

# FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

## COMMON SENSE AND KIDS SPORTS...

*A very good priest here on Staten Island was Father John Hynes. Father Hynes was assigned to Holy Family Church over in Westerleigh and had a great sense of humor. One time, referring to all the basketball games that were going on in his parish he made a humorous reference to a famous statue of Jesus "Christ the Redeemer" in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The statue which is 93 feet high, features Our Lord with his two hands extended. "Listen," Father Hynes would say, "If that statue was in Staten Island, Christ would be holding a basketball in his hand!" It was just a joke but there is some truth behind it.*

*Well, I enjoy basketball and during my years as a priest I have attended many games and most of them are very enjoyable, even if the home team loses. Unfortunately, there have been times when sporting events have not been so much fun and that is usually when the parents get involved. It could be said that some parents live vicariously through their children and become so competitive in their regard they forget that basketball is a kid's game and is meant to be fun.*

*One of the first games I attended as Pastor of Sacred Heart was at the CYO Center in Port Richmond. It was a third grade game and the boys that played could not have been more than eight or nine years old. Yet, one father in the stands was yelling hid head off, repeatedly screaming "Kill! Kill! Kill! Finally, somebody told him to curb his enthusiasm! I am writing this week about youth sports because just recently here at Saint Charles Parish there was a conflict involving the basketball program which most of the time runs very smoothly.*

*A parent who had been forbidden access to our gym some years earlier because of inappropriate social media posts insisted that he accompany his daughter to a practice. Myself and Bishop O'Hara who also was dragged into the conflict, felt that the girl could just attend the practice without the participation of the troublesome father. But he would not accept that.*

*So, after texting some horrible things to our Athletic Director Chris Cordes, it was decided that the entire practice be cancelled. I think you can guess who is the "loser" in a scenario like this-it is the girl herself, who is a wonderful young lady. When it comes to kids sports, it's important to keep things in perspective!*

*Being competitive is fine to an extent, but it is important to remember that probably none of the kids that are playing now will ever be in the N.B.A.! Children in grammar school should have fun playing games and being part of a team. Sports can really teach a child a lot about life including loyalty, fair play, listening and team work. However, if adults don't set a good example, then how can our children learn those important lessons?*

*At Sacred Heart, near the gym door, there was a little story on a sign that was posted many years ago about a kid who got the winning point in a basketball game. It went something like this: "the clock is running down, the kids who haven't won a game all season are down by a single point. The ball is passed to a kid who can't chew gum and dribble the ball at the same time. "Shoot" croaks the coach in a hoarse voiced delirium like plea. Then whoosh! The ball ships through the rim and tickles the net. Bedlam explodes. The coach whoops with joy and the kid's pop stands with chest expanded and paternal pride. And the kid goes home with a dream to place within the pages of his mind, a dream to be dusted off and remembered in a sometimes bleak world..." Please remember why we're here!*

*Sincerely in Christ,  
Father Jerome*