



## Office of Schools

April 19, 2018

May the Peace of Christ be with You!

The hallmark of Catholic education has always been forming the entire child - body, mind and spirit. Catholic Youth Sports (CYS) has evolved since 2012 when we began to look at sports throughout the Diocese and to have one Diocesan sports league versus independent regions that were governed separately.

Since then, CYS has developed into an organization that serves our Catholic schools throughout most of our Diocese offering a wide variety of skill development activities and competitive opportunities for our students. CYS works closely with the Office of Catholic Schools to ensure that the two pinnacles of faith and the fundamentals we follow are the core of everything that we do.

The philosophy of our athletic program in the Diocese of Orlando is "*Faith and FUNdamentals; to ensure all children learn all sport techniques properly in a Catholic-based environment.*" It is critical that all aspects of our Catholic school commitment include sports that are rooted in faith and a reflection of Gospel teachings even when we want our team to win. As the program has grown over the years (Catholic Youth League [CYL] began in 1991 with 250 students participating; today, it serves over 6,000 students), so has the Orlando region.

In a recent meeting with principals and Mr. Rey Rodriguez, CYS League Commissioner, we reflected on how the program has developed and where we want the program to go in the future. In these discussions, the issue of family, school and economic demands on the students and parents were discussed. Issues related to parent travel, given the size of the Orlando region, can exceed over one hour in traffic driving to a game were also discussed.

It is within these parameters that the decision has been made to separate the Orlando region which is currently comprised of Seminole, Orange and Osceola Counties into Northern and Southern regions. There will be six schools in each region with a maximum of two games per week and a maximum of eight games per season. Because we are limiting the number of games per season, this will allow for further opportunities from CYS to plan sports clinics and to work on skill development in our students.

The Northern Region will be comprised of Annunciation Catholic Academy, All Souls Catholic School, St. Mary Magdalen Catholic School, St. Margaret Mary Catholic School, St. Charles

Borromeo Catholic School and St. James Cathedral School. The Southern Region will consist of St. Andrew Catholic School, Holy Family Catholic School, Good Shepherd Catholic School, St. John Vianney Catholic School, Holy Redeemer Catholic School and St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School.

We will evaluate calendars to try to ensure that only one sport is played per season at the grade school and middle school levels which means that grade school soccer will only be played once in the fall. Because we are Catholic schools, no games will be scheduled for Holy Days of Obligation and only after 1 p.m. on Sunday to ensure families can attend weekly Mass.

Sports are an important part in the development of adolescents; however, they are one of the many different aspects that help to form the whole child. Catholic schools in the Diocese of Orlando are committed to excel in every area with the highest priority in the development of an active faith life for our students and families. The Diocese of Orlando is committed to the support and faith development of the family, holding the Holy Family of Joseph, Mary and Jesus as the model. I hope that some of these adjustments support your family with more time.

I appreciate you entrusting your most precious gift to us as partners in making future saints to help build God's kingdom here on Earth.

With blessings,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Henry Fortier". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Henry Fortier  
Secretary for Education/  
Superintendent of Catholic Schools