

LEGACY FOR OUR MISSION:

For Our Children and the Future

CATHOLIC YOUTH ORGANIZATION OFFERS FUN, ENRICHES LIVES

What wildly successful youth initiative mixes sports, spirituality and life-long learning?

Look no further than the Catholic Youth Organization, better known to most people as CYO. Every year more than 12,000 children take part in the archdiocesan program throughout a network of parishes and Catholic schools.

CYO offers 14 different sports activities for boys and girls from fourth grade through high school as well as many other activities such as science fairs and music contests. CYO also provides a summer camp program and year-round educational opportunities at Camp Rancho Framasa, located near Nashville in Brown County.

“CYO helps archdiocesan youth grow spiritually, socially and athletically through extracurricular activities,” said Ed Tinder, director of the archdiocesan CYO program. Every activity CYO offers, whether it’s soccer, music or camp, is an extraordinary experience for the young people who take part. Anticipated funds from the *Legacy for Our Mission* campaign will help CYO continue its great work for future generations.

“CYO’s basic mission is to continue teaching the Catholic school curriculum using other tactics outside the classroom,” Tinder said. “CYO helps bring youth to their full potential by providing opportunities for young people to develop strong moral character, self-esteem and leadership qualities.”

That reflection echoes the experience of Claire Chappell, an Indianapolis resident and alumna of both St. Matthew Catholic School and Cathedral High School.

“The first year I played CYO volleyball for St. Matthew, I lacked most of the skills, but I loved it,” Chappell said. “Learning a new sport, spending time with friends and



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growing in other ways made my experience positive. The other benefit was that our coaches were students from Cathedral High School near my parish. They were our role models, and we wanted to be just like them.”

“To be so young and find true passion for something was remarkable on many levels,” Chappell added. “It was just the beginning of how volleyball and CYO enriched my life. As a student at Cathedral, I too went back to St. Matthew and coached sixth and seventh graders for two years.”

Like CYO athletics, Camp Rancho Framasa is a distinctive youth experience that also offers a core faith component. Tinder believes the camp is just one other example of how CYO blends Catholic spirituality with education, outdoor activities such as horseback riding, crafts and other pursuits. The camp also shows how CYO serves as an extension of Catholic education—one that is simply outside the classroom in a woody setting.

The multifaceted role of CYO can be especially beneficial for the many young Catholics who do not attend Catholic school. Such youth often seek extracurricular activities that connect them to their parishes.

Within the many traditional CYO athletic programs, Tinder believes coaches serve children in more ways than just managing their teams. They also create legacies and deliver early examples of stewardship by learning significant lessons about giving their time, talent and treasure.

“It is important that our CYO coaches realize that they are part of perpetuating the volunteer spirit and will have a great impact on future volunteers,” Tinder said. “When children grow up they remember their coaches fondly and want to give back in the same way.”

That sensibility is part of the foundation for young adults such as Chappell, who continued coaching youth volleyball while she was a student at Indiana University.

“To this day, I remember how important it is to set an example—either as a teammate or as a coach—and to continue serving God with every choice on and off the court,” Chappell said. “That’s why I’ll never forget my memories of CYO.”

Legacy for Our Mission, the archdiocesan capital campaign, is guided by the principles of Christian stewardship and addresses the needs of archdiocesan ministries such as CYO. By contributing to Legacy for Our Mission through your local parish, a portion of your gift will be allocated to CYO and used to support its programs.

Please visit the new online home of the *Legacy for Our Mission* campaign. Our campaign Web site is <http://www.archindy.org/legacy>. It can also be accessed at www.LegacyforOurMission.org