



Archdiocese of Hartford - Office of Religious Education
 Rev. Msgr. Michael J. Motta, D.Min Archdiocesan Director
 467 Bloomfield Ave. Bloomfield, CT 06002-2999 860-243-9465 ext. 20
 860-243-9690 (fax) sbaldwin@adh-ore.org

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Dear 2009 Catholic Youth Spectacular Group Coordinator,

We gather together as valuable members of the Body of Christ “team” - parish, school, college, scouts, sports - to spend the day with our “head coach”, Archbishop Henry J. Mansell, at the beginning of the “playoff season” for the **2009 Catholic Youth Spectacular, “Beyond Sunday: Reading the Signs-Getting Home,” Sunday, September 20, 2009.** This is Catechetical Sunday and a perfect opportunity to kick off the catechetical season with your youth and those who “coach” them. We are planning “spring training” meetings throughout the region in February and March to distribute liturgical catechesis resources and a “franchise owner” orientation in August. “Opening day” with “pre-game warmups” begins at 12:30 at Rock Cats Stadium in New Britain.

The theme of the 2009 Catholic Youth Spectacular raises our awareness of connections between our faith, the game of baseball, and how we are called to live our faith on Sunday and all the days in between. Our Sunday Visitor’s Catholic Dictionary by Fr Peter Stravinskias defines **SIGN**:

Something that gives direction but, more importantly, points beyond itself to some spiritual reality that may not be attained easily or perceived readily. A rich theology of sign is present in the Church’s liturgical and sacramental life. Without these signs, the Faith would be unknowable and opaque. With them, it is possible for Catholics to enter into the mysteries behind the signs and thereby be caught up into the life of Christ and the Church. We refer to the sacraments as signs because they both cause and effect grace through the act of signifying. Signs may be:

	CHURCH	BASEBALL
GESTURES	Standing, kneeling, bowing, prostration, etc.	Circling arm to tell runner to round the bases; signs to batter, pitcher, or runner on what to pitch, hit, and when to run, etc.
ACTIONS	Blessing oneself with the sign of the cross, anointing with chrism, etc.	Blessing oneself before batting, raising the index finger toward heaven after a homerun, sacrifice fly, suicide squeeze, steal a base, etc.
LITURGICAL VESTURE	Alb, stole, chasuble, etc.	Uniforms, fan hats and jerseys, etc.
SACRED VESSELS	Chalice, ciborium, etc.	Bat, glove, glove oil, etc.
ECCLESIASTICAL ART	Stained glass, bells, Book of the Gospels, etc.	Team logos, grooming the field, bobble head figures, rule book, scoreboard, mascots, etc.

The band Exaudio has generously agreed to be part of our “pre-game warm up” to be followed by the submission of “line ups/rosters” and the “singing of the National Anthem” (presentation of team pennants- which you will make- and opening prayer). Steve Angrisano will throw out the “opening pitch” and then we “play ball” with team building and spiritual fitness strengthening activities. Food will be available at three picnic areas (concession stands will be open all day but this is not included in your ticket price) and reconciliation will be available behind home plate. A “seventh inning stretch” will prepare us for the “home

stretch” (Mass). The time to depart and *Go Make A Difference* (Steve’s signature song) at your parish, community, and in the world begins at 7:00pm

We are really excited and fortunate to welcome back our 1998 keynote speaker Steve Angrisano – <http://www.spiritandsong.com/artists/steveangrisano> as our “MVP” keynote. Steve is recognized as one of the most dynamic and effective communicators with Christian youth in the country. A singer, songwriter



and storyteller, Steve creates relevant, dynamic music for liturgy and listening, proclaiming that through Christ we have the power to carry out God’s work. Steve’s unique blend of laughter, song, story and often hilarious audience interaction have made him a popular choice for parish missions, concerts, workshops and youth events. He’s been featured at two World Youth Days, four National Catholic Youth Conferences and countless parish, school, camp and diocesan events. Steve has also worked extensively as a ropes course instructor and youth ministry trainer and has given workshops at both National Federation of Catholic Youth Ministers and National Catholic Youth

Conference events. A parish musician, music director and youth minister for 11 years, Steve’s focus is, and has always been, one of honest ministry. There is an unmistakable awareness that Steve is not a performer. What he shares, both in story and song, is a witness of the love and life of Jesus. Steve lives in Highlands Ranch, Colorado, with his wife, Jenni, and three children. [Steve's MySpace](#).

Registration materials will be e-mailed to those who send in a deposit and will be posted on the Office of Religious Education web site www.orehartford.org You will make your own name tags, supply your own holders, and collect permission slips for all youth (though we will not collect them they need to be kept in your possession for 2 years). There should be one “coach” (chaperone) per 8 “players” (youth) with a minimum of 2 chaperones for your group. I will need the names of your adults and your verification that they are Protecting God’s Children compliant by the end of August.

Promote the event NOW so that you can get commitment from your youth before the spring training season ends (April) and the regular season begins (May-August). Contact the Office of Radio and Television for a Crossroads Magazine/DVD www.ORTV-hartford.org for past clips of the Youth Spectacular to promote in your parish. This is a great way to kick off your 2009-2010 season. Plan on taking your Confirmation or religion classes, youth groups, service groups, sport teams, scout troops, peer ministers and other leadership and campus ministry teams.

“Season ticket” pricing (early bird deadlines) allows you the opportunity to save some money the earlier that you decide to commit to your attendance. Entrance to the stadium is by ticket only. **Season Ticket holder prices per person:**

- **\$20.00** (registration received at ORE by 4:30 Friday, June 19th)
- **\$25.00** (registration received at ORE by 4:30 Friday, Aug 21st)
- **\$30.00** (registration received at ORE by 4:30 Friday, Sept 11th)
- **\$35.00** (registration received after Sept 11th including at the gate)



Priests are encouraged to attend to give support to the team as well as help us with the Sacrament of Reconciliation and to concelebrate Mass with Archbishop Mansell. Priests are FREE but they must have a ticket and be included in your “team” count.

Questions? Got some ideas? Want to be on the committee? Want to host a spring training? Contact me at 860-243-9465 ext. 20 or sbaldwin@adh-ore.org . If you received this as a hard copy, send us your e-mail address so that we can send you this info via e-mail and you can click on some of the links.

Peace,

Shawnee Baldwin

Coordinator of Youth and Young Adult Ministry

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