

**PLAY LIKE
A CHAMPION
TODAY®**

Character Education Through Sports

The 5 Minute Game Plan

A Catechesis Supplement for Youth Sports

5th Grade Edition

Created by Peter Piscitello for the *Play Like a Champion Today Educational Series*

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Dear *Play Like a Champion* Coaches,

Welcome to a new season! We're thrilled you have taken the time out of your busy schedule to be involved in such a fantastic ministry; by coaching children 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 supporting you in this endeavor.

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 a 5-10 minute supplement to practices that creates a curriculum for faith formation in your program. We have worked with 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, we 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 few parts. Included are several "lessons" for each grade. We have created lessons based on curriculum designed for 3rd through 8th grades based on standard youth program ranges, but you may find that 3rd and 4th grade lessons can be adopted for even younger grades if you desire. For each grade, you will find an overview of the entire year: this includes the theme, scripture and saint for each week. Then you will find the individual lessons. The program is designed to go through the lessons in succession, but you can certainly mix and match if you feel that works better for your team. 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 or provide your own insight. You can certainly take some time to prepare prior to practice if you wish,

but the program is designed so that you can simply take the lesson to practice and use it without preparation.

Again, we appreciate your time as a volunteer coach and we know your time is valuable! 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 have on children is dramatic; 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 parish leadership or the *Play Like a Champion* team. You can reach us via email at information@playlikeachampion.org or through our website at www.playlikeachampion.org. Best wishes this season and know I will be praying for you and your team!

In Christ,



Peter J Piscitello
Manager of Outreach and Operations Support
Play Like a Champion Today Educational Series

Lesson #



SAMPLE PLAN WITH INSTRUCTIONS

Lesson 1

Theme: The Trinity

Scripture: 1 John 5:7-9

Scripture length may differ. Have coach or child read aloud!

“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. Legend has it that 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 or more if time and participation allow.

- 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!
- Legend has it that 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?

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 to help the coach take things further and connect theme through practice. Don't read aloud.

Prayer



Prayer can be read by coach or by child. Kids can also create their own prayers!

- 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.

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:

“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 can be read by child or coach...or do your own!

5th Grade Year Outline

Fall Seasons

- Lesson 1 - **Theme:** Mary's Role in the Church **Scripture:** John 19:26-27
Saint: St. John and Our Mother Mary
- Lesson 2 - **Theme:** The Rosary **Scripture:** Luke 1:26-33 **Saint:** St. Juan Diego
- Lesson 3 - **Theme:** The Joyful Mysteries **Scripture:** Luke 2:8-12 **Saint:** None
- Lesson 4 - **Theme:** The Sorrowful Mysteries **Scripture:** Matthew 26:45 **Saint:** None
- Lesson 5 - **Theme:** The Glorious Mysteries **Scripture:** Matthew 28:1-7 **Saint:** None
- Lesson 6 - **Theme:** The Luminous Mysteries **Scripture:** John 2:1-11 **Saint:** None
- Lesson 7 - **Theme:** Made in the Image of God **Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 6:19-20
Saint: St. Rose of Lima
- Lesson 8 - **Theme:** Prayer **Scripture:** 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 **Saint:** St. Kateri Tekakwitha
- Lesson 9 - **Theme:** Forgiveness **Scripture:** Luke 15:11-32 **Saint:** St. Rita of Cascia
- Lesson 10 - **Theme:** Service **Scripture:** John 13:1-20 **Saint:** St. Andre Bessette Winter

Winter Seasons

- Lesson 11 - **Theme:** Sacraments - Baptism **Scripture:** Matthew 3:1-6, 13-17
Saint: St. John the Baptist
- Lesson 12 - **Theme:** Sacraments - Reconciliation **Scripture:** Luke 15:4-10
Saint: St. Pio of Pietrelcina
- Lesson 13 - **Theme:** Sacraments - Eucharist **Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 11:17-34
Saint: St. Teresa of Avila
- Lesson 14 - **Theme:** Sacraments - Confirmation **Scripture:** Ephesians 1:13-14
Saint: St. Catherine Laboure
- Lesson 15 - **Theme:** Sacraments - Marriage & Family **Scripture:** Matthew 19:4-6 **Saint:** Holy Family
- Lesson 16 - **Theme:** Sacraments - Holy Orders **Scripture:** John 10:1-21 **Saint:** St. Mathew
- Lesson 17 - **Theme:** The Priesthood **Scripture:** Matthew 28:18-20 **Saint:** St. John Vianney
- Lesson 18 - **Theme:** Religious Orders - Benedictines **Scripture:** Luke 14:11
Saint: Sts. Benedict and Scholastica
- Lesson 19 - **Theme:** Religious Orders - Ursulines **Scripture:** 1 Peter 5:6-7
Saint: St. Angela de Merici
- Lesson 20 - **Theme:** Religious Orders - Vincent de Paul & Sisters of Charity
Scripture: Luke 10:29-37 **Saint:** St. Vincent de Paul
- Lesson 21 - **Theme:** Religious Orders - Missionaries of Charity **Scripture:** Philippians 2:4-7
Saint: Blessed Mother Theresa
- Lesson 22 - **Theme:** Religious Orders - Sisters Servants of Mary **Scripture:** John 13:34-35
Saint: Blessed Mary Catherine Irigoyen Echegaray
- Lesson 23 - **Theme:** Sacraments - Anointing of the Sick **Scripture:** Luke 7:1-10
Saint: St. Peregrine
- Lesson 24 - **Theme:** Miracles **Scripture:** John 6:1-15 **Saint:** St. Anthony of Padua
- Lesson 25 - **Theme:** The Sanctity of Life **Scripture:** Jeremiah 1:5 **Saint:** Blessed John Paul II

Spring Seasons

- Lesson 26 - **Theme:** The Holy Bible & Scripture **Scripture:** Matthew 5:18-19 **Saint:** St. Luke
- Lesson 27 - **Theme:** Spreading the Gospel **Scripture:** Psalm 96:3 **Saint:** St. Mark

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- Lesson 28 - **Theme:** Liturgical Seasons **Scripture:** Matthew 9:15 **Saint:** St. Lawrence
- Lesson 29 - **Theme:** Holy Days of Obligation **Scripture:** Colossians 2:16-17
Saint: St. Martin of Tours
- Lesson 30 - **Theme:** The Resurrection **Scripture:** John 20:1-9 **Saint:** St. Thomas
- Lesson 31 - **Theme:** The Holy Spirit **Scripture:** John 20:19-23 **Saint:** St. Matthias

Lesson 1

Theme: Mary's Role in the Church

Scripture: John 19:26-27

When Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple whom he loved standing near, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

Saintly Example: St. John and Our Mother Mary

St. John was a disciple of Jesus who wrote the fourth Gospel and was one of the first missionaries to continue Christ's work after His death. In the scripture verse we just read, Jesus refers to St. John, who upon Christ's death took His mother Mary into his home and cared for her for the remainder of her life. Mary plays a major role in the Catholic Church because, like John, we are all called to take to Mary as our spiritual mother and allow her to lead us always toward Christ. By asking for her to pray for us and take our prayers to Jesus, we allow her to care for us as Christ commanded on the cross. In addition, Mary is the perfect example for us to strive for: born without sin and maintaining that perfection her whole life, she is a beautiful and complete example of someone who lived fully according to God's will. Much like we want our friends to honor our mothers, Christ wants us to honor His mother and to ask for her prayers daily so that we can grow in our relationship with Him.

Discussion:

- How do we form a relationship with Mary in our life and what can we do each day to follow her toward Christ?
- Does Mary care for us while we play sports? What is a special way we can bring her into our team this year and how can she help our team grow closer to Christ?

Practice Plan:

- Develop a (simple) team plan for bringing Mary into your team this year and asking for her intercession during the season. Perhaps you can offer each practice to her, or pray to her as a team before games, asking for her protection on the field. Then during practice, remind the kids that we are to perform always knowing that our spiritual mother Mary is watching over us. Ask them how it changes the way they act when their mother is at practice or a game, and help them to see that they must always perform that way to honor Mary and thus grow closer to Christ.

Prayer:

- Holy Mother of God, we ask for your prayers during this practice that you might help lead us closer to God through our participation on this team. We ask that you keep us safe this week and lift up all the prayers we hold in our hearts to God, that we may come to know Him more fully through you. May our practice and play honor you so that it may be worthy of Christ. Amen.

End of Practice: Remind the children what was discussed at the beginning of practice and the special relationship that we have with Mary, just like St. John had with Mary on earth. Reaffirm the plan to bring Mary into each practice and game through the season. Then close with the following prayer:

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

Lesson 2

Theme: The Rosary

Scripture: Luke 1:26-33

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered in her mind what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give you him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there will be no end."

Saintly Example: St. Juan Diego

In the year 1531, a simple laborer named Juan Diego was making a 15 mile walk to Mass when something extraordinary happened. At the top of a hill he saw before him the Blessed Virgin Mary. She asked him to take a message to the Bishop that a beautiful church should be built on that spot. The Bishop didn't believe Juan Diego when he took him the message, and asked for proof. On his return, Mary once again appeared before Juan Diego. She asked him to go to the hill where the church was to be built and pick flowers to put in his cloak. There were no flowers around, but Juan Diego trusted Mary and went to the hill. To his amazement, there he found flowers growing. He picked them and returned to the Bishop. When he let out his cloak to show the Bishop the flowers, roses fell to the floor. Yet the Bishop was staring at something even more amazing; inside the cloak where the flowers had been was a glowing image of Mary. This beautiful image became known as Our Lady of Guadalupe and a church was built where Mary had asked. Thousands of people came to the church and were converted on that spot. Juan Diego lived in a small home near the church and cared for the church and the people who came to visit.

Discussion:

- Mary appeared to Juan Diego and brought the people of Mexico a great gift, a place for them to pray and learn to know God more closely. Another gift she gives us is the rosary. Ask the kids how many of them have ever prayed the rosary or know what it is?

Practice Plan: Pray a decade of the rosary before practice. See below.

Prayer: The rosary is a series of prayers on events in the life of Mary and Jesus. A Rosary is made up of 5 sections called mysteries, with each mystery consisting of an Our Father, 10 Hail Mary's, a Glory Be and the Fatima Prayer. While reciting these prayers, we pray about the mystery and ask Mary to help lead us to Jesus. In the coming weeks we will learn about the mysteries. For now, lets pray a decade of the rosary before practice and ask Mary to help us grow closer to Jesus through the rosary. **Choose a child(ren) to help lead the rosary based on those who know the prayers. Here's the format if needed:

- Our Father, 10 Hail Mary, Glory Be, Fatima Prayer
- Fatima Prayer: Oh my Jesus, forgive us our sins and save us from the fires of hell. Lead all souls to heaven, especially those in most need of Thy mercy.

End of Practice: Remind the children what we learned about the Rosary and ask them to look up the Joyful Mysteries before next week's first practice. Then close with the following prayer:

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