

Prayers for Use with Teams

Athlete's Prayerⁱ

God, let me play well but fairly.
 Help me to learn something that matters once the
 game is over.
 Let competition make me strong but never hostile.
 Always let me help my opponent up.
 Never catch me rejoicing in the adversity of others.
 If I know victory, allow me to be happy; if I am
 denied, keep me from envy.
 Remind me that sports are just games.
 If through athletics I set an example, let it be a good
 one.

Amen

Prayer before the Game

God,
 Please be with me and my teammates as we prepare
 for our game.
 Help us to do our best and to remember the skill we
 have practiced.
 Help us to work together to achieve our goal, whether
 we win or lose.
 God, be with our opponents also. They too have
 worked hard.
 Help us to remember to be good teammates and
 competitors and keep us safe as we
 play.

Amen

For the Glory of God's Nameⁱⁱ

Lord,
 Please clear my head of all distractions
 And my heart of burdens I may bear,
 So I may perform my very best
 Knowing you will always be there.

With great courage I will meet this challenge
 As you have me to,
 But keep me humble and remind me
 That my strength comes from You and only You.

Then when all eyes are upon me,
 At the end of this big game,
 I will turn their eyes to you, Lord.
 And the glory of your Name.

Amen.

From Play Like a Champion Todayⁱⁱⁱ

"Dear Lord, in the struggle that goes on through life
 We ask for a field that is fair,
 A chance that is equal with all the strife,
 The courage to strive and to dare;
 And if we should win, let it be by the code,
 With our faith and our honor held high;
 And if we should lose, let us stand by the road
 And cheer as the winners go by."

**- Knute Rockne, Prayer to Play Fair in the
 Game of Life**

"Lord Jesus Christ, help these athletes to be your
 friends and witnesses to your love. Help them to put
 the same effort into personal asceticism that they do
 into sports; help them to achieve a harmonious and
 cohesive unity of body and soul. May they be sound
 models to imitate for all who admire them. Help them
 always to be athletes of the spirit, to win your
 inestimable prize: an imperishable crown that lasts
 forever. Amen!"

**- John Paul II, Homily at the Jubilee for the World
 of Sport, October 29, 2000**

Proverbs 8:27-31

"When he established the heavens I was there, when
 he marked out the vault over the face of the deep;
 when he made firm the skies above, when he fixed fast
 the foundations of the earth; when he set for the sea
 its limit, so that the waters should not transgress his
 command; Then was I beside him as his nursing, and
 I was his delight day by day, Playing before him all the
 while, playing on the surface of his earth; and I found
 delight in the human race."

1 Corinthians 9:24-27

"24 Do you not know that runners in the stadium all
 run in the race, but only one wins the prize? Run so
 as to win. 25 Every athlete exercises discipline in
 every way. They do it to win a perishable crown, but
 we an imperishable one. 26 Thus I do not run
 aimlessly; I do not fight as if I were shadowboxing. 27
 No I drive my body and train it, for fear that, after
 having preached to others, I myself should be
 disqualified."

Hebrews 12:1

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a
 cloud of witnesses, let us rid ourselves of every burden
 and sin that clings to us and persevere in running the



race that lies before us while keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus."

1 Timothy 1:18-19

"I entrust this charge to you, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophetic words once spoken about you. Through them may you fight a good fight by having faith and a good conscience."

1 Timothy 4:7-10

"Avoid profane and silly myths. Train yourself for devotion, for, while physical training is of limited value, devotion is valuable in every respect, since it holds a promise of life both for the present and for the future. This saying is trustworthy and deserves full acceptance. For this we toil and struggle, because we have set our hope on the living God, who is the savior of all, especially of those who believe."

1 Timothy 6:11-12

"But you, man of God, avoid all this. Instead pursue righteousness, devotion, faith, love, patience, and gentleness. Compete well for the faith. Lay hold of eternal life, to which you were called when you made the noble confession in the presence of many witnesses."

2 Timothy 2:5

"Similarly, an athlete cannot receive the winner's crown except by competing according to the rules."

2 Timothy 4:7-8

"I have competed well; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith. From now on the crown of righteousness awaits me, which the Lord, the just judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me, but to all who have longed for his appearance."

Catholic Blessing for Teams^{iv}

The introduction to it explains:

1024 This blessing is intended for those who participate in an athletic event. The blessing asks that God may protect the athletes from injury and that throughout the event they may show respect for one another.

1025 The blessing may be given by a priest, deacon, or lay minister.

The blessing includes an athletically-themed Scripture reading (2 Timothy 4:6-8) and a prayer over the athletes.

According to the text:

1029 A minister who is a priest or deacon says the prayer of blessing with hands outstretched over the

athletes; a lay minister says the prayer with hands joined.

Here is the actual text of the prayer:

Strong and faithful God,
as we come together for this contest,
we ask you to bless these athletes.
Keep them safe from injury and harm,
instill in them respect for each other,
and reward them for their perseverance.
Lead us all to the rewards of your kingdom
where you live and reign for ever and ever.
Response: Amen.

ⁱ Beliefnet.com, "Prayer Library - Athlete's Prayer." Accessed February 5, 2013.

<http://www.beliefnet.com/Prayers/Protestant/Other/Athlete-s-Prayer.aspx>.

ⁱⁱ Crossover.org, "Extras: Athlete's Prayer." Accessed February 5, 2013. <http://www.crossover.org/athleteprayer>

ⁱⁱⁱ Playlikeachampion.org, "Sample Team Prayers." Accessed February 5, 2013.

<http://www.playlikeachampion.org/coaches/prayers.html>

^{iv} Ncregister.com, "Revealed! The Church's Official Prayer for Sports Events!" Accessed February 5, 2013.

<http://www.ncregister.com/blog/jimmy-akin/revealed-the-churchs-official-prayer-for-sports-events>

