our coaches. Amen.

End of Practice: Ask for a volunteer to go home and learn about what day it is the next day you have practice, so they can come back and tell everyone (see Practice Plan). Close with the following prayer:

- Our Father, Who art in heaven. Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

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4th Grade - Spring Sports Regular Season Week 1

Theme: Organization of the Church

Scripture: Matthew 16: 18-19

“And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

Saintly Example: St. Catherine of Siena

St. Catherine of Siena was a great saint and is considered a "Doctor of the Church", which means her teachings and writings are especially useful to people for understanding God and our faith. In fact, St. Catherine actually began to see visions as early as age 6. She often saw guardian angels as they protected people around her. During her life, there were great disagreements among people in the church and she helped to heal disagreements and teach people what the right way was. She wrote many letters and prayers that are still studied today.

Discussion:

- The Pope is the leader of the church, who appoints bishops to lead each area of the world, and those bishops appoint priests to each parish. All these people follow in the footsteps of the apostles, who were chosen by Jesus himself to go out into the world and spread His gospel message. Do you know your parish priest? Do you know who the bishop is? What about the Pope? What do you know about our current bishop or Pope?
- These leaders of our Catholic Church are often great examples of holiness. Can you think of an example of something a priest, bishop or pope has done that we could follow at home, in school or on our team?

Practice Plan: Talk to your parish's Pastor or Associate Pastor and ask him to come out to at least one practice or event during this season. The visit doesn't have to be long, but often our priests are excited to get an invitation to visit and will enjoy seeing the kids when they have the time to stop by. More importantly, it gives our children a chance to see a priest outside the Mass. Perhaps the priest could give an encouraging message to the kids or simply stop by and say hello while they practice. This can have a great impact on the kids.

Prayer

- Lord, we thank you for the gifts of our priests. Bless our Pope, our Archbishop and our priests. We pray that these holy men will be guided by the Holy Spirit and that you will bless them in all their works. We pray for our Church today, bless her and help us to continue to spread your gospel on our teams, in our community and in our world. Bless our coaches who help us to practice and learn how to improve our skills. Bless this practice and help us to follow you always. Amen.

End of Practice: Remember to ask your priest to attend one of the practices or events, even just briefly. Close with the following prayer, asking for Mary to intercess for our priests and religious:

- Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women, and Blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen. St. Catherine of Siena, Pray for Us!

5 Minute Game Plan - Spring Sports

4th Grade - Spring Sports Regular Season Week 2

Theme: Communion of Saints

Scripture: Romans 12: 4-5

For as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function, ⁵ so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

Saintly Example: The Communion of Saints

In the Apostles Creed, we pray that we "believe in the Holy Catholic Church" and the "communion of saints." What is the Communion of Saints? It is the words we use to describe the group that includes the saints in Heaven, the souls in purgatory, and also all the faithful people living here on earth! The souls who have already entered heaven are called the "Church Triumphant", those souls who are in purgatory are called the "Church Suffering" and those of us here on earth are called the "Church Militant". All together, we make up a community (communion) of all the faithful of Christ. As part of this Church, we know that God always listens to our prayers and is here to protect us.

Discussion:

- Did you know you are called to be a saint here on earth? We often think of saints as those holy men and women who are in heaven, but the word saint also refers to all the holy men and women who love God with all their heart and soul. This is great news! How can you go about becoming a saint? How should a saint act? Does knowing that you can be a saint here on earth change the way you think and act?

Practice Plan: Focus on the idea that all the kids have what it takes to be saints simply by loving God with all their heart, soul and mind. This carries over to sports, where they can demonstrate this by working hard to use the talent God gave each child and help their fellow athletes. Encourage kids on your team to be saints each day by working hard at home, school and practice to follow God and to love Him.

Prayer

- Lord, you have called us all to be saints. May our actions here on earth be worthy of this title so that we may one day spend eternity with you in heaven. My we work hard at this practice to use the gifts you have given us and may we always treat each other with love, knowing that each of us is called to be a saint. Bless our parents, teachers and coaches who help us along the way and grant us a fun and safe practice today. Amen.

End of Practice: Remind the kids that they are all called to be saints and close with the following prayer:

- All Glory Be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, a world without end. Amen.

5 Minute Game Plan - Spring Sports

4th Grade - Spring Sports Regular Season Week 3

Theme: Giving Thanks

Scripture: 1 Chronicles 29:13

And now we thank you, our God, and praise your glorious name.

Saintly Example: St. Nicholas

St. Nicholas may be the most popular saint in the world today, and yet there's a chance you don't even know his real story! Many people think of St. Nicholas when they think of Santa Claus, but the original St. Nicholas was a man who lived over 1600 years ago. He was a bishop who was especially holy and is said to have performed many miracles. Perhaps he is most well known for his love of God and others that resulted in his giving gifts and helping those in need. He was so thankful for all that God had given him, that he chose to show this thankfulness by giving to others in need. It is said he never thought about himself, only how he could do God's will and help others. It is this love that has made him so popular throughout the world, even today!

Discussion:

- St. Nicholas gave thanks to God often and showed how thankful he was by giving to those in need. What things are you thankful for? How do you show your thanks to God? What might you be able to give to others who are in need?
- One of the things we are thankful for is the different talents God gives us. No matter how athletic or skilled we are, he has given us a talent that allows us to be a part of this team. How can we thank God and use this talent during practice today? How can we give the "gift" of our talent to our team in order to make others around us better?

Practice Plan: Focus on the idea of each individual child's talents and skills as being a gift from God. Be sure to encourage everyone to be thankful for these gifts and let them each know how thankful you are that they are using these gifts to get better themselves and contribute to the team. Praise each child's gifts, whether they are athletic skills or other traits. Encourage being thankful to parents, teachers, coaches and most importantly, God.

Prayer

- God, thank you for the many gifts that you have given us and all our friends on this team and in school. Thank you for our parents, teachers and coaches who help us to use our talents and gifts. Help us to constantly give thanks to You for all the blessings we have each day and help us to show this thanks by giving back to other people who are in need. Help us to find ways to help those in need in our schools, our families and our community. We ask that you bless us during practice this week. Amen.

End of Practice: Tell the kids how thankful you are to have them involved in this sport/team and remind them to always give thanks to God for His many blessings. Close with the following prayer:

- All Glory Be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, a world without end. Amen. St. Nicholas, Pray for us!

5 Minute Game Plan - Spring Sports

4th Grade - Spring Sports Regular Season Week 4

Theme: Grace

Scripture: Romans 5:1

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Saintly Example: St. Monica

Grace is the 'free' help God gives us to respond to his call to become children of God (CCC 1996). St. Monica is a great example of someone who had great faith in God and through her prayers allowed His grace to come upon her family. First, she prayed for the conversion of her husband who didn't believe in God. He converted to the Catholic faith before he died. Then she spent a long time praying for her son Augustine. Augustine was not a very good boy and did many things he shouldn't have done as he grew up, yet St. Monica continued to pray for him. She trusted God and knew that because of grace Augustine could be saved. After 17 years of prayers, Augustine finally found God and became a great saint. Yet it was not St. Monica or St. Augustine who could do this alone, but the grace of God which changed St. Augustine as a result of all his mother's prayers.

Discussion:

- There are all kinds of 'graces' that God can give us to help us lead holy lives. Do we ever pray to God and ask him for the graces to get us through a difficult time? What about praying for someone we love and asking God to give that person the graces he or she needs? We can ask for God to help us with all kinds of things, like giving us the graces to be kind to our brother or sister, or to help us pay attention in school, or even to help us be able to work hard at practice so we can get the most of the talents He has given us. What other types of prayers might we pray to God and ask him for special graces?

Practice Plan: The concept of 'grace' is often a difficult one for kids, but it is important that they learn they can pray to God and ask Him for anything. Focus on this and encourage kids to say special prayers during practice when they are having a particularly tough time. Simply asking God to help them get through a drill or to help them to be nice to another kid can be a big help. Encourage these types of prayers always, particularly as issues present themselves at practice that are difficult.

Prayer

- Heavenly Father, we thank you for all the graces you have given us that help us to be holy children and follow you. We thank you for the graces that come from the sacraments and we thank you for hearing our prayers. Bless our practice here today and thank you for this season which has helped us to grow closer to you and grow in our athletic skill. We thank you for our coaches and our teammates. Bless each of us and help us to grow closer to you through this practice. Amen.

End of Practice: Continue to encourage prayer and close practice with the following prayer:

- Our Father, Who art in heaven. Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen. St. Monica, Pray for us!

5 Minute Game Plan - Spring Sports

5th Grade - Spring Sports Preseason Week 1

Theme: The Holy Bible & Scripture

Scripture: Matthew 5: 18-19

For truly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. ¹⁹ Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but he who does them and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Saintly Example: St. Luke

St. Luke is perhaps most well known as the writer of both the Gospel with his name and the Acts of the Apostles, the book that is placed in the bible after the gospels. In the Acts of the Apostles, we learn a lot about the apostles of Jesus and what their lives were like as they proclaimed Jesus to the world after His death on the cross. We also learn a lot of interesting things about Jesus in Luke's gospel. In Luke's gospel we hear the story of the Annunciation and even get the words to the Hail Mary prayer!

Discussion:

- Do you have a favorite book in the Bible? Do you have a favorite Bible story? Share with your team and find out what their favorite scripture stories are!
- Many different athletes have a favorite scripture verse that they use for inspiration. Some read a verse before each competition or write their favorite verse on their shoes. Why do you think it's so important to know the stories in the Bible and how can they help you during your competition this season?

Practice Plan: Come up with a verse in scripture to use as inspiration for the team this year. This doesn't have to be hard and can be selected by either the kids or the coaches. Make it something short that the kids can remember - recite it at practices or events and think of creative ways to use it as inspiration and as a reminder of God's love throughout the season.

Prayer

- Heavenly Father, you give us the gift of scripture and the Holy Bible so that we can learn about your mercy and love. Through scripture we learn the story of salvation history and our redemption in the life and death of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Help us to use scripture to grow in our relationship with you and inspire us in our athletic competition. Bless our team and our coaches this year and thank you for the gift they are to all of us. May we have a safe and fun practice this week. Amen.

End of Practice: Ask the kids to bring back ideas for your team's scripture verse to the next practice, or if you have one in mind have them go home and lookup that particular verse. This is a simple way to bring your team together and refocus the team and coaches on God each practice and event. Ask for our Blessed Mother's intercession for your team and close with the following prayer:

- Hail Mary, full of Grace. The Lord is with Thee. Blessed art Thou among women and Blessed is the Fruit of Thy Womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, Pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. St. Luke, Pray for Us!

5 Minute Game Plan - Spring Sports

5th Grade - Spring Sports Preseason Week 2

Theme: Spreading the Gospel

Scripture: Psalm 96: 3

Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples!

Saintly Example: St. Mark

We are all called to share the gospel with others, not just to keep it to ourselves. St. Mark (the Evangelist) was a great example of this call to share the message of Jesus, as he wrote the second Gospel bearing his name. He actually wrote the original words in Greek, which was unique because he wrote them in that language to convert the most people to Christianity in the early Church. He lived around 60 AD and made it his goal in life to share the message of Jesus with anyone who would hear him.

Discussion:

- Just like St. Mark, we are called to share the message of Christ and spread the Gospel among our own world. You can do this in a lot of different ways. What ways can you think of to help share the Gospel and the wonderful story of Jesus Christ in today's world? In your school? In your town? What about through technology?
- A witness to Christ and His message is someone who lives and acts the way scripture asks us to and treats others the way Christ would treat them. How can we be a witness on our team this year?

Practice Plan: Encourage your team to spread the faith in any number of ways. Perhaps most pertinent here, encourage them to be witnesses to Christ's love and mercy in the way they practice, compete and treat their teammates and opponents. Make this a focus of today's practice.

Prayer

- Lord, you call us to spread the gospel and to share your love with others. Help us to be witnesses to your unending love and great mercy. May our actions at practice and in competition help lead others closer to you. Help us to be willing to always share our love for Christ and our knowledge of scripture and faith with anyone we meet. During this week, keep us safe in practice and bless our family at home. We pray in thanksgiving for their support and love. We pray for our teammates and ask that you help us today to perform to the best of our ability. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

End of Practice: Remember to encourage everyone to be a witness to Christ in the world and to spread the faith in all parts of their lives. Close with the following prayer:

- Glory Be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, a world without end. Amen. St. Mark, Pray for Us!

5 Minute Game Plan - Spring Sports

5th Grade - Spring Sports Regular Season Week 1

Theme: Liturgical Seasons

Scripture: Matthew 9:15

And Jesus said to them, "Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come, when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast."

Saintly Example: St. Lawrence

St. Lawrence was a man of great faith who lived in the early years of the church, around 225 A.D. He spent a lot of his life helping the poor and hungry in Rome. However, not everyone in Rome was happy with the Church and some people were convinced that the Church was hiding money that belonged to the government. One of these officials ordered St. Lawrence to "bring me the Church's treasure." St. Lawrence, full of love for God, rounded up all the sick and poor and hungry who he had been ministering to in the city and brought them to the official saying: "This is the Church's treasure!" Though he was right and these people do make up the Church's treasure, the government was very angry and sentenced St. Lawrence to death by fire. Yet St. Lawrence was so in love with God that he accepted his martyrdom joyfully, famously telling the officials to "turn me over, I'm done on this side!" Before dying he prayed for the conversion of all those who didn't believe and persecuted him. He was a great example of courage and faith.

Discussion:

- The Church gives us certain seasons to help us on our journey as we grow in our relationship with Christ. These are times like Advent, Christmas, and Ordinary Time. During the spring, we go through Lent, when we fast and pray in preparation for the magnificent feast of Easter. How are you preparing during Lent? Did you give up something special? How does sacrificing this help you to grow in your relationship with God?

Practice Plan: Since practice this time of year will often take place during Lent, is there something you can symbolically give up as a team as a part of fasting during Lent? What's something that the kids enjoy doing during practice or meets that you could forgo until after Easter, when you can celebrate the joy of the Easter season? Perhaps there's something at home kids could give up? Work with the team to think of something (let them choose) and put that plan in to action.

Prayer

- Lord, you give us the different seasons of the Liturgical Calendar so that we might grow closer to you through preparation and celebration, ordinary time and special seasons where we remember your birth and resurrection. We pray that you may always help us in these seasons to come to know you deeper and during this particular time we ask that you may help us to grow in our relationship with you. Bless our team and our coaches as we practice today, help us to come to know you through our participation and teach us how to grow in skill. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

End of Practice: Remind the kids of the sacrifice they chose out for the team and commit to that until Easter. Close with the following prayer, asking God to help prepare you all for His coming glory.

- Glory Be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, a world without end. Amen. St. Lawrence, Pray for Us!

5 Minute Game Plan - Spring Sports

5th Grade - Spring Sports Regular Season Week 2

Theme: Holy Days of Obligation

Scripture: Colossians 2: 16-17

Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a sabbath. ¹⁷ These are only a shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ.

Saintly Example: St. Martin of Tours

From a very young age, St. Martin knew he wanted to be a Christian monk. Living in the 4th century (around 325 AD) in what is now Hungary, the saint was forced into military duty for the Roman army. At this time there were not many Christians in the military, so Martin had to work hard to live a Christian life each day. The most famous story of St. Martin took place when he was on duty in France. There, as Martin rode into the city in his fancy military uniform, he saw a beggar who was cold and ragged. While most men in Martin's position would have rode by, Martin did something incredible: he took off his large royal cloak and cut it in half with his sword, giving half to the beggar. People mocked and jeered Martin, but that night he dreamt that he saw Jesus wearing the half of the cloak he gave to the beggar. St. Martin went on to live a holy life and lead many people to Christ.

Discussion:

- St. Martin gave a great example of how we are called to live as Christians when he clothed the beggar with his own cloak. What do we have that we can give to those in need? This doesn't have to be clothes or possessions (though it could be), it could also be our time or talents. What is God calling us to give to others in order to lead them closer to Him and help those in need? Do you have any ideas?
- In addition to Sundays, the Catholic Church has several Holy Days where everyone must attend Mass. These days are Mary, Mother of God (Jan. 1), the Ascension (6 weeks after Easter), the Assumption of Mary (Aug. 15), All Saints Day (Nov. 1), the Immaculate Conception (Dec. 8) and Christmas (Dec. 25). Do you know the dates of these Holy Days? Do you plan to attend Mass on these days with your family?

Practice Plan: Remind the kids that like St. Martin of Tours showed us, we are called to treat everyone as though they are Jesus, for each person is made in the image and likeness of God. Focus during practice this week on making sure that the kids treat each other well. Work to heal divisions between kids and remind them often of our call to treat everyone this way.

Prayer

- Dear Lord, we thank you on this day for the example of St. Martin of Tours. Help us to understand that every person is made in your image and help us to treat everyone with love and respect. May you help us to heal disagreements or arguments with our friends and family so that we can live as you want us to. On this team, help us to work together to create a team where everyone is included and everyone can improve on the skills God has given him or her. Bless everyone here this week and bless all our families. Amen.

End of Practice: Remind the kids to put a special emphasis this week on treating everyone with love as Jesus taught us and St. Martin of Tours showed us. Close with the following prayer:

- Our Father, Who art in heaven. Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen. St. Martin of Tours, Pray for us!

5 Minute Game Plan - Spring Sports

5th Grade - Spring Sports Regular Season Week 3

Theme: The Resurrection

Scripture: John 20: 1-9

Now on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. ² So she ran, and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." ³ Peter then came out with the other disciple, and they went toward the tomb. ⁴ They both ran, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first; ⁵ and stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. ⁶ Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; he saw the linen cloths lying, ⁷ and the napkin, which had been on his head, not lying with the linen cloths but rolled up in a place by itself. ⁸ Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; ⁹ for as yet they did not know the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead.

Saintly Example: St. Thomas

St. Thomas was an apostle of Jesus who is best known for his interaction with Christ after the Resurrection. When the other apostles saw the risen Christ without Thomas present, he refused to believe them and told them he needed evidence to believe what they said. A week later, he got what he needed when Christ came to them again and Thomas was there. Thomas becomes an important witness to the Resurrection when Christ tells him in the bible to place his fingers on the wounds on his hands and his side. Thomas does so and professes that The Lord is truly risen! Though he is known as "Doubting Thomas" because he did not have faith upon first hearing that Christ is risen, he is an important example for all of us who are called to believe without having seen Christ.

Discussion:

- Do we sometimes need to be reassured of Christ's presence like Thomas did? What are some of the ways God reminds us He is always present in the world? Do you know anyone who is a great example of faith?

Practice Plan: Joyfully proclaim the Resurrection of The Lord! This time of year will often be just after Easter, when we have celebrated the Resurrection. Find a special way with the team to joyfully celebrate this amazing gift. Perhaps you could attend Mass as a team or have a special celebration at practice. It's important that all the kids understand what a great time of rejoicing this is.

Prayer

- Heavenly Father, in your death on the cross you died for our sins, but we know that through your Resurrection you give us all the opportunity for eternal life! We rejoice in you and sing your praises! Help us during this holy time to come to know you better and to work to become more faithful and holy servants, always seeking what you ask of us. Bless our team as we celebrate your Resurrection. Help us to improve on this day the skills which you have blessed us with. May we glorify you in all that we do. Amen. Alleluia!

End of Practice: Remind the kids that we rejoice in the Resurrection of The Lord. Implore them to believe and have faith like the apostles, not to doubt as Thomas did. Close with the following prayer:

- Glory Be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, a world without end. Amen. St. Thomas, Pray for Us!

5 Minute Game Plan - Spring Sports

5th Grade - Spring Sports Regular Season Week 4

Theme: The Holy Spirit

Scripture: John 20: 19-23

On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."²⁰ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.²¹ Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you."²² And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

Saintly Example: St. Matthias

St. Matthias holds a special place in scripture as the apostle who was elected after the Resurrection by the other apostles. It was important that there be 12 apostles (like the 12 tribes of Israel) and they had only 11 after the betrayal of Judas. When the apostles got together and discussed who would fill this role, Matthias was the choice. When we read scripture it is clear to us that all of the apostles were chosen for a reason: they were especially equipped to help spread the teachings of Jesus to the rest of the world and to be an example for us. Even though Matthias was not one of the "original" apostles called by Jesus during His ministry, he is no less important and indeed was called to do great things in Jesus name. For even though it seems that the apostles elected Matthias, we know that Christ called each of them for a reason and that this choosing was the work of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Discussion:

- Even though St. Matthias traveled with Jesus and the apostles through much of Christ's ministry on earth, he was not named an apostle until later. Have you ever felt like an outsider or been new in a group? Was this difficult? How can we work to include everyone in our team or in our group of friends, so that we can treat everyone as Christ calls us to treat them? Are we inclusive on our team and in school, or do we exclude new students or teammates? How does Christ want us to treat everyone?

Practice Plan: Make a special effort to assure that everyone is "included" in the team through the way you practice today. Perhaps you could run drills or practice in a way that teaches the team that they are only as strong as their "weakest link." This could include running at a pace where nobody falls behind or taking special care to assure that those who might normally lag behind in skill are included the same as everyone else.

Prayer

- Lord, you gave us the example of your apostles so that we might have faith and seek to become saints, spending an eternity in Heaven with you. Always help us to follow you and to treat everyone we meet with love and respect. On our team, help us to include every member not to exclude everyone. Help us to understand that you give each of us unique skills and talents, that we may glorify you through using these talents to the best of our ability and seeking the talent in others. We thank you for our coaches who help us to use this talent and we ask you to bless them today and always. Bless our team with a safe and fun practice. Amen!

End of Practice: Remind the kids that everyone is a part of this team and that we must all work together and pull for each other at practice and in games/meets. Close with the following prayer:

- Our Father, Who art in heaven. Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen. St. Matthias, Pray for us!

5 Minute Game Plan - Spring Sports

6th Grade - Spring Sports Preseason Week 1

Theme: The Apostles Creed

Scripture: Isaiah 45:5

I am the Lord, and there is no other, besides me there is no God; I clothe you, though you do not know me.

Saintly Example: St. Basil

St. Basil the Great is considered a great mind in the early Church and was named a Doctor of the Church, which means his writings and teachings especially helped to define Church teachings and lead others to Christ. He lived during a time when many in the world didn't believe in God or the Holy Spirit. St. Basil was an important person in confirming the Church's teachings and affirming the Trinity: God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. His insistence of these things helped form the version of the Nicene Creed we say today during Mass and to other prayers and teachings of the Church. The close "relative" of this creed is the Apostles Creed, which some scholars date back to the time of the Apostles, though the version we say today has its roots in the medieval period.

Discussion:

- The Apostles Creed is a prayer perhaps most often used at the beginning of praying the Rosary. It may sound similar to the Nicene Creed that we say at Mass each Sunday. In both prayers, we profess our faith in God and His important teachings. Do you know these prayers? Have you thought about what you're saying when you pray them? Do you simply say them or do you think about what they mean and *pray* them?

Prayer: Begin practice today by reciting the Apostles Creed. It may be helpful to have a few kids lead the group by reading the prayer if you don't have the opportunity to make copies for people to follow.

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth;
and in Jesus Christ, His only Son Our Lord,

Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into Hell; on the third day He rose again from the dead;

He ascended into Heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God, the Father almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting.

Amen.

End of Practice: Reaffirm the importance of the Apostles Creed and in truly praying these prayers rather than simply saying them. Encourage the kids to think about what they are praying and professing and to live according to these teachings. Close with the following prayer:

- Our Father, Who art in heaven. Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen. St. Basil the Great, Pray for Us!

5 Minute Game Plan - Spring Sports

6th Grade - Spring Sports Preseason Week 2

Theme: The Holy Trinity

Scripture: John 15:26

But when the Counselor comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness to me;

Saintly Example: St. Athanasius

Like St. Basil, St. Athanasius was a great bishop and doctor of the early church, likely born around the year 319 AD. During his life, the great threat to the Church was called the Arian heresy. The Arian heresy was a belief by a group of people who argued that Jesus wasn't truly God. This was opposed to our Christian belief in the Holy Trinity: God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. St. Athanasius was a strong defender of our belief that Jesus was fully God and the saint's writings, speeches and teachings helped to combat this heresy and lead the Church during this difficult time. St. Athanasius suffered much during his life and was despised by many people for his beliefs, but he never wavered in teaching the truth and working to lead people toward God.

Discussion:

- As you might imagine, St. Athanasius was not a popular person during his life, because many people disagreed with his teaching the truth about God and Jesus Christ. Have you ever felt unpopular because of your faith? Have you ever been in a situation where you had to stand strong about something you believed while others disagreed or made fun of you?
- How might our team proclaim the truth about God and share our faith during this season? Is there a symbol of our faith or something we might do that can show others we are proud to be Catholic and to represent our church through athletic competition?

Practice Plan: Work with the kids to think of a unique way to live out your faith as a team during this season. This could be a particular prayer, a symbol that reminds everyone of what you believe, or any number of things that represent a reminder and outward symbol of your team's faith. Carry this with you throughout the season and refer to it often as a reminder of what your team believes.

Prayer

- Heavenly Father, you gave us the example of St. Athanasius as a person of courage and someone who was not afraid to stand up for the truth. Help us to be fearless when our faith is in question and to proudly proclaim that we believe in God and in the Holy Trinity. Bless our team and help us to always put you first in everything we do. Help us to do our best today, so that we can get the best out of the skills and talents you gave us. Bless our coaches as they teach us and our families at home. We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Amen.

End of Practice: Remind the team of your commitment to share your faith and the plan you put in place to make sure that faith is apparent during this season. Close with the following prayer:

- Glory Be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, a world without end. St. Athanasius, Pray for Us! Amen.

5 Minute Game Plan - Spring Sports

6th Grade - Spring Sports Regular Season Week 1

Theme: The Catholic Church

Scripture: Galatians 3: 26-28

...for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. ²⁷ For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Saintly Example: St. Peter

St. Peter was one of the first Apostles of Jesus and was the first Pope of the Catholic Church. Perhaps you have heard the story told in the bible, when Peter identified Jesus as the "Christ, the Son of the living God" and our Lord responded by saying "You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church" (Matthew 16:18). In identifying Peter this way and in his following instruction, Jesus is setting up His church that will continue after His Resurrection and Ascension into heaven. St. Peter did just that, becoming the leader of the Church after the Ascension and helping to proclaim the word of Jesus through his speaking and writing, including some found in the bible. He traveled far and wide to convert gentiles and share Christ's teachings, ending up in Rome where he became a martyr (died for his faith). Tradition holds that he was crucified upside down, because he felt himself unworthy to die in the same way Jesus did.

Discussion:

- St. Peter is the first leader of the Catholic (which means Universal) Church established by Jesus. As we read in the scripture verse today, it doesn't matter what country you are from or your gender, we are all brothers and sisters in Christ. Do we treat others this way? Do we welcome our friends and family into our churches, even if they aren't Catholic? Are we proud to share our faith with others?
- As a parish team, we represent a part of the church. How can we be an example of unity and of the love that our church calls us to share? Do we have the courage that the early apostles had to share the Word of God?

Practice Plan: Encourage the kids to actively learn more about their church, whether in school or on their own. It's important that we understand how the Church began and what the early apostles did so that we can better practice our faith and understand our Church today. This could also include learning more about the Pope, our Archbishop, or even their own parish priest. This would be a great opportunity to have your priest come to practice or to be present in some way as one of our church leaders.

Prayer

- Heavenly Father, you established your Church here on earth and appointed St. Peter and his successors to care for it and help it grow here on earth. As we are members of this church, help us to do our part in sharing our faith and welcoming others. May we follow the example of St. Peter in his love for you, his courage and his faith. Bless our team that we may be an example of your love and compassion for all your faithful. We ask this through Christ, our Lord, Amen.

End of Practice: Remind the kids that as Catholics we are part of a worldwide Church and encourage them to learn more about the church. Close with the following prayer:

- Our Father, Who art in heaven. Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen. St. Peter, Pray for Us!

5 Minute Game Plan - Spring Sports

6th Grade - Spring Sports Regular Season Week 2

Theme: The Communion of Saints

Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 4: 14-16

For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the archangel's call, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

Saintly Example: St. Martin de Porres

St. Martin was born in Lima, Peru in 1579 and spent his entire life there. Born in poverty, he developed a special desire to help all those in need: the hungry, the poor, but most notably the sick. St. Martin became a servant in a Dominican friary as a young boy and eventually was able to take vows as a Dominican brother at around 24 years old. There he became known for establishing an orphanage, a children's hospital and for several miraculous cures of the sick. He even setup a shelter where he cared for sick animals. St. Martin is an example for each of us of a hard worker and someone who was completely devoted to God and others, rather than himself.

Discussion:

- The Communion of Saints includes the saints in heaven, the souls in purgatory, and all of us who follow God here on earth. As members of the church and the Communion of Saints, we are called to learn from the saints in heaven so that we can one day join them after our lives here on earth are over. Do you have a favorite saint whose example you follow? Is there a story of a saint that inspires you or encourages you to follow God's will?
- St. Martin de Porres is best known for his work with the sick, including reports of miraculous cures. Though God might not give us the ability to perform miraculous cures (or he could, you never know)...how can we help care for the sick in our community?

Practice Plan: Be a constant reminder to the kids that the ultimate goal for all of us is to get to heaven. As they strive to achieve goals on the athletic field, remind them of this and encourage them today to strive not just to be a great athlete or a great student, but to strive to be a saint and to lead others to heaven.

Prayer

- Lord, we strive to be saints like those who are now in heaven. Help us to be faithful to your call for each of us and help us to always seek to get to heaven and to lead others there as well. Help our team to be a good example through the way we work hard, treat each other, and glorify you. Bless our coaches and keep everyone safe during this practice. May we work hard to use the talents and skills you gave us and achieve our athletic goals, but always remember that our ultimate goal is in heaven. We ask for the prayers of the angels and saints, Amen.

End of Practice: Encourage the kids for their hard work during practice but remind the kids that we are all striving to be saints and spend eternity in heaven. Close with the following prayer:

- Our Father, Who art in heaven. Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

5 Minute Game Plan - Spring Sports

6th Grade - Spring Sports Regular Season Week 3

Theme: The Forgiveness of Sins

Scripture: John 20:22-23

“And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”

Saintly Example: St. Paul Miki

St. Paul Miki was born Paulo Miki to a wealthy family in Japan in the 1500's. He was educated by the Jesuits there and eventually joined the Jesuit order, called the Society of Jesus. Yet the Emperor of Japan was fearful of the Jesuits and began to search for Catholics and to imprison or kill them. Paulo Miki was crucified in public along with 25 other Catholics. Yet even on the cross St. Paul Miki preached and even forgave those who killed him. He and the other 25 crucified with him were all canonized Saints in 1862.

Discussion:

- Even as he was hanging on a cross, St. Paul Miki forgave those who hurt him. This is how Jesus taught us to live, to forgive others and to love as He forgives us and loves us, even when it's really difficult to do. Do we always forgive those who hurt us? Do we forgive those who say something unkind about us? How can we get better at forgiving others, even when it's hard to do? Do we ask for forgiveness when we hurt someone? Is there someone we need to forgive or ask forgiveness from?
- One of the great blessings of the Catholic Church is the sacrament of Reconciliation, where we are able to take our sins to a priest so that God can forgive us of those sins. How often do we go to confession? Do you know when confession is offered at your parish?

Practice Plan: Encourage your team to go to confession sometime during the course of this season. If this practice is taking place during Lent, remind them that this is an excellent time to participate in this sacrament and that many parishes offer even more times for reconciliation as we prepare for Easter. For any athletes who aren't Catholic, encourage them to research and learn more about this Sacrament. If you're feeling really ambitious, talk to a priest at your parish and see if they would be willing to come hear confessions during practice (most will love this idea). They can find a quiet place and kids can excuse themselves from a drill to go to confession right there, then return to practice. What a wonderful combination of sacrament and sports!

Prayer

- Lord, you modeled forgiveness and compassion in your ministry here on earth. Help us each to follow your example and to forgive others when they hurt us and seek forgiveness when we have hurt others. Give us the courage to forgive and seek forgiveness even when this is really hard to do. May we have the courage to confess our sins to you through the sacrament of Reconciliation so that we can be forgiven and work to avoid further sin. Bless our team and our hard work, and may we always glorify you through our using the talents you have given us. Amen.

End of Practice: Encourage the kids to attend confession and consider asking your priest to visit practice. Close with the following prayer:

- Our Father, Who art in heaven. Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen. St. Paul Miki, Pray for Us!

5 Minute Game Plan - Spring Sports

6th Grade - Spring Sports Regular Season Week 4

Theme: Life Everlasting

Scripture: John 5:24

Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears my word and believes him who sent me, has eternal life; he does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.

Lessons on Eternal Life:

As Christians, we believe that our time here on earth is only a small part of where we are called. Our ultimate goal is always to get to heaven, where we can spend an eternity with God in all three persons of the Holy Trinity. The Catechism of the Catholic Church tells us, and we believe that "by his death and Resurrection, Jesus Christ has 'opened' heaven to us" (CCC 1026). So what is this heaven going to be like? Though the bible uses all kinds of images to tell us about it, we know that it is beyond all understanding and description. It is so wonderful, so beautiful, that we can't even imagine how great it is. Think of the best day of your life here on earth. Now imagine something that is infinitely more amazing than that and you *still* aren't close to just how great heaven will be! That's why no matter what happens in this life, all of us are called to live according to God's will so that we will one day get to spend eternity with Him in heaven.

Discussion:

- So how do we get to heaven? While it's up to God to judge us after our life here on earth ends, Jesus gave us a roadmap during his time on earth. Put simply, we get to heaven by living according to God's will - by loving others and living life as God calls us to. How can we determine how God is calling us to live? Do we pray for His help living faithful lives? Do we read the bible to learn how Jesus taught us to live? What other ways can we learn how to live so that we can reach our ultimate goal of heaven?

Practice Plan: Focus on praising the kids for all their hard work this season while reminding them that no matter how great it feels to accomplish their goals in sports, our ultimate goal in life is to get to heaven and lead others there. Make today's practice a positive "celebration" of all the hard work they have done to get to this point in the season and affirm especially solid examples of faith.

Prayer

- Heavenly Father, we thank you for our coaches and teammates during this season. We thank you for the talents you have given each one of us and thank you for all we were able to accomplish as individuals and as a team. Help us to remember that our ultimate goal is in heaven and help us to always seek eternal life, living according to your will here on earth and praying for the graces we need to one day spend eternity in heaven. Bless our families and help lead us all closer to you today and each day. We ask this through Christ, Our Lord, Amen.

End of Practice: Be positive and encourage the kids to always seek the will of God. Close with the following prayer:

- Glory Be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, a world without end. Amen.

5 Minute Game Plan - Spring Sports

7th Grade - Spring Sports Preseason Week 1

Theme: Stations of the Cross

Scripture: Luke 23: 20-25

Pilate addressed them once more, desiring to release Jesus;²¹ but they shouted out, "Crucify, crucify him!"²² A third time he said to them, "Why, what evil has he done? I have found in him no crime deserving death; I will therefore chastise him and release him."²³ But they were urgent, demanding with loud cries that he should be crucified. And their voices prevailed.²⁴ So Pilate gave sentence that their demand should be granted.²⁵ He released the man who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder, whom they asked for; but Jesus he delivered up to their will.

Saintly Example: St. Longinus

Longinus is the centurion who pierced the side of Jesus as he hung on the cross. Scripture includes his profession that "Truly this man was the Son of God" (Mk 15:39). It is said that Longinus immediately converted after experiencing Christ's crucifixion, learned from the apostles, and became a monk. A statue of St. Longinus resides at St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican and a fragment of the lance he used to pierce the side of Jesus is contained as a relic within a chapel in the Basilica. He remains an example of conversion, repentance and a powerful witness to the crucifixion. In the Stations of the Cross which are present in our churches, and which we most often pray on Fridays during Lent, we often remember this moment as we consider the 12th Station, when Jesus died on the cross.

Discussion:

- Consider the crucifixion for a moment and what it must have been like for the unbelievers who were present. How must it have felt for those soldiers like Longinus when Christ died and the world was dark, the ground shook and it became apparent to many that they had crucified our Lord. For St. Longinus, this was a powerful moment of conversion. Do we consider this during the season of Lent or does it impact how we live our lives? Do we understand that Christ died on the cross for our sins? Does this impact how we live? Does this impact how we think about sports or how we act on our team?

Practice Plan: Encourage the kids to attend the Stations of the Cross during Lent and to consider what affect the passion and death of our Lord has on their daily lives. Consider how this impacts the importance of the many things each of us do and where sports should fit into that equation. Sports are certainly an important and fun part of our lives, but are we putting anything before God, who should come first for everyone?

Prayer

- Lord, as you died on the cross the centurion St. Longinus was converted and changed his life. As he became a follower and a martyr for the faith, may we too consider your death on the cross and how it affects our daily lives. We ask that you bless our team this year with faith and hope; that we may be examples of dedication to your will and that we may treat our teammates and others with great love as we seek to develop the talents you have given each of us. May you grant us a safe and fun season. Amen.

End of Practice: Remind the kids the importance of recalling the passion and death of our Lord and considering how this affects our lives. Close with the following prayer:

- Glory Be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, a world without end. St. Longinus, Pray for Us!

5 Minute Game Plan - Spring Sports

7th Grade - Spring Sports Preseason Week 2

Theme: Liturgy

Scripture: Acts 2:42

And they held steadfastly to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers.

Saintly Example: St. John Chrysostom

St. John lived in the 4th century and was given the name "Chrysostom" (which means golden-mouthed) because of his amazing ability to speak. He is considered a Doctor of the Church because of his speaking and writing. St. John Chrysostom is known as a great defender of the faith and incurred many enemies during a time where many people opposed Church teaching. As a result he was banished to exile but remained in good standing with the Pope and suffered joyfully knowing that he was doing the Lord's will. In the Byzantine Rite of the Eastern Orthodox Church, the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom that originated with St. John is still celebrated today.

Discussion:

- The celebration of the liturgy is the term for what we might commonly call the Mass. It is often split into two parts which we know as the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. We often think of the main person involved in the liturgy as our priest, but did you know we are all called to be a part of the liturgy in our own way? What ways do you know of that you can get involved in the liturgy at your parish or school? God may call some to be readers, some to be alter servers, others to help prepare before the liturgy, and some to be a part right from your seats as you probably do now. Are there other ways to get involved? Do you know who to talk to if you would like to get involved?

Practice Plan: Just as it takes many different participants to have a practice or a game in sports, so to it takes all of us to be participants in the holy Liturgy. Use this parallel to encourage the kids to find ways to get involved in their church. You can also encourage them to simply focus on participating through their prayer and song if they don't feel called to take on a more formal role as a server or minister during the Mass. Find out who the kids need to talk to at the parish if they are interested, or where they can learn about signups for the different roles of the Mass.

Prayer

- Father, we ask on this day that you may help us understand your calling for us in our lives here on earth. Help us to determine what you are calling us to in life, in school, in our church and even on this team. Help us to be active participants in the life of our church so that we may glorify you in prayer and through good works. Be with our team and help us to grow in our talents that you have given us. We thank you for the gift of our coaches and pray for them as well. We ask this all through Christ, our Lord, Amen.

End of Practice: Encourage the kids to consider how they are called to get involved in the school and parish now and as they grow older. There are many great opportunities for them! Close with the following prayer:

- Our Father, Who art in heaven. Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Saint John Chrysostom, Pray for us! Amen.

5 Minute Game Plan - Spring Sports

7th Grade - Spring Sports Regular Season Week 1

Theme: Perpetual Adoration

Scripture: 1 Chronicles 29: 10-13

Therefore David blessed the Lord in the presence of all the assembly; and David said: "Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of Israel our father, for ever and ever. ¹¹ Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours; yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all. ¹² Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might; and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all. ¹³ And now we thank you, our God, and praise your glorious name.

Saintly Example: St. Faustina

St. Faustina Kowalska lived from 1905-1938 in Poland. As a young sister in the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy, she took the name Sister Maria Faustina of the Most Blessed Sacrament as a sign of her devotion to our Lord and the Eucharist. As a young nun, she received a message from the Lord where He appeared as the image of Divine Mercy: this is the picture we see in churches today of the Lord in white clothes, with beams of red and white coming from His heart. Sister Faustina was called to spread this message of mercy around the world. This involved living a life of great sacrifice and prayer. Not only did she have this painting commissioned under her direction, but also developed the Chaplet of Divine Mercy that many people pray today and was responsible for the beginnings of the Sisters of Divine Mercy order that began after her death. In fact, the Church now celebrates Divine Mercy Sunday worldwide on the first Sunday after Easter, a testament to the visions of St. Faustina and the fulfilling of the mission she was given by the Lord to spread His message of Mercy.

Discussion:

- St. Faustina was clearly given special graces by God to fulfill a specific mission. Yet her mission wasn't always easy and she often sought strength by praying in front of the Blessed Sacrament. Did you know that your church may have a chapel that is dedicated to Perpetual Adoration - that is that Christ is constantly exposed in the Blessed Sacrament? Have you ever spent time in Adoration, praying in front of the sacrament? Do you know where you can find out about times this is offered at your parish?

Practice Plan: The devotions of St. Faustina provide great opportunities for you and your team. Depending on the location of your practice and timing, take this as an opportunity to do one of the following: either take time at practice this week to pray in front of the Blessed Sacrament with your team (depending on your parish you may have Perpetual Adoration available or simply need to take the team into the church where you can pray in front of the Sacrament in the Tabernacle) or you could take time to pray a Divine Mercy Chaplet. This prayer is prayed on the rosary beads and takes about 7-10 minutes. It can easily be found online. Take the time to help your team grow closer to God in one of these ways during practice.

Prayer

- Heavenly Father, we are blessed with the great example of St. Faustina and through her hear of your great message of mercy. May we seek your mercy and love in all we do, and may we follow her example of mercy in the way we treat our family members, friends and teammates. Bless our practice and competition this week as we seek to use the talents you give us to the best of our ability. Watch over us, protect us, and guide us, Amen.

End of Practice: Consider implementing one of the suggestions in the practice plan. End this practice and the next with prayers of your choosing, which could include a Chaplet of Divine Mercy.

5 Minute Game Plan - Spring Sports

7th Grade - Spring Sports Regular Season Week 2

Theme: Sacramentals

Scripture: 1 Timothy 4: 4-5

For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving; for then it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer.

Saintly Example: St. George

St. George was a soldier in the Roman army during a time when the Emperor Diocletian was putting all Christians that he could find to death. Knowing what would happen, George bravely went to Diocletian and rebuked the Emperor for his cruel treatment of Christians, then renounced his place in the Roman army. As he might have expected, this resulted in his being tortured and killed. Yet St. George was brave throughout and joyful in his willingness to be a martyr for Christ. The most famous painting of St. George depicts him slaying a dragon, which shows his triumph and that of the martyrs over the devil.

Discussion:

- Sacramentals are sacred signs instituted by the Church to prepare us to receive the fruits of the sacrament (CCC). They could also be described as the images, actions and blessings that are reminders of our faith. This could include something in a public place used by all Catholics, like holy water, or it could be something personal, like a rosary. It could even be a devotion to a saint. What sacramentals or devotions do you or your family have? How do these help to remind you of God and our faith?
- Is there a devotion or sacramental that you think could help our team as we seek to grow in our faith the remainder of this season? Consider this as a team and come up with a sacramental the entire team can look to as a reminder of faith as you prepare for the remainder of the season.

Practice Plan: See the discussion question above and consider as a team a sacramental that the team could refer to as a reminder of what's truly important as you head toward the end of the season. This could be any number of objects or devotions, so let the team discuss and determine.

Prayer

- Lord, we thank you for the many saints and sacramentals that remind us of your constant love throughout the ages and help us to draw near to you today. We thank you for the gift of this team, our teammates and coaches. Help us today to understand each person's talents as a gift from God and to use each of our talents to the best of our ability. May you watch over us and guide us in our efforts on this team and help us to be good teammates. Amen.

End of Practice: Remember to consider your team's sacramental for the remainder of the season and close with the following prayer:

- Our Father, Who art in heaven. Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Saint George, Pray for us! Amen.

5 Minute Game Plan - Spring Sports

7th Grade - Spring Sports Regular Season Week 3

Theme: Novenas

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 14:15

What am I to do? I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the mind also; I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the mind also.

Saintly Example: St. Anthony of Padua

St. Anthony was born in the year 1195 and became a martyr for the faith in 1231. Considered a Doctor of the Church, St. Anthony is a beloved Franciscan who was known for teaching in a way that almost anyone could understand. While there were many people during the time he lived who sought to drive people away from God and convince people that the church was wrong, St. Anthony fought valiantly against these heresies and converted many through his teachings. In fact, so perfect were his many teachings that when his body was exhumed over 330 years after his death, his tongue was found to be uncorrupted (that is, still in normal condition). He was named a saint just a year after his death.

Discussion:

- Novenas are a series of prayers repeated for 9 days with the intent of obtaining special graces through the prayers. Perhaps the most popular type of novena would include a person or group praying a rosary for a specific intention on 9 straight days; these are often accompanied by a special devotional or set of prayers. Have you ever taken part in a novena? Do you know of any particular novenas that your family or others have prayed?

Practice Plan: Encourage the kids to consider the way in which they pray and today's scripture reading which encourages us all to pray with our whole heart and mind. The Catholic Church has a limitless amount of special prayers and devotions that can help us all grow closer to God and pray for a special intercession. Encourage the kids in these efforts and make the concept of prayer a focus of today's practice.

Prayer

- Almighty Father, we rejoice in many examples of holiness you give us in the saints. May we follow the faithful example of St. Anthony of Padua, who was devoted to you in word and action during his life. May we consider the teachings and prayers of the saints, so that we too may learn to pray with our whole heart and mind. Help us to love you more fully each day and to glorify you in all that we do. We thank you for the gift of this practice and our teammates and coaches. Bless us on this day and in the week to come. Amen.

End of Practice: Remind the kids of the importance of prayer at home, school, practice and everywhere in between. Close with the following prayer, asking for our Blessed Mother's intercession:

- Hail Mary, Full of Grace, The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen. St. Anthony of Padua, Pray for us!

5 Minute Game Plan - Spring Sports

7th Grade - Spring Sports Regular Season Week 4

Theme: Popular Piety

Catechism: CCC 1674-1676

1674 Besides sacramental liturgy and sacramentals, catechesis must take into account the forms of piety and popular devotions among the faithful. The religious sense of the Christian people has always found expression in various forms of piety surrounding the Church's sacramental life, such as the veneration of relics, visits to sanctuaries, pilgrimages, processions, the stations of the cross, religious dances, the rosary, medals, etc. 1675 These expressions of piety extend the liturgical life of the Church, but do not replace it. They "should be so drawn up that they harmonize with the liturgical seasons, accord with the sacred liturgy, are in some way derived from it and lead the people to it, since in fact the liturgy by its very nature is far superior to any of them." 1676 Pastoral discernment is needed to sustain and support popular piety and, if necessary, to purify and correct the religious sense which underlies these devotions so that the faithful may advance in knowledge of the mystery of Christ. Their exercise is subject to the care and judgment of the bishops and to the general norms of the Church.

Saintly Example: St. Francis of Assisi

St. Francis was born into wealth and for the first 25 years of his life he lived a life of excess and worldly pleasures. He admitted after this time that he "lived in sin" and was known to seek wealth and fame while partying away his life. He sought earthly beauty and loved the things of this world. More than anything, Francis thought he wanted to be a valiant knight, so he was excited to go to war. Yet when he left for just his second battle something happened that changed his life. Francis had a dream where God told him to turn around and go home. He told Francis that he had it wrong and needed to change. While the conversion of St. Francis didn't happen immediately, through prayer he began to grow strong in faith. Through a series of events God strengthened him even more and helped him to understand that true glory and beauty lie in heaven, that his life should be lived for God and others, rather than himself. He renounced his possessions and began to take a special care for all of God's creation. He is known for his care of animals and for his ability to show equal respect and honor to all people, especially the poor. He founded the Franciscan orders, who practiced a very simple life and devoted their time to the care of others while leading great amounts of people to God. It was a far cry from the life he lived for the first part of his life, yet he found that he was happier than he ever could have been with all his worldly possessions before.

Practice Plan: As you end this season, consider that you are "sending forth" your team to take the lessons they have learned and use them in their lives. This could be using athletic skill to perform in the same sport or a different sport, or it could be taking more important lessons about perseverance, faith, hope and many other virtues into each day of their life. Consider the things you want the team to take away from this experience and discuss with them how they can use those lessons to go forth and live for God. How can they be like St. Francis and use the lessons they have learned to care for others? How can they get more involved in their church and school? How can they continue to grow in their faith and in using the athletic talents God gave them?

Prayer

- Heavenly Father, we thank you for this season and for our teammates and coaches. As we begin to think about the end of the season, help us to consider how the lessons we have learned will not only lead us to greater athletic achievement now and in the future, but also how these lessons will help us to become more faithful to your holy will. May we follow the example of St. Francis and seek not earthly fame and glory but instead seek to focus on the things of God and how we might love others as He loves us. Bless us and protect us in our remaining practices this season. Amen.

End of Practice: Consider the things discussed today and close practice with a prayer of your choosing.

5 Minute Game Plan - Spring Sports

8th Grade - Spring Sports Preseason Week 1

Theme: Church History - Pentecost & Persecutions

Scripture: Acts 8: 1-3

And Saul was consenting to his death. And on that day a great persecution arose against the Church in Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the region of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. Devout men buried Stephen, and made great lamentation over him. But Saul laid waste the Church, and entering house after house, he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison.

Saintly Example: St. James

St. James is first mentioned when Jesus calls to him and his brother John in their fishing boats by the sea. We learn that when Jesus called them to follow him, both James and John quickly left their things and followed him, becoming his apostles. This should be our first sign that St. James was a man of great faith, as he followed the call of God immediately and accompanied Jesus in his ministry on earth. We also know that James must have held a special place for Jesus, as there are multiple times where we read that Jesus took only Peter, James and John along with him, such as when Jesus was transfigured in his glory on the mountain. Jesus must have trusted James a great deal with his message. He even gave James and his brother John a nickname: Sons of Thunder. We actually form a good understanding of James from the events of the gospels, and we know about his death when Acts 12 reveals he died a martyr. It is said that he was killed shortly after the death of Jesus by King Herod Agrippa I as the king persecuted the early Christian community.

Discussion:

- It seems that many times through Church history, beginning even with the end of Jesus' time on earth, Christians have been persecuted and even killed for their faith. Though our life may not be threatened due to our faith, the world today is full of people who seek to ridicule or treat unfairly people of great faith. Have you ever felt as though you were treated differently or unfairly due to your faith? Have you ever felt you were treated this way for any other reason? Bullying is a way that this occurs today, do you have any experience with bullies? What can we do to help stop this from happening to people in our schools and on our team?

Practice Plan: Bullying can be a heavy issue, but at this age it's unfortunately something that kids are dealing with. Help to set a healthy environment on your team and create a zero tolerance policy for bullying. Get the kids to invest in this policy and help keep bullying (verbal or physical) out of your team.

Prayer

- Lord, you called St. James to be your apostle and he immediately followed you. Help us to follow his example by responding to your call and following you wherever you lead us. Give us the courage to remain faithful to you and to stand strong in our faith no matter who persecutes or treats us unfairly. May we follow the heroic example of St. James at home, in our schools and in our practices. Help us to stand up for others, especially the meek, when they are treated unfairly. May God bless our team this year and help us to grow in the talents we have been granted, both athletically and spiritually. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

End of Practice: Review the material discussed before practice, especially anything pertaining to your team's stance on bullying and encourage them in a commitment to stick together - to treat everyone as a teammate as we are called to love our brothers and sisters in Christ. Close with a prayer of your team's choice.

5 Minute Game Plan - Spring Sports

8th Grade - Spring Sports Preseason Week 2

Theme: Church History - Middle Ages

Scripture: 1 Peter 1: 6-9

In this you rejoice, though now for a little while you may have to suffer various trials, ⁷ so that the genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold which though perishable is tested by fire, may redound to praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. ⁸ Without having seen him you love him; though you do not now see him you believe in him and rejoice with unutterable and exalted joy. ⁹ As the outcome of your faith you obtain the salvation of your souls.

Saintly Example: St. Dominic

The Middle Ages of the Church are full of Crusades, heretics and great saints who battled the evils through their actions, writings and speech. St. Dominic is one of these saints, living from 1170-1221 in Spain and eventually founding the Dominican order. Ordained as a young man, Dominic sought to preach to the heretics on his own but found it of little use. He realized a need for an order of teaching that could spread throughout Europe preaching God's message and winning converts in the midst of this turbulent era. Though he initially struggled to receive permission, he persisted and founded the order around 1216 and traveled to help the order grow until the end of his life. The Dominicans were very successful during the Middle Ages in converting others to the faith through their teaching and St. Dominic's preaching is credited for spreading devotion to the Rosary around Europe. This prayer has been a central component of the Dominican order and the order today remains a strong source of teaching and a faithful example of holiness.

Discussion:

- The Middle Ages often bring thoughts of Knights and castles, of Crusades and wars valiantly fought. Yet it was a very difficult time for Christians around the world as they were persecuted and killed by those who sought to gain their own power. It took a lot of courage for men and women like St. Dominic and St. Joan of Arc (who lived nearly 200 years later) to defend the faith knowing they may become martyrs. Can you think of a time where you had to be courageous in defending something you believe in? Did you rely on prayer and faith in God to help you? Do you find difficulty standing up for your faith today?
- What about courage in athletic competition? Can you think of a time you were called to have courage on the field, court or track? How did you find the courage to persevere?

Practice Plan: Focus on courage today. Encourage all the kids and point out great examples you may have witnessed in the past, as well as qualities during the practices this week where kids are persevering and growing in their athletic skill. Help the kids to understand what this means on the field, and more importantly what it means to be courageous in life.

Prayer

- Heavenly Father, you give us the example of St. Dominic and all those who sought to courageously uphold the teachings of the church during times of trouble. We thank you for the great teaching of our bishops and priests today, help us to listen as we are taught in school and church so that we might grow in our knowledge and understanding of your holy church. Bless today our coaches who teach us here at practice and we thank you for the time and energy they take to help us grow. We ask all this through Christ, our Lord, Amen.

End of Practice: Praise the hard work of your athletes and close with the following prayer:

- Glory Be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, a world without end. Amen. St. Dominic, Pray for us!

5 Minute Game Plan - Spring Sports

8th Grade - Spring Sports Regular Season Week 1

Theme: Church History - Reformation/Counter Reformation

Scripture: Romans 8:31

What then shall we say to this? If God is for us, who is against us?

Saintly Example: St. Pius V

Michele Ghislieri was an Italian born Dominican brother in the 1500's before a turn of events put him at the center of one of the most crucial times in our church history. Brother Michele was well studied and so good at the work he was asked to do, that he began to be given more and more important jobs in the church as he grew older, including roles as bishop and cardinal. Then in 1566, the former Brother Michele was named Pope and took the name Pius V. This was during a time of great reform in the church, as previous (wayward) leaders had led people astray and the church now fought against several groups either persecuting the church or trying to convince people of different heresies. Pope Pius V is credited with a great deal during this period, as he published the Catechism and revised the Breviary and Missal. He published far and wide the works of the Council of Trent, which ended in 1563 and sought to define Church teaching on a number of important issues that were being disputed at the time. Our understanding of important topics in Scripture, Original Sin, Sacraments and Church Tradition can even today be traced back to this council, which Pope Pius V spread to the world. Known as a holy man who won great victories for the faith during this time, Pope Pius V was canonized a saint in 1712.

Discussion:

- St. Pius V did a great deal to advance the spread of information so that people worldwide could learn about God and understand the teachings of the Church. It's important that we continue to learn about God and His Church today so that we can grow in understanding and faith. What topics have you covered in school this year that you thought were especially important and interesting? Do you take time to learn about the faith outside of school? Do you know where to find good, truthful information when you have questions? What are some ways you could continue to grow in your faith and learn more about the church?

Practice Plan: Just as its important to know about your sport in order to grow and get better, it's important for our faith to continue to grow and learn. Encourage this growth of knowledge and encourage the kids to pay close attention in school. In your role as a coach, you can have more of an impact in encouraging their learning than you probably think.

Prayer

- Almighty God, we thank you for all the many blessings you have given us today and this week. We pray for our families, our friends, our teammates and our coaches, and we glorify you and give you praise for all the many wonderful things we have to thank you for. We pray that you may give us the focus and desire to learn more about your church and our faith as we grow, so that we may continue to grow in the faith, hope and love that you call us to. Grant that the prayers in our hearts may be answered as you see fit. As we practice today, keep us healthy and strong, helping us to use the talents you have blessed us with to the best of our ability. Amen.

End of Practice: Encourage the kids to pay attention in school as the year winds down and explain how important this knowledge is. Close with the following prayer:

- Glory Be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, a world without end. Amen. St. Pius V, Pray for us!

5 Minute Game Plan - Spring Sports

8th Grade - Spring Sports Regular Season Week 2

Theme: Church History - Pre-Vatican/Post-Vatican

Scripture: Hebrews 13:8

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever.

Saintly Example: Blessed John Paul II

By the time you are reading this, Blessed John Paul II might already be St. John Paul II, as he will be canonized in spring of 2014. John Paul II was born Karol Wojtyla in Poland in the year 1920. He was Pope from 1978 until his death in 2005. Over his life and 27 years as Pope, this modern saint was witness to many events that changed both the Church and the world around it. Called to the priesthood as a young man in Nazi-occupied Poland in the early 1940's, Wojtyla studied in a secret seminary; had he been discovered he most certainly would have been sent to a concentration camp. As a young Bishop in the early 1960's, he was an influential part of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), which developed key teachings and informs some of the modern liturgy you know today. During his papacy, John Paul II played a key role in teaching on many important issues that affect the modern world, including popular teaching on Theology of the Body, advocating a culture of life, and affirming Catholic moral teachings on marriage and family. He traveled the world and developed World Youth Day to help bring the gospel message to kids all over the world. He even survived an assassination attempt. He was also known for his love of sports, particularly skiing. In a homily on sports in the year 2000, he noted that sports can "develop important values such as loyalty, perseverance, friendship, sharing and solidarity" and reminded us that "every Christian is called to be a strong athlete of Christ, that is, a faithful and courageous witness to his gospel" (Jubilee of Sports People, 2000).

Discussion:

- One of the amazing things about the Catholic Church is that while time has formed some of her traditions the core truths and teachings remain unchanged since Christ lived some 2,000 years ago! Consider today's scripture: *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever.* If Christ is the same, what does that say about how we should live and what we believe? Do we follow the latest fads or do something just because it's "popular"? Or do we remain focused on the message of Christ and the teachings of His church?

Practice Plan: Most coaches will have some memory of John Paul II from his papacy. Take a moment to share any memories with the team. We have few saints who lived during our lives and it would be inspiring for the kids to hear about such a holy man and his impact on the world.

Prayer

- Father in Heaven, we thank you for the gift of the saints and the example of John Paul II in the lives of so many in the modern church. May we strive to follow the example of faith he set and to understand and live by the moral teachings you shared with the world through his writings and speech. Bless us on this day and protect us as we practice and compete. We pray that we may grow in body and soul through the lessons we learn and we ask you to bless our coaches and teammates as well.

End of Practice: Consider the message of John Paul II above about how sports and faith intersect. Encourage a proper understanding of sports while putting God first in each of our lives. Close with a prayer of your team's choosing.

5 Minute Game Plan - Spring Sports

8th Grade - Spring Sports Regular Season Week 3

Theme: Local Church History

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

Do you not know that in a race all the runners compete, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. ²⁵ Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. ²⁶ Well, I do not run aimlessly, I do not box as one beating the air; ²⁷ but I pommel my body and subdue it, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.

Saintly Example: Edith Stein

Edith Stein was born in 1891 into a large Jewish family in Poland. By the time she was a teenager, she had become enamored by some of the modern thought in the world and considered herself an atheist. Yet as Edith embarked on a prestigious academic career, an intense interest in the Catholic faith entered her heart. It is said that her reading of the biography of St. Theresa of Avila motivated her ultimate conversion, and she was baptized into the church in 1922. A very well educated woman, Edith held a doctorate in philosophy and taught with some of the so-called academic leaders in Germany. Yet after her conversion, she left to teach at a school run by Dominican nuns and continued her education in the faith there. In 1933 she became a Discalced Carmelite nun and assumed the name Theresa Benedicta of the Cross. Within the next few years, however, as Nazi's took over countries and send millions to the infamous concentration camps, it became clear that a Catholic nun with a Jewish family would not be safe in the convent. Her order transferred her once, but when the Nazi's occupied the Netherlands she was captured and sent to the camps. She became a martyr for the faith in 1942 when she was killed in the camp with many other Catholic and Jewish people alike. Her many writings on philosophy and the church are still important today and many schools bear her name. She was canonized St. Theresa Benedicta of the Cross in 1998, but many still know her by the name Edith Stein.

Discussion:

- As athletes, consider the scripture today where St. Paul uses athletics to call to mind how we ought to live. Just as we all strive to win a race, so too must we use discipline, focus, our talents and all the knowledge we have learned to seek the imperishable wreath (crown) of heaven. What things that you have learned in sports can you take also into your faith life? What skills or virtues can you learn on the field that can help you with prayer? Do sports help build faith, hope and love? How?

Practice Plan: Call to mind the words of St. Paul in today's scripture and continue to emphasize the importance of God above all things, while drawing parallels to the great things virtues and lessons learned in sports.

Prayer

- Heavenly Father, through St. Paul you admonish us to "run so as to win" in our athletic pursuits, but to keep our eyes us on the eternal glory of heaven. May we always take the lessons we learn in sports and use them to help us grow in faith, hope and love. Help us to follow the example of your saints, who like Edith Stein showed great courage and proclaimed your glory no matter the cost. We lift our prayers to you and ask that you bless our teammates and coaches during this practice and in the week to come. Help us to strive to use our talents to the best of our abilities and to glorify you in doing so. We all these things through Christ, our Lord, Amen.

End of Practice: Close practice today with a prayer of your team's choosing.

5 Minute Game Plan - Spring Sports

8th Grade - Spring Sports Regular Season Week 4

Theme: The Church and New Media

Scripture: Mark 16:15

And he said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation."

Saintly Example: Saint Francis de Sales

St. Francis de Sales may have lived over nearly 400 years ago in France, but there are many things we can learn from his ability to take Christ's message to others and to convert souls to The Lord. In the midst of the Protestant Reformation, when traveling to certain areas in Europe as a priest could have been dangerous, Francis decided to do something bold. He went into the mountains of Switzerland into a territory occupied by over 60,000 Calvinists, and there he sought to convert them back to the Catholic faith. He lived in terrible conditions and faced many obstacles, yet through patience, perseverance and faith he began to have success. Though it didn't happen overnight, it is said that in that region St. Francis converted over 40,000 souls to the faith. Upon returning home he took to writing and preaching, converting more souls with each step. Some of his more well known teachings include his opposition to gossip and his admonishing people to not judge others. Like many of the saints, he spoke on the importance of prayer and taught that all people were called to holiness.

Discussion:

- Though the message has not changed in the 2,000 years since Christ spoke to large followings on hillsides and in villages, the means of communicating that message are certainly different now than in years past. With technology and the internet, we must consider how we share this message today. As we are all called to evangelize and spread the Word of God, how might we go about doing that in the world today? How can you use mediums like YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or other new networks to share the message of God's love? Do you see anyone else doing this in a unique way? Have you been impacted by someone using new media to share the gospel? How can you help the Catholic Church share this message in today's world?

Practice Plan: As a coach and parent, you probably feel like you spend a lot of time just trying to get kids away from the latest gadget or technology and back into the world to listen to what you have to say. This can certainly be true, but for today try something a little different: encourage them instead to use that technology to spread the word of God. Encourage them to invite friends to their next CYO competition and to share good, positive messages when they are online. Encourage moderation in all things, of course.

Prayer

- Lord, we thank you for the gift of your love and the many blessings you have given each of us. We thank you for our families, our teammates, our coaches and all those who help lead us closer to you. Help us to use the gift of technology to spread your message to all who need to hear it. Like St. Francis de Sales, give us the courage to convert souls by whatever means you call us to. May we always keep our focus on you in the midst of the busy world around us. Bless us as we strive to use our talents to the best of our ability, glorifying you and knowing that all things come from you. Amen.

End of Practice: Close practice today with the following prayer, seeking always to do God's will:

- Our Father, Who art in heaven. Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen. St. Francis de Sales, Pray for us!

5 Minute Game Plan - Spring Sports

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The following are sources used for the materials in this publication. With the exception of scripture or where noted otherwise, no materials were quoted nor was content used directly from these materials. Sources were used for themes, ideas or general content regarding lives of the saints. All content herein remains the property of the CYO of Johnson and Wyandotte Counties through creator Peter Piscitello.

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