

Prayers for
Athletes & Sports



Chaminade-Madonna
College Preparatory

Published by:
Mission Integration Office

Dear Coaches, Trainers and Student Athletes:

Chaminade-Madonna College Preparatory is a Catholic school rooted in the Marianist Tradition. One of the Characteristics of Marianist Education is to provide a high-quality education for the whole person: mind, body, and soul. Therefore, Catholic-Marianist schools offer a variety of educational opportunities, including arts, sciences, spiritual and athletic. This methodology allows us to help each student mature as an integrated, whole person, tending to intellectual development and moral, social, psychological, physical, and creative development.

Marianist educators, including athletic coaches and trainers, encourage students to cultivate their talents, acquire the skills that will equip them to be learners all their lives.

As a Catholic school rooted in the Marianist tradition, we begin all activities, the school day, individual classes, and athletic events asking for God's blessings for ourselves and others. Our praying is not necessary for a win; instead, it is a prayer for the blessings of life and thanksgiving for those who support us and petition God's assistance in keeping our eye on what is most important in life.

In this spirit, I urge all our coaches, trainers and student-athletes to use this collection of prayers developed by our Mission Integration Office. These sections of prayers include General Prayers, Athletes' Prayers in the Marianist Tradition, and Prayers for Specific Events.

Matthew Bishop

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Saint Sebastian **Patron of Athletes and Sports**

St. Sebastian (256 – 288) was a brave and dedicated Christian Commander in the Roman Emperor's Imperial Guard. The Emperor persecuted Christians, but St. Sebastian secretly brought supplies to these persecuted Christians. His missionary efforts were known in the underground circles. He was a man of great faith when such faith had to be hidden, and he was even known to have brought Christianity to fellow members of the Roman armed services. St. Sebastian was also known to be extremely fit and able to withstand long physical endurance, especially during this martyrdom. His story is one of courage, dedication and strength. Attributes such as these are important for athletes and soldiers, for it is their dedication and fearlessness that helps them to succeed in their endeavors. Hence, St. Sebastian became known as the patron of athletes and sports. Similar to St. Sebastian, during games and events, all athletes have to be able to withstand long physical endurance. They pray to him, a devoted, strong and holy person, to receive the strength to do their best and to avoid injuries.

Does praying or not praying to Saint Sebastian really make a difference? The truth is praying isn't going to win the game or give athletes super-human powers, but it does help to start every practice and competition with a prayer. While praying to St. Sebastian won't ensure a win however, it gives you—the athlete a positive attitude.

Prayer to St. Sebastian for Athletes

Saint Sebastian, patron saint of athletes and sports, help me to do the best that I can, aim high, and always give it my best effort, and if I should fail, give me the strength to try harder. Amen.

General Prayers All Sports

1. God our Creator, help us to put forth our best effort, to represent our CMCP school community with class, to respect our opponents, and to grow as disciples of your Son, Jesus and Mary, our Mother. Keep us safe from injury and harm and help us to conduct ourselves as you would, with grace and kindness. We pray: may the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit be gloried in all places through the Immaculate Virgin Mary. Amen. (Adapted from www.ConnectUsfund.org)
2. Good and Gracious God, as we prepare for this (*Insert name of the sport*), game, we offer you this prayer of thanksgiving. Thank you for helping us to grow in spirit, inspiration and talent. You have blessed us and given us strength as a team. As we start this game, we ask that you continue to guide us so that we may do your will in everything. We ask this in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen. (Adapted from 10 Prayers Before a Game, Courtney Pococh; www.everydayknow.com)
3. Source of all Life, we praise you and thank you for all of the blessings and gifts that you have given our CMCP. Help us to start this (*Insert name of the sport*), event with a heart full of your love, strength and wisdom. May we put into practice today everything that we have learned during our training and may we play this game to the best of abilities. As always, we ask you to hear our prayers, through the intercession of St. Sebastian, our patron and protector. Amen. (Adapted from 10 Prayers Before a Game, Courtney Pococh; www.everydayknow.com)

4. God of All Blessings, before we start this (*Insert name of the sport*) game, we pause to give you thanks for the blessings in our lives. We thank you and ask you to bless all those who support us, our coaches, our teachers, our families and our friends. Allow us to play this game to the best of our ability and keep our players and our opponents safe and free from injury. And, most of all, Creator God, may we learn to be the women and men You created us to be. And may the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit be gloried in all places through the Immaculate Virgin Mary. Amen.

5. Creator God, we ask your blessing on the game we are about to play. Give each of us the courage to play this game in a manner which by our words and our actions is pleasing to you and represents the values we treasure here at CMCP. Let us enter into this competition in a spirit of sportsmanship and with a respect for the members of the opposing team. Bless us, our coaches, the officials, our parents and our team. And may the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit be gloried in all places through the Immaculate Virgin Mary. Amen.
(Adapted from the Archdiocese of San Antonio, TX)

6. Almighty God, You are the source of all our gifts and talents. As participants in (*Insert name of the sport*), help us to represent You as members of the Body of Christ and members of our Chaminade-Madonna community in our attitudes, competition and actions. Protect us from all injuries and give us the strength to play our best using sound strategies in a fun, fair and competitive way. Help us to respect all that are here today and guide the coaches and officials to aid us in playing in a Christian manner. Amen. (Adapted from Gary Roney, Athletic Director Pittsburgh Catholic Youth Ministry)

Prayer for Sports Medicine

Good and Gracious God, whose Son, Jesus Christ, went about doing good and healing all manners of illness, I ask you to hear my prayer. You have entrusted me with the care of all our student-athletes at CMCP. I give you thanks, and I ask for your assistance in this ministry. Please help me to keep my athletes well, strong, and fit. Protect them from all injuries, but should they occur, give me the knowledge and skill to help in their healing process. As we all strive for our shared goals of providing a holistic learning experience for the students, I ask you to give me the grace to be an instrument of your healing presence in mind, body, and spirit. Through the intercession of Saints Cosmas & Damian, patrons saints of medicine, I ask this prayer, Amen.

Pre-Game Prayer

Dear God, please bless today's game, our team, our opponents, and all watching our play. Thank you for the opportunity to compete and bring out the best in each other. May we play hard and fair. Please keep everyone safe from injury and harm. We pray this prayer in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit – Amen (Adapted from God, Be In My Sport, Play Like a Champion Educational Series; www.playlikeacampion.org)

Prayer for our Team

Dear Lord, you have blessed our team with many gifts and talents. We thank you especially for the ability to participate in (*Insert name of the sport*), today together, as a team. Help us all to play in a Christ-like manner and to play in a way that fosters goodwill, teamwork and makes great memories for us to cherish. Assist us to play to the best of our abilities. Win or lose, we hope to have fun, make friends and celebrate life. We always ask these prayers in name of Jesus, Our Lord. Amen. (Adapted from www.ConnectUsfund.org)

Prayer for all those involved in Sports

O God, you gave us bodies, as well as minds and hearts. Our sports and exercises are a fitting use of gifts and talents you have given us. Bless our workouts and the games we play, and those with whom we exercise or compete. Give us strength, endurance, courage and agility as we compete or train. Keep us safe and healthy as we celebrate our physical and mental skills in sport. And may the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit be gloried in all places through the Immaculate Mary. Amen. (Adapted from a Prayer Courtesy of Marquette University, God, Be In My Sport, Play Like a Champion Educational Series; www.playlikeachampion.org)

Prayer to Play Fairly

God, let me play well but fairly. Help me to learn something that matters once the game is over. Let competition make me strong but never hostile. Always let me help my opponent up. Never catch me rejoicing in the adversity of others. If I know victory, allow me to be happy; if I am denied, keep me from envy. Remind me that sports are just games. If through athletics I set an example, let it be a good one. And may the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit be gloried in all places through the Immaculate Mary. Amen. (Adapted from www.beliefnet.com)

Prayer to Build Each Other Up

God of heaven and earth, today we ask you to bless our game, our team and all who are watching us play. Thank you for the opportunity to compete and bring out the best in each other. May we play hard and fair. Show us opportunities to build each other up, spiritually, emotionally and physically. We also ask you to send blessings on our entire CMCP community. We pray in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. (Adapted from www.ConnectUSfund.com)

Prayer before Tough Game

Heavenly Creator God, you promised that you would not abandon us. We have a really tough game today, and we are nervous. Our opponents are very good, and we need to win this game. Help our team work well and communicate with each other. Help us to hit our mark and not make mistakes. Calm our minds so we can think clearly and play our best. And may the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit be gloried in all places through the Immaculate Mary. Amen. (Adapted from www.ConnectUSfund.com)

Post-Game Prayer

Thank you, God, for the chance to compete and use our talents through sports. Remind us that we are called to give our best and to finish the race while caring for others along the way. Bless our parents, friends and fans who came and supported us during this game. May we use the lessons we have learned during this game for the good of ours. And may the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit be gloried in all places through the Immaculate Mary. Amen. (Adapted from God, Be In My Sport, Play Like a Champion Educational Series; www.playlikeachampion.org)

Prayer to Play Fair in the Game of Life

God of the Universe, in the struggle that goes on through life we ask for a field that is fair, a chance that is equal with all the strife, the courage to strive and to dare. And if we should win, let it be by the code, with our faith and our honor held high. And if we should lose, let us stand by the road and cheer as the winners go by. We ask this through Jesus our Lord and Savior. Amen. (Adapted from a Prayer Attributed to Legendary Notre Dame Football Coach, Knute Rockne, God, Be In My Sport, Play Like a Champion Educational Series; www.playlikeachampion.org)

Athletes' Prayer in the Marianist Tradition

1. God in heaven, we come before you this day and we give you thanks for our many blessings. May the actions of all here players, fans, coaches, and referees, always reflect your love for all people. Please keep all the athletes free from injury and may they be strengthened in mind, body and soul to do the best each day. And, together we pray: May the Father, and the Son and Holy Spirit be glorified in all places through the Immaculate Virgin Mary. Amen. (Adapted from St. Mary's University)
2. Creator God, I am aware at this moment of your love for me, for I know you are the source of all that is good in my life. I give you special thanks for bestowing physical talent upon me and all team members that allows us to participate in (*Insert name of the sport*). I pray that as an athlete I can represent the Marianist tradition to the best of my ability both on and off the playing field. I ask that I play with courage, determination, and endurance. I also ask for your help, that I may always be a powerful witness to all the values that I have come to learn here at CMCP. May the Father and the Son and Holy Spirit be glorified in all places through the Immaculate Virgin Mary.
(Adapted from the Athletic Directors of Marianist Schools, 2005)
3. Holy Mother of God, we ask for your prayers during this practice (or competition) that you might help lead us closer to God through our participation on this team. We ask that you keep us safe as we lift up all the prayers we hold in our hearts to God, that we may come to know your Son more fully through you. May the Father, and the Son and Holy Spirit be glorified in all places through the Immaculate Virgin Mary. Amen.
(Adapted from God, Be In My Sport, Play Like a Champion Educational Series; www.playlikeachampion.org)

Prayers for Specific Sports Events

Baseball

Holy God we pray:

- Grant me wisdom, to tell a strike from a ball, to know where to throw.
- Keep me always in the base line, running straight and true.
- Give me vision, to see every pitch and if another player needs my help.
- Be my strength, when I throw the ball when I'm far from home plate, or against a wall.
- Guide my feet, so I never miss a base, and bring me home safely.
- Let me always hustle, so I'll be at my best.
- When I help younger players, let me always give praise.
- Guide our coach, to be fair and smart, and be an inspiration for us.
- Let me take a loss, just as well as a win.
- And, however my games end, let me always have fun.

May the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit be gloried in all places through the Immaculate Virgin Mary. Amen.

(Adapted from Prayers to Our Saints, www.prayertooursaints.com)

Basketball

God of all Creation, As we face our opponents tonight, may we play our hearts out and give a 100% effort out there on the court. May we also be good sportsmen to our opponents before, during, and after the game. We ask that you watch over us during the game. Give us the stamina to endure the game, and empower us mentally to overcome every challenge we will face. Bless our coaches, our team, and all those who support us as we compete on this court. May the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit be gloried in all places through the Immaculate Virgin Mary. Amen.

(Adapted from Prayers to Our Saints, www.prayertooursaints.com)

Beach Volleyball

God of Creation, You have shown us our place in this world as channels of your love. As we play this game (or training) of Beach Volleyball we are reminded of your power and light that comes from the sun, moon and stars. Help us to compete fairly, play as a team, and always remember we are made to protect all of creation: air, water, sand and soil. We begin this our time together with a mindful remembrance of our Characteristics of Marianist Education and in particular: Education for Service, Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation. We pray this through the intercession of St. Francis, Patron of God's Creation. Amen.

(Adapted from Laudato Si' by Pope Francis)

Cheerleading—This prayer can be used before a game or a competition.

God, before we take to the field (or practice), we come together as a team to pray. Please watch over us from music start to finish. Help us to succeed and so we pray:

- Stunts that are solid and tight. Arms that remain by our side.
- Flyers that are confident. High "V's" that are never bent.
- Cradles that are caught up high. Pointed jumps that truly fly.
- Tosses that soar through the air.
- Motions that are sharp and snap. A loud crowd that likes to clap.
- Voices that deeply shout. Thumbs that do not stick out.
- No bumps that happen while we're passing.
- Smiles that are everlasting! Endurance that keeps us strong.
- Teamwork that can't go wrong.

But mostly God, we'd like to have a routine that is injury free. Amen.

(Adapted from Prayers to Our Saints, www.prayertooursaints.com)

Dance

God of all Creation, I sometimes forget that I was created for joy and to dance in your presence. My mind becomes too busy, and my heart is too heavy for me to remember that I have been called to dance; dance to the Sacred Dance of Life.

I was created to smile, to love: to be lifted, and lift others up. Grant me the courage to attempt the impossible and the heart to make it possible. Teach me to dance to the sounds of your world and your people. I want to move in the rhythm with your plan and help me to follow your lead. May I lead with joy and may my dance tell of your love for me and others. O Sacred One, untangle my feet from all that ensnares. Free my soul that my dancing may praise you now and forever. Amen.

(Adapted from a poem by Hafiz, a 14th century Persian Muslim poet.)

E-Sports

Dear Lord, you have already blessed us with the gift of technology and imagination. Bless my teammates as they grow in friendship with each other. We ask for your assistance in playing honestly and in the spirit of good sportsmanship as we begin this competition. Give me calm as I log on, guide me through my strategy, keep my fingers steady, and may I compete with lightning speed. Send your Holy Spirit upon us today and let all participants in these games play to their best. We ask these prayers through the intercession of St. Isidore of Seville, patron of computers and programmers. Amen.

Flag Football

As we begin this game, I ask you to bless all my fellow teammates and our community at CMCP. I am grateful for all the blessings you have given me and our team. Fill us with energy and passion as we push ourselves to play well and fair. May we be strong on the field and remember the strategies we practiced. May we respect our opponents, and grow into women of strength, wisdom and integrity. Amen.

Football

God in Heaven, Our CM Lions Football team is built upon the good foundations of love, respect, trust and excellence. As we play today, may our squad be strong, united and our club spirit be one of truth and love. Today we pray that we work together to be the best we can be, to play fairly and to respect every player in the game. Keep us all safe and guard us from injury. Thank You for our coaches, our training, family and friends and all those who have come out to support us as play this game. Watching over us, Lord, and whether we win or lose, may Your love triumph over all. And, May the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit be gloried in all places through the Immaculate Virgin Mary. Amen. (Adapted from Prayer by Julie Palmer © Copyright 2019 www.prayerscapes.com)

Golf

Creator God, you have blessed us with the beauty of nature, and the abilities of mind and body. Today, we give you thanks for the chance we have to play the game of golf. We are also thankful for the sense of community we experience with others on this course. Open our minds and hearts to the lessons this game can teach us. May we not give up after a few bad holes, because things will get better – if we keep trying. Be with us, that we may enjoy each moment of today's play. And, may our vision be keen as an eagle; may our drives be as straight as arrows; may our irons aid the birdies' flight; may our putts be true and on the mark; and may our friendships always be above par. We ask all these prayers through the intercession of St. Andrew of Scotland, Patron of Golf and Golfers. Amen.

Runners, Cross Country & Track and Field

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God, source of my strength, as I approach the track/course to start this race, I remember to thank you for your grace and blessings. You have created me to strive to be the best I can. Give me the courage, strength, and agility as we train (or compete). Protect me as I go my way and keep us safe and healthy. Guide my feet to run smooth and swift – to move and run free. Stay with me, Lord, and may my run be pleasing to you, because it is through you, I can do my best. And, May the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit be gloried in all places through the Immaculate Virgin Mary. Amen.

Softball

Good God, I pause and bring your presence in my mind. I ask you to bless me as I begin this softball game (or practice). Allow me to play my best but always with integrity. Allow competition to make me stronger but never bitter, jealous or inconsiderate of others. Always encourage me to see my opponents as people and keep my heart filled with compassion and integrity. If I should see the blessings of victory, allow me to be proud but keep me from reckless boasting. If victory is denied, keep me from feeling defeated. Allow me to be genuinely proud for a worthy competitor as I say “Good Game.” At the end of each day, help me to find the life lessons that You want me to learn, so I may grow as an athlete and person. I ask you to hear my prayer. Amen.

(Adapted from A Softball Players Prayer –SIFG)

Soccer

Good and Gracious God, as we begin this practice (competition), we come to you in prayer. We are thankful for the gifts you have given us. Bless us and all those of the CMCP soccer community. Protect us from injury; and give us the courage and speed to be an example to all athletes of good conduct and enthusiasm. Help us to maintain our dignity, because we are made in your image and likeness. It is because of You that we take pride in our athletic achievements. Bless us, with Your love and your peace, so that when this event is but a memory, we will remember with pride and joy, our participation. May the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit be gloried in all places through the Immaculate Virgin Mary. Amen.
(Adapted from World Cup Soccer Prayer , Rt. Rev. Archimandrite Ephraem)

Swimming

Dear God, another swimming meet today. As I dive off the block and my head hits the rush of cold water, I ask you to Bless my family, my friends and my coach. As I take to the blocks, let me not to forget You. Let my starts and turns be quick, my arms and legs be sure, and help my strokes be smooth and strong. Help me to endure this race. You have blessed me with unique and special gifts, sharing these talents with others in my CMCP community. Let me never forget that swimming is not medals and wins, rather it is the passion in me on how I swam the race and live my life. We ask all these prayers through the intercession of St. Adjutor of Vernon, patron of swimmers. Amen.
(Adapted from a Swimmers' Prayer – SAIL)

Tennis

Creator God, as we approach the court to prepare for this match, help us to remember that you have created us in your image and we are blessed with gifts and talents unique to each of us. Today, we ask you to be with us. Whether it's singles or doubles, let us always play fair, to respect the decision of the umpire and give us a lift when our game is off. Let our parents, coaches and fans be proud of our actions and play on and off the court. We ask all these things in your name, one God forever and ever. May the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit be gloried in all places through the Immaculate Virgin Mary. Amen. (Adapted from www.FancifieldBySharla.com)

Volleyball

Good and Gracious God, thank you for the privilege of training with this team. We thank you for all the gifts and talents that you have so graciously given us. We also thank you for each player on our CMCP Volleyball team. Watch over us as we compete today. Protect us from injury and fill us with strength and courage as we give of our best. Guide us to play well and if we know victory, grant us happiness. If we are denied a victory, keep us from envy. Seal in my heart that everyone who takes the court with me becomes my (sister or brother). May the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit be glorified in all places through the Immaculate Virgin Mary. Amen.

Biblical Scriptures for Athletes
(New Revised Standard Version)

Deuteronomy 31:6; 7b-8

Be strong and bold; have no fear or dread of them, because it is the Lord your God who goes with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. Be strong and bold, for you are the one who will go with this people into the land that the LORD has sworn to your ancestors to give them; and you will put them in possession. It is the LORD who goes before you. God will be with you; God will not desert you or abandon you. Do not fear or be dismayed.

1 Corinthians 9:24-27

Do you not know that in a race, the runners all compete, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win it. Athletes exercise self-control; they do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable one. So I do not run aimlessly, nor do I box as though beating the air; but I strictly discipline my body and make it my slave, so that after proclaiming to others, I myself should not be disqualified.

Philippians 2:3-4

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but the interests of others.

Philippians 4:13

I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me.

Colossians 4:5-6

Conduct yourselves wisely towards outsiders, making the most of the time. Let your speech always be gracious and attractive so that you will have the right response for everyone.

1 Timothy 1:18-19a

I am giving you these instructions, Timothy, my child in accordance with the prophecies previously made earlier about you, so that by following them you fight the good fight, having faith and a good conscience.

1 Timothy 6:11-12

But as for you, a child of God, shun all this; pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith; take hold of the eternal life, to which you were called, and for which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

2 Timothy 4:7-8

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

Hebrews 12-2a

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every obstacle and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.