



DIOCESE OF PITTSBURGH
Secretariat for Catholic Education

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DEPARTMENT FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

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Dear Coaches and Parents,

Recently, our Catholic school basketball league has experienced some serious incidents. They are "serious" because they involved conduct unbecoming Catholic school students, coaches and parents. Our diocese has taken great pride in the fact that we have led the nation in insuring that all our coaches are accredited and that our parents have been exposed to a quality video entitled Sports: A Guide for Catholic School Parents, which clearly delineates the proper role and behavior of parents at any Catholic school sporting event.

Catholic school sports participants should at all times be primarily concerned with Christian principles, good sportsmanship and treating each other as Christ taught us. Coaches and parents must demonstrate a consistent Christian ethic on and off the field. When a problem or issue develops, it is the coaches' and parent's responsibility to defuse the situation, not contribute to escalating the emotional and irrational actions of others. Coaches must take control of their team and call for calm. Parents must recognize that two wrongs do not make a right.

It is painful to observe, or to be told of behavior that does not belong in a Catholic community. Racial slurs, the use of profanity, displays of anger cannot and will not be tolerated. Any parent, coach or fan that does not control their tempers will be banned from Catholic school sports. If you have a complaint, you are to send it in writing to your principal who will forward it to my office. There it will be addressed as quickly as possible. There must be no attempt to take the "law into your own hand."

Any coach, player, parent or fan who is given a technical by the official for bad behavior will receive additional penalties from the diocese as delineated in the Guide for Catholic Elementary School Sports Programs.

Attached is a copy of the prayer said before the game. Please read it and internalize the sentiment. Catholic school sports are supposed to promote the spiritual, physical and social growth of the children under our care.

Thank you for your cooperation in this effort to insure our Catholic school sports programs are faith-oriented, quality activities.

Yours in faith, hope and charity,

Dr. Ronald T. Bowes
Assistant Superintendent for
Public Policy and Development
Athletic Director

Enclosure

A PRAYER BEFORE THE GAME

Dear Lord,

You have blessed us with many gifts and talents.

**We thank you especially for the ability to
participate in sports today.**

Help us to play in a Christ like manner.

**Help us to play in a way that fosters good will
and teamwork.**

Help us to play to the best of our abilities.

**Win or lose we hope to have fun, make friends
and celebrate life.**

Amen.