



DICASTERIUM
DE CULTURA ET EDUCATIONE



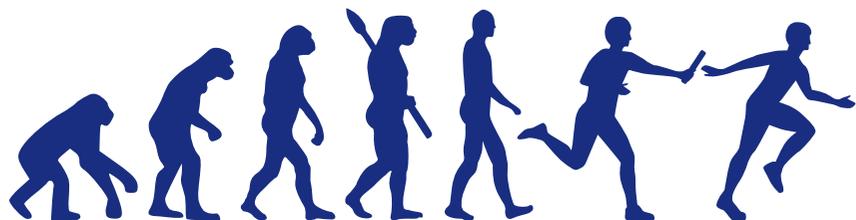
PASTORAL OF SPORT

**GENERAL
GUIDELINES**

1. WHAT IS SPORT?

 Despite the complexity of the term, “sport” is an extraordinary event in human existence (i.e., it is not a basic survival need), involving bodily movement, conscious awareness of this movement, and an intentional (recreational, competitive, aesthetic and medicinal) aspect.

➔ Brief history of sport:



“
Sport has gone 'from ritual to record'
Allen Guttman, sports historian

2. WHY DOES THE CHURCH ABOUT SPORTS?



Because if the Gospel requires a relationship with culture (Jn 1:9; GS 1; EG 115), and if sport is one of the greatest cultural events of our time, then the Church cannot ignore this phenomenon (GS 61), seeing it also as a place for evangelization.



Because if sport is the ability to transform the human being, then by changing sport, the human being changes, and by changing the human being, society changes... in the light of the values of the Kingdom of God.



What is its evangelical purpose?

articulate the **THREE CROWNS:**

To prevent the wreath of sports from becoming a crown of thorns (a source of humiliations, discriminations, sufferings, corruption...), but a means to achieve the incorruptible crown (1 Cor 9:25): the crown of eternal life (Jas 1:12; Rev 2:10).



I have fought the good fight,
I have finished the race,
I have kept the faith.

St. Paul (2 Tim 4:7)



3. SPORT MAGISTERIUM

(Some steps
in Tradition)



BASIL THE GREAT, 330-379

And we, who await in the afterlife such wonderful rewards (...), do we perhaps think we can obtain them by living our lives in comfort and idleness?

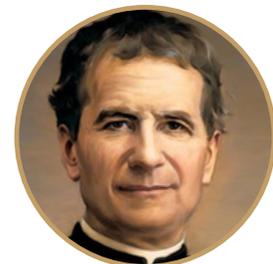


THOMAS AQUINAS, 1225-1274

It is permissible to use games as long as it is done in moderation.

IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA, 1491-1556

And even outside of these hours (of study), it is not good to keep them going for long without some appropriate rest or recreation.



JOHN BOSCO, 1815-1888

Great sacrifices are reserved for a great reward



PIER GIORGIO FRASSATI, 1901-1925 PATRON SAINT OF ATHLETES

Don't just exist, live!

POPE PIUS XII, 1939-1958

How could the Church not be interested in sports?



POPE JOHN PAUL II 1978-2005

Jesus is the true athlete of God.



POPE FRANCIS

To train myself - and even a Pope must always keep training! - is to ask God every day, "What do you want me to do, what do you want from my life?" Asking Jesus, confronting Him as a coach.



Document (2018):
Give the best of oneself



Statement (2022):
"Sport for All"
www.sportforall.va

4. THE CULTURAL POWER OF SPORT



Political sense

- it aims to be the prophecy of a fraternal society through sports diplomacy (Mt 20,16)

Ethical sense

- it focuses on the ethical enhancement of the individual and respect for others (Luke 6:29)



Pedagogical sense

- it educates to self-awareness and awareness of one's own limits (Mk 1:20)

Spiritual sense

- che punta a un senso che va oltre lo sport: il senso trascendentale (Mt 17,20)



Ecological sense

- it takes on the responsibility of protecting the environment (Jn 4:7)

“
My faith inspires me a lot. It is the real reason why I run. I believe that my running is truly a gift from God and it is my responsibility to use it to glorify Him. My faith also helps me not to be obsessed with winning, but to see the real context and the life that I am truly called to live.

Alyson Felix, sprinter athlete (USA)



5. PASTORAL PRACTICE



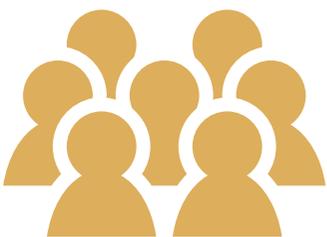
Locations:

- Home
- School and University
- Sports Society Facilities
- Parish Structures (oratory)
- Gyms and public sports spaces
- Sports competition venues
- ...

Actors:

- **Indirect actors:** all those who are called to a Christian vision of sport (the athletes themselves; families; operators of sports centers; coaches and managers of sports clubs; doctors and sports insurance agencies; sponsors; journalists and media commentators; fans...)
- **Direct actors:** those who explicitly exercise the mission of promoting the dynamism of a sports pastoral care (diocesan and parish sports pastoral care teams; sports chaplains), being prophets who proclaim the "good news of sports" (Is 52,7).

Actions:



- **Practices:**

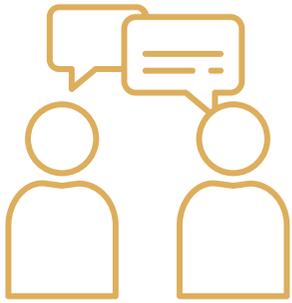
- prayer and blessing of athletes at a sports event
- create the 'last place award' (Mt 20:16)
- offer a religious symbol
- fundraising for social institutions
- promoting the participation of the most disadvantaged
- ...

- **Theories:**

- organizing conferences or debates on sports topics
- publishing articles or documents on "sports and faith"
- advertise the testimony of faith of athletes
- ...

I would say that my faith is probably the biggest thing that motivates me. I know that I have been given a talent. A talent that I must make the most of, so that I can do very well in the world, be an example, and raise awareness of the Gospel.

**Jason Smyth, Paralympic athlete
(Northern Ireland)**



The **six verbs** of the Sports Chaplain

talk

with the athletes:
to make them feel that
they are not alone.

challenge

Athletes: to extend their
influence beyond sports,
becoming role models for a
harmonious lifestyle for others.

pray

with the athletes:
offering moments of prayer
and reflection.

stay

with athletes: not only on race days,
but throughout the year; not only in
sports facilities, but also in other
areas.

visit

the athletes: in moments of
physical injury or sports
discouragement.

accompany

athletes in extraordinary moments
of their lives: marriage, birth of
a child, death of a relative...

“Sports chaplains are undoubtedly the answer to the needs of a group of people who, due to their circumstances at a certain moment in life, cannot benefit from the regular pastoral care of their parish priests.”

*Jason Checchio, Sports Chaplain
(Diocese of Camden - USA)*

THE RUNNING MADONNA

Prayer of the Marathon Runner

Thank you, Lord, for making me run and not leaving me alone at km 35 of the great marathon of my life.

Thank you, Lord, for the beauty of running alone in the woods and among people, in the cold and the heat, the rain and the wind.

Thank you, Lord, for being by my side in moments of tiredness when sweat clouds my vision, fatigue weakens my legs, and I want to stop.

I move forward with you.

This running of mine done with humility and passion is a prayer of praise to you that I repeat even in the last, endless, 195 meters of the marathon of my life.

And I thank you, Lord, for the friends with whom I share the joy of running side by side.

Sir, making the sign of the cross, I start to run, confident that your smile will accompany my strides.



(Sulmona - Italy)



www.dce.va
info@dce.va



+39 06 698 93 801



Dicastery for Culture
and Education
Piazza Pio XII, 3
00120 Vatican City