

CYO ATHLETICS

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

One potentially significant contribution to the life of a community is the Catholic Youth Organization's athletic program. Youth are allowed to express themselves through athletics while developing harmony of body, mind, and spirit. By participating in the CYO Athletic Program, young men and women develop self-confidence, discipline, and a sense of perseverance which serves as a foundation for them to build upon. Any student of a sponsoring Catholic Parish Elementary School, or any registered member of a Catholic Parish is eligible to participate in CYO athletics.

The Athletic Program meets the needs of many youth by providing an environment which satisfies the needs of stability, friendship and meaning for its participants. With its young athletes in mind, CYO athletics strives to associate the competitive spirit of athletic events with the spirit of struggle corresponding to spiritual growth. With the appropriate adult interest and supervision that CYO provides, athletic competition can accomplish these objectives.

The Church's approach to athletic competition reflects the view that Christian maturity comes as a process of inner growth. The accumulation of symbols indicating victory or defeat are insignificant in relation to the lifetime gains of athletic experience. The Church is involved with an athletic program in witness to a community which values individual and communal efforts above victory or defeat.

The history of the youth movement in the Church in America seems to verify the many worthwhile benefits that have come from Church sponsored athletic programs. These programs have been a beginning point of contact and source of identity with the Church, for the young people involved. Many adults have athletic abilities to offer CYO athletics by coaching & volunteering to work with the kids. Through their volunteer work, adults have a tremendous influence in the physical and Christian development of youth.

For millions of young people, CYO athletics has served as the contact point for further forms of ministry, such as involvement in parish youth groups, retreat movements, prayer groups catechetics etc. Yet, CYO athletics is also reaping another remarkable fruit. Young people who have participated in sports programs are now returning as adults to share what they have received. This involvement in the Church's apostolate to youth, in the role of coaches, adult advisors, board members, and interested parents is a sign of true ministry.