

Dear CYO Coaches and AD's,

As we are in the middle of our fall sports seasons, we are all being bombarded through the media with coverage of the NFL teams who are choosing to "take a knee" during the playing of the National Anthem. Although there are issues our country is facing that merit thought, prayer and ongoing discussion, put in its simplest terms, athletes taking a knee during the National Anthem is a polarizing act that creates strong emotions and sentiments on both sides of the debate. It has truly become a divisive issue across the country!

At each of our pre-season coaches' meetings and AD meetings, one of the central themes I have shared is that CYO is different, and that at the core of everything we do, our desire is to bring all involved closer to Christ! In an effort to carry out this quest, we at the CYO Office agree that the expectations in this regard need to be clear, concise, and in the best interest of the entire organization. We have also been in conversation with Archdiocesan leadership, and have their full support in implementing these procedures. Below are the strong expectations of the CYO in regard to players, coaches and officials standing during the playing of the National Anthem, if it is played at a particular site:

1. Players, coaches and officials are expected to stand and maintain a respectful demeanor during the playing of the National Anthem.
2. This is expected at any CYO activity where the Anthem is being played.
3. Additionally, during pre-game prayer, reverent and respectful demeanor is expected by all.
4. It is the responsibility of coaches and AD's at each parish to make sure that all players, coaches and parents/guardians from every sport are aware of these expectations.
5. If a player or coach chooses to take a knee during the Anthem, they are to be suspended from participating in that game. If a player or coach takes a knee, and does participate in the game, the CYO requests that the opposing coach and officiating crew reports this to the CYO after the game, so that the CYO can implement the suspensions of the player and coach in the next game.

It truly is our desire to do what is best for the entire CYO organization and the youth we serve. Thank you for helping us avoid any type of behavior that might be considered as offensive or polarizing by others. May God bless us all as we continue to do His work! Good luck to all teams!

Sincerely,

Bruce Scifres

CYO Executive Director