



# **The 5 Minute Game Plan**

A Catechesis Supplement for Youth Sports

3rd Grade - Winter Edition

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

## 5 Minute Game Plan - 3rd Grade Year

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](mailto:admin@cyojwa.org). More information about this initiative, including lessons for all ages and seasons, is available online at [www.cyojwa.org](http://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 fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and "J".

Peter J Piscitello  
Executive Director, CYO

## 5 Minute Game Plan - 3rd Grade Year

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.

## 5 Minute Game Plan - 3rd Grade Year

### Year Outline

#### Fall Seasons

- Preseason Week 1 - **Theme:** The Trinity **Scripture:** 1 John 5:7 **Saint:** Saint Patrick
- Preseason Week 2 - **Theme:** Made in the Image of God **Scripture:** Gen 1:26-27 **Saint:** None
- Regular Season Week 1 - **Theme:** God's Revelation **Scripture:** Deut 7:6 **Saint:** Blessed Mother Teresa
- Regular Season Week 2 - **Theme:** Heaven **Scripture:** John 3:16 **Saint:** The Communion of Saints
- Regular Season Week 3 - **Theme:** Introduction to Vocations & The Single Vocation **Scripture:** 1 Sam 3:10 **Saint:** Saint Joseph
- Regular Season Week 4 - **Theme:** Married Vocation **Scripture:** Matthew 19: 4-6 **Saint:** St. Joachim and St. Anne
- Regular Season Week 5 - **Theme:** Religious Vocation **Scripture:** John 15: 16 **Saint:** St. Therese of Lisieux
- Regular Season Week 6 - **Theme:** Priesthood Vocation **Scripture:** Eph 3:7-10 **Saint:** St. John Vianney
- Regular Season Week 7 - **Theme:** Mary, Mother of God **Scripture:** Luke 1: 26-31, 38 **Saint:** St. Bernadette

#### Winter Seasons

- Preseason Week 1 - **Theme:** Loving God Above All **Scripture:** Deut 6:5-7 **Saint:** St. Francis of Assisi
- Preseason Week 2 - **Theme:** God's Mercy **Scripture:** Luke 7:11-17 **Saint:** St. Peter
- Preseason Week 3 - **Theme:** Confession **Scripture:** Luke 15: 11-24 **Saint:** St. Augustine
- Preseason Week 4 - **Theme:** Signs & Miracles **Scripture:** Luke 6:6-11 **Saint:** St. Philomena
- Preseason Week 5 - **Theme:** Spiritual Works of Mercy **Scripture:** Matthew 25: 31-36, 40 **Saint:** None (List Spiritual Works of Mercy)
- Preseason Week 6 - **Theme:** Forgiveness **Scripture:** Luke 5:17-26 **Saint:** St. Maximilian Kolbe
- Regular Season Week 1 - **Theme:** Divine Mercy **Scripture:** None - Discuss Communion of Saints and Pray Divine Mercy **Saint:** St. Faustina Kowalska
- Regular Season Week 2 - **Theme:** Corporal Works of Mercy **Scripture:** Luke 4:38-41 **Saint:** None (List Corporal Works of Mercy)
- Regular Season Week 3 - **Theme:** Caring for the Sick **Scripture:** Luke 5:12-16 **Saint:** Fr. Damian of Molokai
- Regular Season Week 4 - **Theme:** Feeding the Hungry **Scripture:** Isaiah 58:10-11 **Saint:** St. Katherine Drexel
- Regular Season Week 5 - **Theme:** Peace and Justice **Scripture:** Matthew 7:12 **Saint:** St. Vincent de Paul
- Regular Season Week 6 - **Theme:** Service to Others **Scripture:** 1 Peter 4:10-11 **Saint:** John Bosco
- Regular Season Week 7 - **Theme:** Living Holy Lives **Scripture:** 1 Thessalonians 4:7 **Saint:** St. Dominic Savio

#### Spring Seasons

- Preseason Week 1 - **Theme:** Liturgical Seasons **Scripture:** Matthew 9:15 **Saint:** None - Discuss Feast Days & Liturgical Calendar
- Preseason Week 2 - **Theme:** The Last Supper **Scripture:** Luke 22:17-19 **Saint:** St. Thomas Aquinas
- Regular Season Week 1 - **Theme:** Jesus Gives His Life for Us **Scripture:** John 3:16 **Saint:** St. John
- Regular Season Week 2 - **Theme:** Apostles Creed **Scripture:** Luke 10:1-12 **Saint:** None - Focus on Apostles Creed
- Regular Season Week 3 - **Theme:** The Apostles **Scripture:** Matthew 10:1-14 **Saint:** St. James
- Regular Season Week 4 - **Theme:** Pentecost **Scripture:** Acts 2:1-4 **Saint:** None - Focus on Holy Spirit

## 5 Minute Game Plan - 3rd Grade Year

Winter Sports Preseason Week 1

**Theme:** Loving God Above All

**Scripture:** Deuteronomy 6:5-7

*“And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. And these words which I command you this day shall be upon your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way and when you lie down, and when you rise.”*

**Saintly Example:** St. Francis of Assisi

St. Francis is a great example of how we are called to live our life: by loving God above all things. St. Francis was born into a wealthy family and had all the material things he could want. Yet Francis always found himself wanting more from life. Finally, when he began to listen to God's call, he realized what he was meant to do. He left his life of wealth behind and set out with absolutely nothing, only the clothes he had on. From that moment on he lived a life full of joy and happiness because he loved God above everything else and always put God first. As a result, God blessed St. Francis and he began the Franciscan order of monks. He is also known as the patron saint of animals, because he loved them and was said to be able to communicate with them better than anyone.

**Discussion:**

- What things can we do to make sure we put God first in our lives each day?
- How do we put God first in our sports practices and games?

**Practice Plan:** Focus on making God the focus of practice today. Remind the kids often that He is always with us, no matter what we're doing. Remind them that He is present here at practice and ask the kids to glorify Him by trying their absolute best.

**Prayer:**

- Dear God, you teach us to put you first each day, in everything that we do. Help us to put you first at home, at school and in practice. May we glorify you by trying our hardest in everything we do and giving thanks for your many blessings. Teach us how we can put you first in our lives by giving up things that aren't that important or by making sure we pray often. Bless us with a safe and fun practice, we pray. Amen.

**End of Practice:** Remind children to put God first in everything they do. As they head home, remind them that prayer is a great way to learn from God how they can make him the center of each day. Close with the following prayer:

- Father, you give us everything we have. Help us to put you first in all things as we remember you always and pray the prayer you taught us: Our Father, 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 of Assisi, Pray for us!

## 5 Minute Game Plan - 3rd Grade Year

Winter Sports Preseason Week 2

**Theme:** God's Mercy

**Scripture:** Luke 7:11-17

*"Soon afterward he went to a city called Nain, and his disciples and a great crowd went with him. As he drew near the gate of the city, behold, a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and a large crowd from the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said to her, 'Do not weep.' And he came and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, 'Young man, I say to you, arise.' And the dead man sat up, and began to speak. And he gave him to his mother. Fear seized them all; and they glorified God, saying, 'A great prophet has arisen among us!' and 'God has visited his people!' And this report concerning him spread through the whole of Judea and all the surrounding country."*

**Saintly Example:** St. Peter

St. Peter is a wonderful example of God's Mercy and a great figure in our Church. As Christ was being punished and died on the cross, Peter denied that he knew him three times so that he could protect himself. Yet God knew that Peter loved Jesus and so he showed him great mercy and forgave him when he repented of his sins. Though St. Peter made mistakes like anyone else, with great mercy and love Christ made St. Peter the first leader of the Catholic Church. St. Peter is considered the first "Pope". He is a great example of faith in God and how God can pour out His mercy on all of us.

**Discussion:**

- Who needs God's mercy and love? (Answer: All of us!) How does God show His mercy in the gospel story we read about Jesus raising the young man from death?
- How can we show other's God's love and mercy in sports? How do you think Jesus would want us to treat others with this in mind?

**Practice Plan:** Highlight during practice ways in which participants can be recipients of God's mercy. Remind them that one of the great sacraments is confession, which allows God to pour out his mercy upon us when we tell him our sins. If any disagreements happen, remind the kids about God's mercy and love and that we are called to forgive each other.

**Prayer:**

- Lord, we thank you for your great mercy and love for us. We thank you that we may be at this practice and participating with our friends in this game. Help us to forgive others as you forgive us and may we always be grateful for the times when you have showed us mercy and saved us from sin. Bless our practice with safety and fun today so that we can learn and work to the best of our abilities. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

**End of Practice:** Remind children that God is all loving and merciful. Reinforce last week's lesson about putting God first in their life and tell them to remember that they can ask God for forgiveness when they sin or pray to him for help when things go wrong. Close with the following:

- 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 - 3rd Grade Year

Winter Sports Preseason Week 3

**Theme:** Confession

**Scripture:** Luke 15:11-24

*“And he said, “There was a man who had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of property that falls to me.’ And he divided his living between them. Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took his journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in loose living. And when he had spent everything, a great famine arose in that country, and he began to be in want. So he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have fed on the pods that the swine ate; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have bread enough to spare, but I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired servants.’ And he arose and came to this father. But while he was yet at a distance, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and embraced and kissed him. And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and make merry; for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.’ And they began to make merry.”*

**Saintly Example:** St. Augustine

Augustine was not a very good person when he was young, he did not listen to God and did lots of things he was not supposed to. But God loved Augustine just like He loves everyone and one day Augustine had a conversion. St. Augustine stopped living a life of sin and committed himself to God. He confessed his sins to God and asked for forgiveness. God heard him and had mercy on him. Then St. Augustine became a great saint! He was very smart and began using his intelligence to write great books about God. He became a priest and then a bishop. He is a great example of how all of us can ask forgiveness for our sins and become closer to God.

**Discussion:**

- When we go to confession God cleanses us of our sins so that we can live holier lives. How might this help us in sports? If we aren't weighed down by sin, can we be more free to focus on sports? Do we treat teammates better? When we are spiritually "fit" we can perform better physically!

**Practice Plan:** Encourage all the kids on the team to go to confession. In fact, your team might even be practicing at a time when confession is offered at your church, or you could ask a priest to come to practice and offer confession somewhere in the gym during practice! What an amazing gift this would be to have a sacrament available for kids who could excuse themselves from drills for a minute to go to confession!

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, you forgive us our sins in the great sacrament of confession. Have mercy on us and help us to be cleansed of our sins so that we can lead more holy lives each day. As we strive for holiness, help us to do our absolute best in everything, especially here at this practice. Bless all our teammates and coaches with a safe and fun week. Amen.

**End of Practice:** Encourage the kids to go to confession and to forgive others when they do wrong to them. Then 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, a world without end. Amen. St. Augustine, Pray for Us!"



## 5 Minute Game Plan - 3rd Grade Year

Winter Sports Preseason Week 4

**Theme:** Signs and Miracles

**Scripture:** Luke 6:6-11

*“On another sabbath, when he entered the synagogue and taught, a man was there whose right hand was withered. And the scribes and the Pharisees watched him, to see whether he would heal on the sabbath, so that they might find an accusation against him. But he knew their thoughts, and he said to the man who had the withered hand, ‘Come and stand here.’ And he rose and stood there. And Jesus said to them, ‘I ask you, is it lawful on the sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to destroy it?’ And he looked around on them all, and said to him, ‘Stretch out your hand.’ And he did so, and his hand was restored. But they were filled with fury and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus.”*

**Saintly Example:** St. Philomena

Not much is known about Philomena's life except that she died a martyr very long ago, around 300 A.D. as a young girl. Yet we know that St. Philomena is responsible for great miracles since a shrine was dedicated to her by a priest in Italy. That priest was struck with great joy when he heard about her and since he created this shrine, people have been cured of cancer, healed of wounds and even had their heart problems stop! Many saintly people have since had great devotions to her and people often ask for her intercession while praying a rosary or a novena, which is a prayer that repeats over nine days.

**Discussion:**

- Jesus did many miracles during His ministry here on earth. What can these miracles teach us? Do they help our faith by reminding us that God can do anything?
- Many times great comebacks or plays in sports are called "miracles." Can you think of any? (Coaches might need to help) Why do we call these miracles? Could these be a sign in sports that if we believe in God then He can do anything? If we can make great plays in sports or come back from being down many points, how much greater are the things God can do in our lives?

**Practice Plan:** Remind the kids that if they try their hardest, God can make anything possible. At the same time, let them know that God is always watching over us and that we can always pray to him and ask him to heal a sick friend or family member. Reinforce these things during practice.

**Prayer:**

- Lord, we love you with all our heart. You worked great miracles during your life on earth and through your saints. Help us to believe and increase our faith through these miraculous events. Bless and protect all those who need our prayers or who might need a miracle. Teach us how to give our best effort and have fun during practice this week. Help us to pray always. Amen.

**End of Practice:** Remind the kids that God works miracles great and small each day. One of the greatest gifts He gives us is the Eucharist. Encourage them to pray to God if they have family or friends in need or sick, for God can do all things. 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. Saint Philomena, Pray for Us!

## 5 Minute Game Plan - 3rd Grade Year

Winter Sports Preseason Week 5

**Theme:** Spiritual Works of Mercy

**Scripture:** Matthew 25: 31-36, 40

*“When the son of man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will place the sheep at his right hand, but the goats at the left. Then the King will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.*

*And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my bretheren, you did it to me.’”*

### **Spiritual Works of Mercy:**

Admonishing the sinner  
Instructing the ignorant  
Counseling the doubtful  
Comforting the sorrowful  
Bearing wrongs patiently  
Forgiving all injuries  
Praying for the living and the dead

### **Discussion:**

- How can living out the spiritual works of mercy help us to be closer to God? How can they help others become closer to God?
- How do these apply to our participation in sports? Which ones might we remember during practices and games?

**Practice Plan:** Incorporate these principles into your coaching, whether it's a reminder to "bear wrongs patiently" when you feel a call goes against your team in a game, or to "counsel the doubtful" if any of the kids has a doubt about their faith that comes up in practice or game - this could even apply on a smaller scale to being positive and alleviating doubts kids might have about athletic performance.

### **Prayer:**

- Lord of Love and Mercy, help us to remember the Spiritual Works of Mercy each day, so that we may grow closer to you and help others to come to know you more fully at home, at school and on our team. Teach us to always treat others with love and respect, remembering that everyone is a child of God. Bless our efforts during practice and grant us a safe week. Bless our families and friends this week as well. Amen.

**End of Practice:** Remind the kids of the Spiritual Works of Mercy and that God wants them to always lead people to Him. Ask them to remember these lessons in sports as well as at home and school. 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, a world without end. Amen.

## 5 Minute Game Plan - 3rd Grade Year

Winter Sports Preseason Week 6

**Theme:** Forgiveness

**Scripture:** Luke 5:17-26

*"On one of those days, as he was teaching, there were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting by, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem; and the power of the Lord was with him to heal. And behold, men were bringing on a bed a man who was paralyzed, and they sought to bring him in and lay him before Jesus; but finding no way to bring him in, because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down with his bed through the tiles into the midst before Jesus. And when he saw their faith he said, 'Man, your sins are forgiven you.' And the scribes and the Pharisees began to question, saying, 'Who is this that speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God only?' When Jesus perceived their questionings, he answered them, 'Why do you question in your hearts? Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say 'Rise and walk?' But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins' - he said to the man who was paralyzed - 'I say to you, rise, take up your bed and go home.' And immediately he rose before them, and took up that on which he lay, and went home, glorifying God. And amazement seized them all, and they glorified God and were filled with awe, saying, 'We have seen strange things today.'"*

**Saintly Example:** St. Maximilian Kolbe

St. Maximilian Kolbe was a Franciscan priest in Poland. As a young priest, he traveled the world and worked to open monasteries and encourage people to pray the rosary, starting a movement of people devoted to the rosary he called the "Knights of the Immaculata." During World War II, he was taken prisoner for being a Catholic priest and taken to the concentration camp known as Auschwitz. There he offered himself to face death instead of another man. While forced to starve, St. Maximilian Kolbe was actually extremely joyful, and led his fellow prisoners in singing songs of praise to God! The guards in the prison were amazed at his faith and his confidence that he would soon be with God in heaven. He encouraged his fellow prisoners to forgive those who wronged them and to praise God always.

**Discussion:**

- Great saints and even Jesus Himself were known to forgive those who did harm to them, even unto death. If they can forgive, we must follow this example every day! How often are we called to forgive those who do wrong to us? (Answer: Always.)
- How does this apply to our team? Are there times when we must forgive teammates or opponents? Do we tell them we forgive them?

**Practice Plan:** Reinforce the importance to a team of practicing forgiveness. If we don't forgive each other when we sin, our team will be broken and hurt. But if we forgive each other through the year, our team can compete together well. Relate this to the importance of each of us forgiving others as Jesus taught in our everyday lives.

**Prayer:** Jesus, you forgive our sins in the sacrament of Confession and you taught us to forgive others through your ministry and the lives of your saints. Help us to always be forgiving and loving in our interactions with our friends, family and even those against us. In sports, help us to forgive those who might hurt us verbally or physically. Help us to remember that we are all one body in Christ. Bless our team and lead us this week. Amen.

**End of Practice:** Pray 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. Maximilian Kolbe, Pray for us!

## 5 Minute Game Plan - 3rd Grade Year

Winter Sports Regular Season Week 1

**Theme:** Divine Mercy

**Devine Mercy Prayer:** The Devine Mercy Chaplet is a prayer based on the vision and prayers of St. Faustina Kowalski. It is prayed on the traditional rosary using different prayers on the beads. The Chaplet begins by reciting the *Our Father, Hail Mary and Apostles Creed*. Then the *Eternal Father* prayer is prayed on the traditional *Our Father* beads and the *For the sake of His sorrowful Passion* is prayed on the traditional *Hail Mary* beads. Pray a decade with the kids using the prayers below (like the rosary, the prayer can be split by leader/group as noted by the / below):

Leader Begins with *Eternal Father* prayer: "Eternal Father, I offer you the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Your Dearly Beloved Son, Our Lord, Jesus Christ / In atonement for our sins and those of the whole world."

Ten "Hail Mary" Beads: "For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, / have mercy on us and on the whole world."

Conclude with *Holy God* repeated 3 times: "Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, / have mercy on us and on the whole world."

**Saintly Example:** St. Faustina Kowalski

Saint Faustina was a Polish nun who lived between 1905 and 1938. She received visions of Christ throughout her life and wrote about having conversations with Him in her diary. One of these visions was the image of the Divine Mercy, where she noted that Jesus appeared wearing a white robe, with red and pale white rays coming from His heart. She was told to have the image painted and this is now the Divine Mercy image we can find in our churches throughout the world. St. Faustina's prayers also became the Divine Mercy prayer you learned above. She was known to be a holy and cheerful nun to those around her, many of whom knew nothing about her visions of Christ until after her death.

**Discussion:**

- God clearly wants to teach us and show us His mercy, which means treating others with love and forgiveness, as well as praying for them and remembering the "Spiritual works of Mercy and the Corporal Works of Mercy. How do we see his mercy in our daily lives? In our sports?

**Practice Plan:** Remember the concept of Mercy and apply it to your team and practice. Take a look at the Spiritual and Corporal works of mercy if necessary as a refresher, then determine how you can apply those to teach young athletes. For example, comforting the sorrowful is a Spiritual Work of mercy. Practice this, even if it's just comforting an injured team member or encouraging team members to show comfort for a teammate who experiences a loss during the season.

**Prayer:** Father of Mercy, we thank you for the lessons of mercy and love which you have showed us through your son and the many saints who have followed you throughout the ages. Bless our team on this day and help us to be examples of your love and mercy whenever we can. Help us to learn how we can show mercy and follow you. Make us joyful like St. Faustina and help us to learn from her. Help us to always learn to know you better, Lord, in all that we do this week. Amen.

**End of Practice:** Remind the team about the Divine Mercy chaplet and encourage them to research it and learn it, as they will need to know it in school. Then 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. Saint Faustina, Pray for Us!

## 5 Minute Game Plan - 3rd Grade Year

Winter Sports Regular Season Week 2

**Theme:** Corporal Works of Mercy

**Scripture:** Luke 4:38-41

*“And he rose and left the synagogue, and entered Simon’s house. Now Simon’s mother-in-law was ill with a high fever, and they besought him for her. And he stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her; and immediately she rose and served them. Now when the sun was setting, all those who had any that were sick with various diseases brought them to him; and he laid his hands on every one of them and healed them. And demons also came out of many, crying, ‘You are the Son of God!’ But he rebuked them, and would not allow them to speak, because they knew that he was the Christ.”*

**Corporal Works of Mercy:** The Corporal Works of Mercy are 7 specific ways in which we can help our "neighbors" by showing them God's love and mercy:

To feed the hungry;  
To give drink to the thirsty;  
To clothe the naked;  
To shelter the homeless;  
To visit the sick;  
To visit the imprisoned;  
To bury the dead.

### **Discussion:**

- In what ways can we practice the Corporal Works of Mercy above in our daily lives? Are there small ways to help clothe those who need clothing, or to feed those who are hungry?
- What about as a team? What ideas do we have to live out one of these works? (Coaches, See below)

**Practice Plan:** Put one of these Works of Mercy into practice. Preferably by utilizing an idea that comes from a team member, arrange a plan to do one of these things. Perhaps the easiest would be to have a small canned food drive within your team, volunteering to collect the food as a coach and donate. Or perhaps a used clothing drive. If one of your schools is doing this, work as a team to donate as much as possible to the school from this team. Work to have the kids come up with the idea so it's them putting this into practice.

### **Prayer:**

- Father, we learn of Jesus healing the sick and you teach us the Corporal Works of Mercy so that we can live out the lessons of Christ in today's world. Help us to do this as a team through the ideas we have discussed and the actions we have planned. May our compassion for others help us to bring Your love into the world. Grant that we may have a fun and safe week of practice and bless our efforts to show your mercy and love to the world. Amen.

**End of Practice:** Remind kids about whatever initiative you have come up with to live out a Corporal Work of Mercy. Encourage them to really seek out ways to follow these works in their daily lives. Then close with a decade of the Divine Mercy Chaplet as learned last week.

## 5 Minute Game Plan - 3rd Grade Year

Winter Sports Regular Season Week 3

**Theme:** Caring for the Sick

**Scripture:** Luke 5:12-16

*"While he was in one of the cities, there came a man full of leprosy; and when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and besought him, 'Lord, if you will, you can make me clean.' And he stretched out his hand, and touched him, saying, 'I will; be clean.' And immediately the leprosy left him. And he charged him to tell no one; but 'go and show yourself to the priest, and make an offering for your cleansing, as Moses commanded, for a proof to the people. But so much the more the report went abroad concerning him; and great multitudes gathered to hear and to be healed of their infirmities. But he withdrew to the wilderness and prayed."*

**Saintly Example:** Fr. Damien of Molokai

Father Damien of Molokai was a priest from Belgium in Europe who lived in the 1800's. He was sent on a mission to Hawaii to help evangelize and care for those in need. After several years there, he made the decision to go to the island of Molokai and tend to a group of people there with leprosy. Leprosy affects people by causing lots of painful skin sores and weakening muscles. It can be caught by coming into contact with someone who has leprosy, so in many places in history people with the disease are outcast and made to live in groups away from most people. Like Jesus, Fr. Damien had compassion for these people and wanted to share the love of God with them. He built hospitals and cared for the sick, particularly the children. Eventually, Fr. Damien got leprosy himself and died. He taught many people about God and cared for many sick, just as Jesus taught.

**Discussion:**

- What ways have you (the children) cared for those who are sick? What did Jesus teach about caring for the sick? In what ways can all of us be like the example Fr. Damien and care for the sick?
- How does this apply to injuries in sports? How do you think Jesus wants us to treat an opposing player who gets injured during a game?

**Practice Plan:** Encourage the kids to care for the sick and make this a team activity through the year as a team member comes down with illness. It can be as simple as having the team make/sign a card for one of their teammates when that child is sick and unable to attend practice. Also apply this to injuries suffered during games, assuring the kids know how to react teammates and opponents who are injured, especially by praying for them during practice.

**Prayer:**

- \*First, ask for any special intentions from the kids for family or friends who are sick.
- Heavenly Father, you teach us to care for the sick and gave us the example of St. Damien of Molokai and all the great saints who cared for those who were sick. We ask that you remember now those for whom we offer this prayer, all our family and friends who are sick. Help us to care for them as Jesus taught us. Bless our practice that we may be kept safe from injury and bless all those in our classes and on opposing teams that they may be healthy and safe this season. Amen.

**End of Practice:** Remind the kids to pray for all those who are sick and especially the special intentions mentioned prior to the prayer at the beginning of practice. Explain that our Mother Mary can often be a great source of intercession, just like our own mothers who care for us when sick. Close with 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. Saint Damien of Molokai, Pray for Us!"

## 5 Minute Game Plan - 3rd Grade Year

Winter Sports Regular Season Week 4

**Theme:** Feeding the Hungry

**Scripture:** Isaiah 58:10-11

*"If you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday. And the Lord will guide you continually, and satisfy your desire with good things, and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters fail not."*

**Saintly Example:** St. Katherine Drexel

St. Katherine Drexel was born in 1858 to a very wealthy family in Philadelphia. She could have had anything she wanted and lived a life away from the poor and oppressed, but she loved God and chose to give herself to the service of others through her life. She founded an order of nuns dedicated to helping the African and Native Americans living in the United States, particularly those in most need. She donated all of her money she inherited to these works and helped to open schools and missions across the country. She was canonized a Saint by Pope John Paul II in the year 2000 and became only the 2nd American born saint.

**Discussion:**

- In what ways do we help feed the hungry? Do our parishes and schools have ways to help feed those in need? What are some ways we can help others going forward?

**Practice Plan:** Encourage the kids to help "feed the hungry" by looking for ways they can help those in most need. Whether it's donating food in a school or parish food drive, or sharing a snack with a friend who is hungry, there are many ways each child can make a small (or large) difference even at a young age. Make this mentality of helping others a focus of practice by pointing out ways that each child can help his or her teammates during practice drills or plays.

**Prayer:**

- Lord, you teach us to feed the hungry and care for all those in need. Help us to follow your example and learn to give of ourselves to others both from our material goods and from our own service. May we be devoted to helping others in our home, our school and on this team. Bless our practices and game this week, keep us safe and help us to have fun by doing all things in Your name. Amen.

**End of Practice:** Remind kids to help those in need and encourage them to treat all their friends and classmates with love and respect. Close with a decade of the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, per previous lesson. Offer this decade for those in most need of food on this day.

## 5 Minute Game Plan - 3rd Grade Year

Winter Sports Regular Season Week 5

**Theme:** Peace and Justice

**Scripture:** Matthew 7:12

*“So whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them; for this is the law and the prophets.”*

**Saintly Example:** St. Vincent de Paul

St. Vincent de Paul was born in France and became a priest in the year 1600. He quickly took to caring for those most in need from infants to the elderly and was known for many works of charity during his life. Though he was honored even during his life for all his generous works, he always remained humble and gave glory to God. He is perhaps most known for his works caring for the poor and for prisoners. He helped to create hospitals and shelters for those in need and devoted his entire life to these causes.

**Discussion:**

- Do you (children) know the "Golden Rule"? (Do unto others as you would have them do to you.) Does that sound a lot like the scripture passage we read above? Do you try to follow this rule?
- How do you think this scripture applies to sports and to this team? Does it affect the way you treat teammates? What about opponents?

**Practice Plan:** Consider how you as a coach can promote the virtue of Justice in your team's practices and games. This can be as simple as reminding them of the Golden Rule or encouraging them to build relationships with their teammates and have compassion for both their teammates and opponents. Consider how you approach the topic of opposing teams and assure this meets with instilling the virtue of justice in young children.

**Prayer:**

- Jesus, you taught us by your actions and words to love our neighbor and care always for those in need. Help us to care for our brothers and sisters in Christ and to show them your love in our own actions and words. Help us to treat others how we would want them to treat us. May we be good teammates and opponents this week in practices and our game. Bless our efforts and help us to do as you wish, Lord. Amen.

**End of Practice:** Remind the team about doing unto others as you would want them to do and encourage them to remember that at home, in school and with the team. Remind them to think about what Jesus taught us about how to treat people. 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. Vincent de Paul, Pray for Us!



## 5 Minute Game Plan - 3rd Grade Year

Winter Sports Regular Season Week 6

**Theme:** Service to Others

**Scripture:** 1 Peter 4:10-11

*“As each has received a gift, employ it for one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who utters oracles of God; whoever renders service, as one who renders it by the strength which God supplies; in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong the glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”*

**Saintly Example:** St. John Bosco

St. John Bosco was blessed with dreams throughout his life that helped him to understand God's will and learn God's mission for him. He was an Italian priest who lived in the 1800's and spent most of his life ministering to poor and neglected children - often those who were in serious trouble or were disadvantaged. He focused on helping these children through great love, rather than punishment. Many people in his town thought he was crazy for wanting to help such troubled or needy kids, but worked hard to listen to God's will and care for the children he was called to care for.

**Discussion:**

- Our scripture today teaches that God has given each of us talents that we are called to use to serve others. What might these talents be? Can you (children) think of any talents you have that God may be calling you to use to serve others?
- How does this apply to our team? What talents do each of us have that serve the good of the entire team? Are some people better at different skills than others? How can we serve others on our team each time we practice and play?

**Practice Plan:** Focus on the idea of players individual "gifts" or skills and praise them during practices and the game this week for being talents given to them from God. Pick out individual children and point out a skill they have during practice that can help the team. Help them to understand how they can use this particular talent to serve the good of the team and help their teammates. Use this example to help show them how they can serve others in their lives in other ways.

**Prayer:**

- Heavenly Father, you have given us each unique and special talents and gifts that we can share with others. Help us to understand how we can use these gifts to serve our family and friends. Help us to understand what skills you have given us on our team so that we can use these skills to serve our teammates. May you help us to have fun this week using the talents you have given us and to always be grateful for whatever skills you bless us with, understanding that all of us will have different talents we can use to serve others. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

**End of Practice:** Remind them to think about the skills you have pointed out in each child during practice and how they can help the team. Then encourage them to think about how they can use their talents and gifts to serve others in their family or community at home, school or elsewhere. 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 Bosco, Pray for Us!

## 5 Minute Game Plan - 3rd Grade Year

Winter Sports Regular Season Week 7

**Theme:** Living Holy Lives

**Scripture:** 1 Thessalonians 4:7

*“For God has not called us for uncleanness, but in holiness. Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you.”*

**Saintly Example:** St. Dominic Savio

Dominic Savio was 12 years old when he met St. John Bosco and helped to organize a group of boys who would hope to become priests and follow John Bosco's mission work. Dominic was known as an exceptionally bright and talented boy who remained humble and focused on God. He was known for his amazing devotion to prayer and holiness as young as five years old! Among the boys at his school, he treated all of them with great love and worked daily to help them to avoid sin and lead holy lives. When his friends would sin or begin to fight, Dominic was almost always there to remind them of God's presence. He lived a holy life and was an example not only to other boys and girls but also to those much older. When he was 15, he got tuberculosis and had to be sent home from the school where he studied and worked with John Bosco. He kept his amazing faith even when he died of the illness. He was named a saint and became known world-wide for his extraordinary love of God.

**Discussion:**

- St. Dominic Savio was not much older than you when he created a group of boys to study under John Bosco and become priests. What does his example of prayer and devotion to God teach us about how we should act as young boys and girls?
- God calls us to holiness, how do we try to be holy each day at home? During school? What things can we do to strive for holiness during practice?

**Practice Plan:** Focus on how "living holy lives" can begin at practice. Help the children to understand that by setting the example of prayer at practice, they can become better praying on their own. Or by listening to their coaches, they can learn how to better listen to parents at home. Think of ways to help children see that by growing in physical skills at practice, they can learn how to grow in other skills and become better students and children of God.

**Prayer:**

- Lord, you give us the example of St. Dominic Savio as a child who demonstrated great holiness and love for his friends and family. Help us to be like him and to treat all our friends at school, our teammates and our families with great love and respect, always striving to lead others to heaven. May you help us to lead "extraordinary" lives of holiness so that we may glorify you in all that we do. Bless us in this practice and help us to learn how to become better athletes as well as better friends, brothers, sisters and children. Amen.

**End of Practice:** Remind the kids about the example of St. Dominic Savio and encourage them to strive for holiness. 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. Maximilian Kolbe, Pray for us!

## 5 Minute Game Plan - 3rd Grade Year

### Acknowledgements and Sources

Many thanks go out to all those who were involved in the discussion, creation and implementation surrounding this initiative. In particular a special thanks to the Executive Board of the CYO of Johnson and Wyandotte Counties for their input and approval of this initiative. In addition a thanks to Dr. Kathy O'Hara, Superintendent of Schools for the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas, both for her discussion and support of this initiative. Further thanks to the Athletic Directors of each CYO parish for their hard work in implementing this program with coaches and teams. A thanks to the Directors of Religious Education and Youth Ministers at various parishes throughout the area with whom I discussed this initiative and bounced ideas off of. Finally a special thanks to Becky Skaggs for her work on editing and formatting these lessons.

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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