



Catholic Youth Organization
A Division of
Catholic Charities Community Services
1011 First Avenue, 6th FL
New York, NY 10022
Phone: 212-371-1000
www.cyony.org

Friday, June 08, 2018

CYO Archdiocesan Sportsmanship Award

Participating Parishes of the Archdiocese of New York were asked to submit supporting documents detailing the good work their CYO program does in their community and beyond. The documents received outline selfless acts and generous donations, exemplified a strong spirit of volunteerism, and illustrated the presence CYO has in communities throughout the entire Archdiocese of New York.

After careful consideration, CYO would like to congratulate St. Augustine-Ossining of Westchester and St. Gregory Barbarigo of Rockland County for being named the co-winners of the 2017-2018 CYO Archdiocesan Sportsmanship Award!!!

St. Augustine's Ossining is blessed with a core group of 30 parents, grandparents, teachers and siblings from the parish community who volunteered their time to serve in this role. This community exemplified sportsmanship, Christian values and service to others.

The 2017-18 season commenced with a spiritual gathering attended by more than 300 people. Working with their pastor Fr. Brian McSweeney, representatives from each team participated in liturgy as altar servers, readers and gift bearers. Fr. McSweeney bestowed a blessing to all in attendance followed by fellowship at a breakfast gathering their cafeteria.

Their new leadership team committed to reinforcing the mission of the loyalty to CYO ideals. To this end the CYO Prayer or Pledge was recited at the start of each game. Banners were installed in their gym and visiting opponents were asked to join in this important act of spirituality at the outset of each game. This tradition has been received well by their participants, parents and visitors to all their home games.

Lastly, in partnership with St. Vincent de Paul Society, CYO conducted a Christmas Gift Drive to support neighboring Cardinal McCloskey Community Services. During games in the holiday seasons, their families donated gifts and gift cards values at \$2,000 to give to children less fortunate.

St. Gregory Barbarigo is a shining example of the values and strength of character that CYO strives to promote. St. Gregory has developed and implemented the following events and programs within their community:

The Peter Sasso Tournament - In December of 2017, they held a tournament to raise money for the Sasso family. Peter Sasso, a longtime CYO supporter experienced some difficult medical challenges. Peter's wife, Ellen Sasso is a 20+ year CYO coach at St. Gregory as well. She has volunteered her time teaching and coaching girls basketball. After her husband's illness, the family experienced some financial troubles.

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Their CYO program stepped right in, and organized a 7th grade boys tournament that raised over \$3,000 for the Sasso family.

High School Scholarships- Each year their program awards high school graduating seniors with scholarships based on service and participation in the program. The essay topic is: What have you learned from CYO and how it is has helped to make you a better person. All applicants for the scholarship must have played St.Gregory CYO and remained actively involved in the parish.

Food Drives- For the last 3 years, their CYO program along with their religious education program has teamed up during the month of November to collect canned and boxed foods for the needy to use for Thanksgiving. They have collected over 1,500 canned and boxed foods and all has been donated to Catholic Charities of Rockland County. CYO players and coaches volunteer their time to deliver the foods to Catholic Charities.

Shoe Box Project for Haiti- Beginning in December 2016, a handful of their CYO teams make shoe boxes before Christmas, fill them with presents and mail them to Haiti for children who are less fortunate. It has become a yearly tradition, with over 150 shoe boxes have been sent to Haiti, all stuffed with Christmas presents.

Blood Drive- Their CYO program has assisted with a blood drive through the New York Blood Center. Players, coaches, and families helped to promote the event and volunteered on the day of the drive with the setup, cleanup, and snack table. They have collected over 100 units of blood that has helped save lives.

On behalf of Catholic Youth Organization for the Archdiocese of New York, we graciously thank St. Augustine Parish of Westchester and St. Gregory Barbarigo of Rockland for their great work at these parishes. Both programs will receive a banner which they can share and display proudly in their community.

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