



The 5 Minute Game Plan

A Catechesis Supplement for Youth Sports

4th Grade Edition

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

5 Minute Game Plan - 4th 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. 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 fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and "J".

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

Read aloud by coach or child

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

"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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Year Outline

Fall Seasons

- Preseason Week 1 - **Theme:** Free Will **Scripture:** Proverbs 16:9 **Saint:** Mary, Mother of God
- Preseason Week 2 - **Theme:** The Fall of Man **Scripture:** Genesis 3:2-7 **Saint:** St. Thomas Aquinas
- Regular Season Week 1 - **Theme:** The People of Israel **Scripture:** Psalm 33:12-15 **Saint:** St. Joan of Arc
- Regular Season Week 2 - **Theme:** God Saves His People **Scripture:** Exodus 14:9-10, 13-17 **Saint:** St. Christopher
- Regular Season Week 3 - **Theme:** Ten Commandments (1-3) **Scripture:** Exodus 20:1-11 **Saint:** St. Francis Xavier
- Regular Season Week 4 - **Theme:** Ten Commandments (4) **Scripture:** Exodus 20: 12 **Saint:** St. Dorothy
- Regular Season Week 5 - **Theme:** Ten Commandments (5-8) **Scripture:** Exodus 20: 13-16 **Saint:** St. Maria Goretti
- Regular Season Week 6 - **Theme:** Ten Commandments (9-10) **Scripture:** Exodus 20:17 **Saint:** St. Clare
- Regular Season Week 7 - **Theme:** The Great Commandments **Scripture:** Matthew 22:37-40 **Saint:** St. Veronica

Winter Seasons

- Preseason Week 1 - **Theme:** Our Father **Scripture:** Luke 11:1-4 **Saint:** St. Luke the Evangelist
- Preseason Week 2 - **Theme:** Prayer **Scripture:** Luke 11:5-8 **Saint:** St. Benedict
- Preseason Week 3 - **Theme:** Prayer **Scripture:** Luke 11:9-13 **Saint:** St. Scholastica
- Regular Season Week 1 - **Theme:** Spontaneous Prayer **Scripture:** Matthew 18:20 **Saint:** St. Ignatius
- Regular Season Week 2 - **Theme:** The Moral Teachings **Scripture:** None **Saint:** St. Dominic
- Regular Season Week 3 - **Theme:** Beatitudes **Scripture:** Matthew 5 **Saint:** None
- Regular Season Week 4 - **Theme:** Beatitudes **Scripture:** Matthew 6 **Saint:** None
- Regular Season Week 5 - **Theme:** Beatitudes **Scripture:** Matthew 7 **Saint:** None
- Regular Season Week 6 - **Theme:** Living a Moral Life **Scripture:** Philippians 4:8 **Saint:** St. Frances Xavier Cabrini
- Regular Season Week 7 - **Theme:** Making Mistakes (Sin) **Scripture:** 1 John 1:8-9 **Saint:** St. Mary Magdalene
- Regular Season Week 8 - **Theme:** Sacraments **Scripture:** Ephesians 3:8-12 **Saint:** St. Kateri Tekakwitha
- Regular Season Week 9 - **Theme:** The Eucharist **Scripture:** John 6:35 **Saint:** St. Andrew Kim Taigon
- Regular Season Week 10 - **Theme:** Heaven **Scripture:** Revelation 22:4-5 **Saint:** St. Charles Lwanga

Spring Seasons

- Preseason Week 1 - **Theme:** The Sacramental Life of the Church **Scripture:** CCC 1116 **Saint:** St. Patrick
- Preseason Week 2 - **Theme:** The Liturgical Calendar **Scripture:** Matthew 9:15 **Saint:** St. Jerome
- Regular Season Week 1 - **Theme:** Organization of the Church **Scripture:** Matthew 16:18-19 **Saint:** St. Catherine of Siena
- Regular Season Week 2 - **Theme:** Communion of Saints **Scripture:** Romans 12:4-5 **Saint:** None
- Regular Season Week 3 - **Theme:** Giving Thanks **Scripture:** 1 Chronicles 29:13 **Saint:** St. Nicholas
- Regular Season Week 4 - **Theme:** Grace **Scripture:** Romans 5:1 **Saint:** St. Monica

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Fall Sports Preseason Week 1

Theme: Free Will

Scripture: Proverbs 16:9

“A man’s mind plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps.”

Saintly Example: Mary, Mother of God

Free will means that God created each one of us with the ability to choose what we do each day and in life. However, as Christians we know that the thing that will ultimately make us most happy in life is choosing to do what God is asking us to do. He allows us to freely choose Him. Mary is the perfect example of this. When the angel Gabriel came to Mary and announced God’s plan for her, she did not turn away, but joyfully accepted her mission in life, that she was to become the Mother of God. In her “yes” to God, she represents a great example for us to follow each day. We can strive to be like Mary, who was without sin, by striving each day to determine how we can do God’s will and find happiness.

Discussion:

- Are there things each day that we would rather not do, but we know that it’s best we do them because our parents or God are asking us to? (chores, being nice to someone, etc)
- How can we imitate Mary’s “yes” in our practice today and during this coming season? How can we choose to follow God’s will while playing our sport?

Practice Plan

- Let the children know that they can choose to commit themselves to practice today so that they can achieve their goals and do the best they possibly can. Remind them to follow Mary’s example and to ask her to pray for us, so that we can better understand and choose to do God’s will in our lives.

Prayer

- Heavenly Father, we thank you for granting us a free will, and ask that you will help us to always choose to do your will so that we can be most happy. Be with us in this practice so that we can grow in not only our athletic skill, but also in virtue and our relationship with you. Bless all the families on our team and we pray for a safe and fun experience today and through the season. Amen.

End of Practice: Remind kids to work on seeking to understand and follow God’s will, remembering that this will make them truly happy in life. Tell them they can ask for the prayers of Mary and look to her example each day. Say 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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Fall Sports Preseason Week 2

Theme: The Fall of Man

Scripture: Genesis 3:2-7

And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened...

Saintly Example: St. Thomas Aquinas

St. Thomas Aquinas was a great student who wrote many writings, poems and hymns still used today. He spent his entire life learning everything he possibly could about the Lord and was very wise in interpreting what things meant. His masterpiece called the "Summa Theologica" is well known around the world and he is considered a "Doctor of the Church" based on how beneficial his teachings were to the whole church.

Discussion

- Adam and Eve tried to be like God instead of following his commands. In a similar way, sometimes we think we can know more than our parents instead of doing what they ask us to do. In what ways can we better follow God and our parents each day?
- Instead of thinking he knew more than God, St. Thomas Aquinas spent his life learning everything he could from the Lord, spreading His word around the world. How can our team imitate the example of St. Thomas Aquinas by seeking to know God better through this season?

Practice Plan

- Remind kids that this team is a community who together can strive to follow God and come to know Him better in each practice and game. Let them know that God wants us to follow Him and ask Him for help when we need it, instead of thinking we can do things ourselves all the time.

Prayer

- Lord, you gave us the example of St. Thomas Aquinas who faithfully followed you and sought to gain knowledge about you so he could share with the world. Help us to learn from his zeal for truth and to follow you in all that we do each day. Bless our practice that we may follow the teaching of our coaches so that we can all get better this week. Grant that we may have a safe and fun practice. Amen.

End of Practice: Remind the kids to seek to know more about God in the coming week and to pray to Him when they need something, instead of trying to do it all themselves. Pray 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. Thomas Aquinas, Pray for us!"

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Fall Sports Regular Season Week 1

Theme: The People of Israel

Scripture: Psalm 33:12-15

Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people whom he has chosen as his heritage! The Lord looks down from heaven, he sees all the sons of men; from where he sits enthroned he looks forth on all the inhabitants of the earth, he who fashions the hearts of them all, and observes their deeds.

Saintly Example: St. Joan of Arc

God loved the people of Israel and repeatedly blessed them and looked out for them. Through Christ, God's promises to Israel were fulfilled and the Church was established. Today, God still looks out for everyone in the world just like He did so long ago. Many years ago, he used Joan of Arc to help save many of His people when they most needed Him. When Joan lived in France, her country was fighting with the English and people worshipping God were persecuted by their enemies. God sent angels and saints to tell her to save her country. Joan listened and became a great soldier, leading her country to victory and driving out the English invaders. Still, though she saved many people and won great battles for her country, some corrupt people helped friends of the enemy capture her. She was falsely accused of many things and killed. She was faithful to God until the end, and years after her death the people revisited her case and made it known that she did nothing wrong.

Discussion:

- Since the time of the Israelites, God has called His chosen people to follow Him and even fight for his kingdom so that everyone on earth can know Him. Though he may not be calling us to be a soldier like St. Joan of Arc, what are ways that we can "fight" for God in our own way in the world today?
- How can our team follow God and be his soldiers this season?

Practice Plan

- Remind the children that they are chosen by God to do great things for Him, whether in sports, school, home or in their community. Affirm that through much prayer and hard work they can follow God and achieve what he calls them to do. Help each child to do the best they can on your team during this practice and season.

Prayer

- Dear God, we thank you for watching over us and choosing us for greatness. Like Joan of Arc, help us to listen to your call and do as you ask each day, even when that task is difficult or different than what the world around us thinks is popular. Keep us safe in this practice and help our team to always compete for you in all that we do! Amen.

End of Practice: Select a child or two and point out a way in which they got better during practice. Affirm again that everyone is called to greatness by God. Pray the following prayer with the intention that everyone may have the courage to follow God at all times:

- Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our defense against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray. And do thou oh Prince of Heavenly Hosts, by the power of God, thrust into hell Satan and all the evil spirits, who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. St. Joan of Arc, Pray for Us!

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Fall Sports Regular Season Week 2

Theme: God Saves His People

Scripture: Exodus 14:9-10, 13-17

The Egyptians pursued them, all Pharaoh's horses and chariots and his horsemen and his army, and overtook them encamped at the sea...And Moses said to the people, "Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will work for you today; for the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again. The Lord will fight for you, and you have only to be still. The Lord said to Moses, "Why do you cry to me? Tell the people of Israel to go forward. Lift up your rod, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the people of Israel may go on dry ground through the sea. And I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they shall go in after them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, his chariots, and his horsemen."

Saintly Example: St. Christopher

Saint Christopher was originally named Offero. He was a big, strong soldier who worked at a river and helped to get travelers across the water safely by carrying them on his shoulders. He knew of Jesus and hoped that some day Jesus would appear to him while he worked. One day, a little boy appeared at the river and Christopher proceeded to take him across. Yet as they crossed, the boy got heavier and heavier on his shoulders until finally Christopher asked "Who are you?". The boy replied "I am Jesus Christ." The large soldier immediately became a Christian and followed Jesus for the rest of his life, eventually becoming a martyr. His name became Christopher, which means "the man who carried Christ."

Discussion:

- God repeatedly protects us and saves us, whether through a great miracle like the parting of the sea or through one of His saints. Can you think of any times God has saved you from harm?
- How can we ask God to protect us during this season? What can we do to entrust our season to Him?

Practice Plan

- Determine something your team can do each practice or game as a reminder that God is present and protects us always. This could be as simple as a prayer or some symbol. Keep this practice as a constant reminder of God's protection and love for each person on your team.

Prayer

- Lord, we know that you watch over and protect us each day. Keep us safe during this practice and help us to know that you are always looking out for us, whether we realize it or not. Help our team to trust in you and seek you in all things. May we all have fun and get better in our sport during this practice. Amen.

End of Practice: Remind the kids about the discussion before practice and whatever your team is doing as a reminder of God's love and protection. 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. Christopher, Pray for us!"

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Fall Sports Regular Season Week 3

Theme: Ten Commandments

Scripture: Exodus 20: 1-3, 7-11

And God spoke all these words, saying, "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before me..."

...You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain. Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work; but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your manservant, or your maidservant, or your cattle, or the sojourner who is within your gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it."

Saintly Example: St. Francis Xavier

St. Francis Xavier was one of the first followers of St. Ignatius Loyola, who founded the Jesuit order. St. Francis spent much of his time traveling all over the world teaching people about Jesus, converting them and baptizing them as Catholics. In fact, it is estimated he baptized nearly 40,000 people during his travels! It's appropriate that he is the patron saint of missionaries. St. Francis Xavier loved God so much that he was willing to go to many foreign lands to teach that God was the only God, and to teach others how to live by his commandments.

Discussion:

- What does it mean to "not take the name of the Lord your God in vain?" How can we make sure we follow this commandment?
- God teaches us to keep the sabbath day (Sunday) holy. What can we do in our families to help keep this a day of rest and worship of the Lord? (Note that this commandment is why CYO games are no longer played on Sunday, so that all workers and families can rest and worship God as best as they can.)

Practice Plan

- Remind kids that it's important that in everything we do we put God first, keep his name sacred, and keep holy each day, but particularly Sunday. Ask them to especially focus on this during sports, where it can be easy to be frustrated and forget that God is present. Work with them to always be positive during practice and games, praising God in everything.

Prayer

- Heavenly Father, bless us in this practice as we proclaim you as God and seek to live according to your commandments. Help us to always strive to keep your commandments in everything we do. Help us also to find ways that we can set aside special time for God through the week and especially on Sunday. Bless our practice and keep us safe while having fun. Amen.

End of Practice: Remind the kids to focus on following the first three commandments as read about at the beginning 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. Francis Xavier, Pray for us!"

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Fall Sports Regular Season Week 4

Theme: Ten Commandments

Scripture: Exodus 20: 12

“Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your God gives you.”

Saintly Example: St. Dorothy

St. Dorothy lived in early 300's AD, when an emperor named Diocletian was persecuting Christians and killing many people. In fact, Dorothy's learned the faith from her own parents, who had died as martyrs protecting the faith. Dorothy herself was arrested and sentenced to die. As they were taking her out of the court, a person mocked her and said "Bride of Christ, send me some fruit and flowers from your bridegroom's garden!" Amazingly, a small child suddenly appeared with a basket full of flowers and fruit, which the child took to the man who had mocked Dorothy. Though Dorothy had died, the man who just moments ago had made fun of her was instantly converted and proclaimed himself a Christian. He too became a martyr.

Discussion:

- How can we follow God's commandment to honor our mother and father in our own lives?
- Our parents bring us to practice and games, sacrificing a lot so we can have fun playing on this team. How can we honor our mothers and fathers in a special way this week as a team?

Practice Plan

- Communicate to the children the importance of honoring God by treating those closest to us with love and respect. Put into practice some way to honor the mothers and fathers of the team for their sacrifice in bringing the team together each week.

Prayer

- Lord, we thank you especially for the mothers and fathers you have given us who teach us the faith and help us to know you. Thank you also for their sacrifice and hard work that allows us to go to school and to have fun playing on this team. Bless them in a special way this week. Help us to follow the example of St. Dorothy, who honored her mother and father through a faithful love of God until the very end of her life. Grant us a safe and fun practice. Amen.

End of Practice: Remind children to honor their mothers and fathers in a special way at home, thanking them for all the work they do so that the kids can have fun at practice. Remind them that honoring their mother and father also helps them honor God their father in heaven. 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. St. Dorothy, Pray for Us!

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Fall Sports Regular Season Week 5

Theme: Ten Commandments

Scripture: Exodus 20:13-16

“You shall not kill. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.”

Saintly Example: St. Maria Goretti

St. Maria lived in a very poor family where her mother was the only one who could go to work after her father died. At a young age, Maria did all the cooking and cleaning at home while caring for her brothers and sisters. Still, she remained very happy. One day a man named Alessandro said inappropriate things to Maria and tried to hurt her. Faithful to God, Maria did not give in to the man and so he ultimately killed her. However, before she died, Maria was able to tell her priest that she forgave Alessandro. Many years later while in prison, Alessandro saw an image of Maria and was converted. He even asked Maria's mother for forgiveness and she forgave him too.

Discussion:

- The 5th - 8th commandments tell us not to do bad things to others. Though we might not think about doing things this bad, other smaller things can be hurtful as well. What are some things that might be hurtful to our teammates and how can we make sure we follow God's commandments on our team?
- When we are hurt by others we are called by God to forgive them. St. Maria Goretti's story gave us a great example of forgiveness. How can we imitate this love and forgiveness in our own lives and on our team?

Practice Plan

- Focus on making sure the team's practice and games reflect God's commandments to love others and avoid harming them, even in small ways. Ask the kids to all work hard during the next week to treat their classmates and friends with love and respect.

Prayer

- God, you love us and you call us to follow your commandments and love those around us. May this team help us to grow closer to you and help us together to love and respect each other as brothers and sisters in Christ. May we be quick to ask forgiveness when we do wrong and to forgive others who hurt us. Keep us safe and may we have fun during this practice.

End of Practice: Remind the kids of the commandments mentioned at the beginning of practice and of the importance of forgiveness in all our lives. Remind them to focus on avoiding anything that might hurt another person in the week to come. 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. Maria Goretti, Pray for us!”

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Fall Sports Regular Season Week 6

Theme: Ten Commandments

Scripture: Exodus 20:17

“You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his manservant, or his maidservant, or his ox, or his (donkey) or anything that is your neighbor’s.”

Saintly Example: St. Clare

St. Clare was a follower of St. Francis of Assisi, who took a vow of poverty as a reminder that God was more important than all the money or things in the world. Though she was part of a very rich family, St. Clare longed to live a very poor life as well, so that she could simply pray and focus on God. St. Clare became a nun, cut her hair and put on a simple robe with a rope for her habit. Today the group of sisters she began are known as the Poor Clares and they live a simple life praying all day for those who sin and do not know God.

Discussion:

- These commandments tell us not to be jealous of others or their possessions. God wants us to remember that He made us perfectly as He desired and has given us everything that we have. If we focus on others possessions or are jealous, we aren’t being thankful for the gifts he has given us. For example, he gave everyone on this team different gifts to use, different skills and talents. What do you think happens to the team if everyone is jealous of others gifts and doesn’t focus on their own? What happens if everyone focuses on using their own gifts for the good of the team?
- Sometimes people focus too much on possessions that they have or things that others have they want, and lose focus on God. Do you think it is easy to lose focus on God in today’s world? What kinds of possessions keep you from prayer? How can we learn to detach from those things and follow God more closely, like St. Clare did?

Practice Plan

- Focus on the individual talents of each child and as coaches work to compliment those talents in each child at least once during practice. Remind the children that as a team, it’s important to be grateful for the gifts God gives us and the talents that can help us to contribute to the team. Drive the point home by praising everyone’s gifts to the team at some point during the practice week.

Prayer

- God, you tell us not to be jealous of our neighbor’s possessions and teach us to be thankful for the many blessings and talents you have given us. Help each of us to learn to be the person you created us to be and help us to recognize the great and unique gifts you have given all of us. May we truly learn to utilize the athletic talents of each team member for the good of the whole team, so that we may glorify you in our practice and play. Keep us safe and help us to have fun this week. Amen.

End of Practice: Remind the kids of their talents and praise them for things they did well during practice. 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. Clare, Pray for Us!”

5 Minute Game Plan - 4th Grade Year

Fall Sports Regular Season Week 7

Theme: The Great Commandments

Scripture: Matthew 22:37-40

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment.”

Saintly Example: St. Veronica

When asked about the greatest of the commandments, Jesus responded by teaching us that loving the “Lord your God with all your heart” was the most important thing to remember. St. Veronica lived that commandment in her interaction with Jesus. Jesus was beaten and hurt badly, then made to carry His own cross. As He walked, he was spit on and mocked while people yelled and screamed at him. There was nobody there to love him on this difficult journey. St. Veronica saw Him and wanted to show Him love, so she made her way out to Him when he fell and she wiped His face with the veil from her head. She was pulled away from Jesus and when she looked at her veil she expected to be bloodied and dirty, she found instead it had a beautiful image of Jesus face imprinted on it. That veil has been lost and reportedly found many times over the centuries since, always considered a very important relic in the Church.

Discussion:

- Veronica demonstrated her love for Christ by helping him on his journey with the cross. Though we live thousands of years later, what ways can we show Christ our love each day and fulfill his great commandment?
- How can we demonstrate our love for Christ on this team?
- How does the way we treat each other reflect a love for Christ?

Practice Plan

- Encourage the children to always follow this great commandment and remind them that a relationship with Christ is more important than any sport or accomplishment on earth. Remind them that the most important thing they can remember to do is to love God with all their heart, soul and mind.

Prayer

- Lord, St. Veronica gave us an example of love on your path to Calvary by wiping your face when you fell. May we learn to imitate her love in our own lives, seeking always to show our love in all that we do. May our team show a great love for you in the way we practice and play, always glorifying you and praising you. Protect us and draw us closer to you through this practice, so that we may one day see your face as Veronica did. Amen.

End of Practice: Remind the kids of what Christ said was the greatest commandment and encourage them to live their lives in a way that demonstrates this love of Christ through their interactions in sports, school and with others. Pray 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. Veronica, Pray for Us!”

5 Minute Game Plan - 4th 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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