

**PLAY LIKE
A CHAMPION
TODAY**

Character Education Through Sports

Champion Parent Note

Educating Parents and Developing Champion Athletes

When God Cheers: Positive Parenting in Action



This week, friend of *Play Like a Champion* John Shaugnassy tells one of his favorite stories about the positive impact parents can have on youth sports. From his book *When God Cheers*, It's a tale of inspiration, sportsmanship and most importantly, unconditional love. Watch this week's video and consider how you can make this kind of positive impact in your own child's sports experience.

Questions for Sports Parents



In the spirit of the video above, we can ask ourselves the following questions as parents to reflect on whether or not we are providing the positive and fun experience our kids deserve. Take some time to consider these questions now as a reflection of your overall role as a sports parent, then ask yourself specific questions about the areas where you can improve during practices and games.

- Am I always supportive of my child in sport?
- Do I thank God for my child's ability to play sport, regardless of their skill level?
- How do we make sure our child's involvement in sport is all about *play* and doesn't become *work*?
- Do I remind my child to have *fun* at practices and games? Do I remind myself to do the same?
- What can I say or do to express my unconditional love for my child-athlete before a game? What about after a game?
- What am I doing to make the ride home from practices and games an enjoyable experience? Do I dwell on the practice/game that occurred? Or do I praise my child's effort and assure them of my unconditional love for them? (Tip: avoid any sort of critique or feedback of the practice/game on the ride home.)
- As a parent, did I do my part to support a nurturing, developmental and fun

environment before, during and after the practice or game?

- Did I respect all of the coaches, officials, parents and children involved in today's practice or game? Did I treat each person with the dignity he or she deserves as a creation of God?

Lenten Reflections: Sports Stations of the Cross

The Play Like a Champion Today Educational Series offers a Sports oriented Stations of the Cross that is perfect for using with athletes this Lent. This includes scripture and meditations for each station that allow athletes to consider spiritual, physical and mental growth in the context of being a Catholic athlete. They're also a great way for parents to reflect with their athletes during this Lent.



Below is a meditation on the Fourth Station of the Cross. It's one that is particularly fit to the parent/athlete relationship. If you are interested in the full set, please contact us at information@playlikeachampion.org.

The Fourth Station: Jesus meets his Blessed Mother

Luke 2:34-35: Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, Jesus' mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too."

Our parents/guardians have a way of bearing our pain for us. Have you ever met with a mother of an athlete who has been hurt, who lost a big game, made the error that lost the big game? It is hard for a parent of an athlete to be in the stands and hear the fans ripping her child or see a referee make a bad call against his/her child? Parents do have a way of bearing this pain. If they can't take it away, they will just be with it. That is what Mary did for Jesus. How can Mary's example help parents in this difficult situation?

All: Jesus, help me to show compassion for others and simply "be" with them in their pain and in their blessings.

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