

CYO STEADFAST ENCOURAGES CATHOLIC VALUES

CYO introduced the phrase "Apostolic Athletes/Apostolic Coaches" into the CYO vernacular as a reminder that sports can help develop our talents in service to others; that we are called to live a life of selflessness; and that we can draw strength from the ultimate act of selflessness - the Eucharist. God calls us to serve those in need. CYO initiated programs to embody this mission; and we are using sports as a vehicle where we can assist the neediest amongst us.

CYO STEADFAST

CYO Steadfast is a Saturday morning program currently run at Our Holy Redeemer Parish in Freeport. Steadfast connotes the concept of perseverance, commitment, unwavering faithfulness and resolution. These values are important not just in our civic life, but also in our spiritual life. How often have we heard from the writings of the saints, "Let us be steadfast in our faith... steadfast in our prayer life... steadfast in our service to others?"

CYO Steadfast uses sports and recreational activities to provide other services to young children in need of educational enrichment. From 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., we provide children assistance with reading, writing, math and homework review.

We teach chess and provide a safe environment to play board games, Legos and American Girl dolls, and do arts and crafts. We have partnered with Book Fairies, so each child brings a book home from our library.

In January, we will partner with Island Harvest to provide families with groceries. The program is run by certified teachers and volunteers with a commitment to helping our young families succeed. While the genesis of the program is in Freeport, we intend to bring CYO Steadfast to parishes throughout the Diocese.



HOPSKIPDRIVE

HopSkipDrive is an organization founded by working mothers, who addressed the need to pick up and deliver children of those needing transportation to participate in community activities. Think of it as the "Uber for the working poor."

HopSkipDrive hires mothers as drivers, conducts extensive background checks and pays them a living wage. The idea is mothers trust other mothers to carpool their children back and forth to events.

The service is currently offered in several states and HopSkipDrive has identified Long Island as a target market for expansion. We were introduced to this organization at a "Project Play" Conference hosted by the Aspen Institute.

Children of the working poor face many challenges to participate in community sports programs, including the high cost of sports and difficulty arranging transportation. If a sport/community event is not within walking distance, many children can't participate.

CYO Steadfast has experienced the issue where parents interested in our program need transportation assistance. HopSkipDrive addresses this need.

We are in the early stages of seeing how HopSkipDrive can serve our neediest communities, and are working to create a coalition with other non-profits to bring this service to Long Island. State funding may be available to help defray transportation costs. †

ST. SEBASTIAN MEDAL FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE

Starting with the girls volleyball season, CYO will ask our Apostolic Athletes to compete on a different playing field - community service. CYO will work with TeamUp4Community, a non-profit run by Steve and Teresa Webb. Steve is a former NY Islander and his organization promotes student athletes competing to do good in their communities.

CYO will have its own "home page" where our teams will select a variety of charities, projects and fundraisers that will impact their community/parish. For example, our teams can assist their Parish Outreach ministries by donating service hours to those in need at the food bank. They can volunteer to assist us in our CYO Steadfast program or create their own projects addressing a specific need of their community/parish/Catholic school.

CYO will track total hours contributed by each team and then select two teams for our St. Sebastian Medal for Community Service. Awards are granted based on total hours served on a per person basis, as well as recognizing the most creative community service project. St. Sebastian is the Patron Saint of Athletes and the story of his commitment to evangelization is well known to Catholics.

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