Annual Report and Year End Review

for

The Catholic Youth Organization

1996-1997

Archdiocese of Indianapolis
A MESSAGE FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, EDWARD J. TINDER

Dear Friends of the Catholic Youth Organization:

This annual report will serve as a dedication to all the great volunteers and past staff members who lovingly and faithfully established and developed the Catholic Youth Organization into the success story it is today. I especially want to note the special work of beloved staff members, Bill salon and Bill Korz, past directors of CYO, and Maggie Boyle, serving as secretary for forty years to the organization.

Clearly, too, no group embodies the spirit of the CYO more than the volunteers. While it would be completely impossible to name all the individuals and groups that have given their time, talent and treasure during the past fifty-eight years, I have chosen an individual to represent this group. The "captain" of the thousands of volunteers chosen to represent the rich traditions and memories that make up the CYO is the late Edward J. Flettworth. Sr. Mr. Flettworth was the first president of the CYO board of directors. In fact, he led the way to actually establishing the CYO in 1939. Mr. Flettworth remained a loyal friend to the CYO and an advance to himself and previous directors until his death this past year.

A debt of appreciation and gratitude is owed to a cast of thousands for creating the CYO experience. Perhaps, as some would argue, our CYO is among the very best in the country. This year's activities, volunteers, participation records, and development efforts are just another successful chapter in the ongoing CYO story. As you read through the pages of this annual report, I think you will join me in pronouncing 1996-97 as a year of exciting achievement. With your help, we continue to develop a model program for youth services in the Archdiocese.

No successful organization can rest on past achievements and expect to get better automatically. I pledge that as we move closer to the next decade of our existence, the CYO will continue all of our traditionally popular programs. More importantly, though, everything we do will be built upon an abundance of wholesome adult direction and guidance. I can assure you that we will always have future direction on the principles established by leaders like Ed Flettworth, Sr. and remain faithful to the mission that has brought us this far.

One thing is very clear to me. The CYO will accomplish very little without the commitment and support of many people, including yourself. Your sacrifices of human and financial resources to our efforts will help us grow and prosper. Let us pray for God's continued blessings on the CYO. Thank you and thank God for all the concentration of kind and generous support that flows through the CYO.

Finally, this annual report is a celebration - a celebration of the past, present and future. Throughout this report we have included many old photographs to help us remember the past as we describe our accomplishments during 1996-97. We hope you enjoy reading this annual report and our old photographs and memories.

EDWARD J. TINDER
CYO Executive Director

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And CYO BOARD PRESIDENT, JOSEPH M. DEZELAN

Dear CYO Friends:

When I joined the CYO board of directors in 1991, I did so with a great deal of enthusiasm and appreciation. I never thought, however, that my time on the board would be so challenging and rewarding for me personally.

In 1994 I was asked by my fellow board members to assume the role of board president. I was a little apprehensive at first, but I accepted the challenge. I never regretted my decision and as I write this message, I have completed my third year as president of the CYO board of directors. It has truly been a privilege for me to follow in the footsteps of many individuals who I admire as I grew up with the CYO.

Through the years, I have come to know firsthand how dedicated and hardworking the CYO board is. Board members constantly demonstrate their commitment to CYO and the youth who participate in CYO programs without fanfare and recognition.

In the last three years, the board has developed and implemented a strategic plan to guide the organization into the 21st century. Members of the board also provided oversight to the construction of a new site of our flagship project CYO Camp Rancho Framasa - a project which cost $100,000 and was critical to keep the camp open. The board is currently working on a comprehensive development plan for Camp Rancho Framasa which will define development objectives that will allow the camp to become a year-round facility.

The value of volunteers to an organization like the CYO can never be overestimated. CYO volunteers, whether they be members of the board of directors, coaches, or active parents or students, are truly the lifeblood of the organization. The CYO is proud to offer programs that so many adult volunteers can be involved with at their Catholic schools and parishes. Each year, over 6,000 adult volunteers give time and talent to assist the CYO in providing varied programs to young people. To each and every CYO volunteer, I say a very sincere Thank You!

My personal view of the Catholic Youth Organization is that it is a "beak" in progress." The work of serving the needs of youth will never be completed as new challenges and opportunities will continue to be forthcoming. These new challenges and opportunities will keep the CYO looking to the future with a sense of pride and renewed enthusiasm, ready to share its values with future generations of young people under the guidance of caring adult volunteers.

I am proud to be a member of the CYO family and thankful to have been able to give something back to this organization that has meant so much to me and my family through the years. The CYO truly impacts young lives in a positive way and will continue to do so for generations to come.

JOSEPH M. DEZELAN
CYO Board President

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Varied Programming for Youth

One of the strengths of the Catholic Youth Organization is its ability to offer a variety of programs for youth. As the largest youth serving agency in central Indiana, the CYO mission is widely known and supported. Nearly 10,000 young people each year participate in a wide variety of athletic, cultural and camping programs. Children participating in CYO programs come from all faiths and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Coaches Education Programs

Since the quality of leadership is the most important element in making participation in CYO programs a worthwhile experience, the CYO has conducted mandatory coaching education programs since 1980. These programs are intended to improve the quality of coaching in CYO and give volunteers the tools necessary to develop a positive coaching style.

The CYO conducts four 3-hour coaching education programs each year and although the exact course material may vary slightly from one class to another, the basic information presented in each session includes the following:

- Spirituality and philosophy of Catholic youth athletics.
- Developing a positive coaching philosophy.
- Psychology of coaching youth.
- The art of teaching sport skills.
- Application of sport psychology.
- First aid and liability.

This course is dedicated to the countless coaches who, by giving unselfishly of their time and talents, make it possible for youth to enjoy the benefits of athletic participation.

In 1996-97, 117 coaches participated in the CYO Coaches Education Program.

Leadership Development

One of the primary goals of CYO programs is leadership development. Developing youth leaders and educating adult volunteers places the CYO ahead of many organizations in the community that serve youth.

CYO programs are designed to be fun for the participants, however leadership development must be a priority. A child can benefit greatly from participation in CYO athletics. Athletics, well understood and practiced, contribute to the development of the whole person. Through athletics a child can:

- acquire an appreciation for an active lifestyle
- develop a positive self-concept
- learn to set goals and attain those goals
- learn how to work as part of a team
- develop social skills with other children and adults
- learn about managing success and disappointment
- learn about fair play and being a good sport
- learn about the joy of competition
- learn about the value of time
- learn respect for others

If these principles are taught well and lived out, CYO athletics help to develop youth leaders as well as healthy and happy children.

The Church And The Value of Sports

"Sport, because of the wholesome elements it gives value to and erects, may become more and more a trial instrument for the moral and spiritual elevation of the human person and therefore contribute to the construction of an orderly, peaceful and hard-working society.

The Church approves and encourages sports seeing in it a form of gymnastics of the body and of the spirit, a training for social relations based on respect for others and for one's own person and an element of social cohesion which also furthers friendly relations."

Pope John Paul II
CYO Athletics

The athletic programs sponsored by the CYO give young people an opportunity, not only for recreation and physical activity, but also for contact with the church and dedicated Christian leaders such as the coach.

CYO athletics present an ideal setting for the formation of a real Christian community. Team members work together, enjoy victory, suffer defeat and frustration together, and with the proper Christian leadership, athletics can have a positive impact on the lives of the young participants.

One of the most important aspects of CYO athletic programs is that parental involvement and support is very strong. With parents acting as athletic directors, coaches, cheering leaders, concession stand workers, equipment managers and car pool drivers, CYO programs at the schools and parishes run smoothly and efficiently. Athletic programs bring families together for wholesome activities which benefit their youth.

Through participation in CYO athletics, youth are given the opportunity to represent their Catholic school or parish in competition with other Catholic schools or parish teams. Through this competition youth gain pride in their community identity and it allows them to see they are part of a bigger church with other children with different lifestyles and socioeconomic backgrounds.

CYO athletics also serve as an important social network for the young participants. By participating with their classmates, friends and fellow parishioners, relationships are formed that will last a lifetime.

Over the past few years CYO athletic programs, in particular, girls athletic programs have experienced tremendous growth. Most athletic programs begin for boys and girls in the fourth grade and continue through grade eight. There are also athletic programs for high school aged boys and girls on a more limited basis.

Participation in CYO athletics has also greatly increased from schools and parishes outside the Indianapolis metropolitan area. St. Michael, Greenfield St. Sussana, Plainfield St. Joseph, Shelbyville and St. Charles, Bloomington, routinely participate in CYO athletic programs. In addition, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Our Lady of Grace, St. Louis Dehon and Holy Spirit at Gretna, all parishes from Lafayette Diocesan regularly participate in CYO programs.

Additionally, teams not affiliated with Catholic schools or parishes participate in CYO athletic programs as well. Teams from Black Expo, Jewish Community Center, St. Luke Methodist and Meridian Street United Methodist participated with other CYO teams.

The CYO athletic programs serve to connect the lives and needs of young people in the community to build appropriate attitudes and skills for healthy physical, mental and social development. The opportunities stress positive self-esteem, creative expression, emotional well-being, team work, leadership and respect for others.

CYO Camping Programs

CYO Camp Rancho Fiamma nestled in the wooded hills of Brown County, Indiana, has served generations of young campers since 1946. The camp is truly a special place where children have slept away from home for the first time, roasted hot dogs and listened to fireside stories with their favorite counselors and made new and cherished friends. It is a place where children have come to enjoy the beauty of a hilly, wooded, majestic setting. Their fun-filled days at camp include the awesome view of a clear, starry night. CYO Camp is fun place but it is also much more.

Leaders in the child development field recognize the value of camp in providing for the acknowledged needs of children. The camp experience offers a nurturing environment away from distractions, and, in some cases, hostile environments and is designed to help children develop socially, emotionally, intellectually and morally.

In the structured environment of CYO camp campers live, play with and work with positive role models with time to listen, talk, relax and reflect. Through fun and challenging outdoor activities children learn to work together, make choices, take responsibility, develop creative skills and gain confidence, building independence and self-reliance, necessary steps on a youngster's path to a healthy, productive life.

CYO Camp enables children to be productive members of a community. This experience helps them to recognize that they are not powerless but can take initiative both at camp and, in time, in the larger community. Catholic camping makes a real difference in the lives of youth. CYO Camp Rancho Fiamma commits its resources to promoting the spiritual, emotional and physical development of youth through high quality programs and interactive learning in an outdoor setting. Each morning and evening the campers gather for scripture and chapel, which are times when campers have the opportunity to reflect on God's word and are challenged to follow it. Campers celebrate Eucharist together every Thursday afternoon.

In the continuous effort and commitment to expand the campers’ faith through prayer, service, reflection, dedication and sacrifice for others, CYO camp offers the St. John Bosco Bead Program. Upon the completion of goals in a certain growth area signified by various bead colors, the campers receive a colored bead which represents to that camper the achievement of the challenges that bead represents. The bead program also challenges each camper to apply what they have learned long after their stay at camp. Each summer campers can return with their necklace to earn another bead.

For the oldest campers, CYO camp offers FLASH, which is an acronym for Faith, Love and Sharing Hour. Each night the group gathers in the camp chapel with CYO camp staff to reflect on scripture and to share their own faith experiences.

Over the last six years, CYO camp has enjoyed significant increases in camper enrollment. This past summer almost 1,900 campers attended CYO Camp Rancho Fiamma. According to the American Camping Association, CYO camp has an unusually high return rate for campers.
Overall, the return rate of campers in Rancho Fronmusa is 54.4% compared to 40-50% for similar summer residential camps throughout the United States.

There is good reason for this high rate of return. Simply stated, CYO camp offers something for everyone through varied and exciting camping programs. CYO Camp offers 15 different camping programs for youth ages 7-17 years. These programs include:

- Traditional Summer Camping (Ages 7-15)
- Safariax Camping (Ages 7-10)
- Teen T.E.A.M. Challenge Weekend (High School Junior/Senior)
- Family Camping (All ages)
- Fall Weekend (Ages 7-15)
- Holiday Lock-in Overnighter (Ages 10-15)
- Enthea Service Camp (Ages 15-17)
- Mustang Horse Camp (Ages 13-15)
- St. Francis of Assisi Environmental Camp (Ages 12-15)
- Counselor-in-Training (Campers entering 10-12 grade)
- Adventurer Camp (Ages 12-15)
- Adventurer Plus East Trip (Ages 15-17)
- Adventurer Plus West Trip (Ages 15-17)
- Bike Trip (Ages 12-15)
- Canoe Trip (Ages 12-15)

One of the camp's most unique programs which sets it apart from other camping facilities is the Inclusion Program. This program makes it possible for children with special needs and disabilities to be included in regular CYO camping programs. The Inclusion Program at CYO Camp Rancho Fronmusa creates an opportunity for children with disabilities to interact with all their peers, not just peers with disabilities. It also creates awareness in youth that do not have disabilities to create sensitivity and positive feelings towards children with different abilities.

The goal of the Inclusion Program is to provide for children both with and without disabilities, the opportunities to learn and share in a group learning experience. This past summer, 17 children with developmental disabilities participated in CYO Camp's residential camping program. Each special camper had the opportunity to experience inclusive group living, community service, recreation and faith development.

One highlight of the Inclusion Program this past summer centers around a child with autism. This particular teen camper attended camp for one week and returned to camp later in the summer to participate in the camp's counselor-in-training program. This camper excelled and truly benefited from the inclusive program.

CYO Camp Rancho Fronmusa is much more than a summer residential camp. It is truly a year-round facility and is being used by many groups throughout the Archdiocese of Indianapolis for outdoor education, retreat getaways and challenge course participation.

The staff at CYO Camp encourages school groups, church groups, retreat groups and other organizations to utilize the camp's facilities and services. A group can provide its own program or the camp staff will work with a group to create a unique program for them.

CYO Camp Rancho Fronmusa serves to teach youth how to cooperate with each other to achieve a common goal, appreciate the gifts and talents of others and learn about themselves. CYO Camp offers experiences that will achieve these goals and stay with young campers throughout their lives. Catholic camping does make a difference and CYO Camp Rancho Fronmusa brings it to life.

CYO Cultural Programs

The Catholic Youth Organization is the business of sponsoring and implementing youth programs which are wholesome, fun, challenging and educational in nature. With this in mind, the CYO is proud to offer cultural programs which provide young people with the opportunity to display and share their God-given talents with others in an educational atmosphere.

CYO cultural programs such as the music contest, science fair, chess competition and one act play festival provide an extracurricular forum for students to demonstrate skills and interest of a cultural nature, thus better integrating the learning experience of the participants.

CYO cultural programs not only recognize the outstanding achievements of youth in the cultural field, they provide parents the opportunity to work with their children in preparation for the activity.

CYO MUSIC CONTEST

In conjunction with Bishop Chatard High School and Marian College, the CYO was proud to offer the 39th Annual Music Contest which attracted 960 students last year from throughout the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. Competition for this one day contest is conducted in piano, instrumental and vocal divisions. The piano competition featured 127 contestants and the instrumental and vocal divisions combined featured 644 contestants. From this student total, 73% of the participants were Catholic and 27% were non-Catholic.

The CYO Music Contest held each February at Bishop Chatard High School is the only music contest in central Indiana other than the Indiana State Music Association contest. It is interesting to note that many of the students entered into the contest are entered through private music teachers and public schools as the competition is seen as a fun and challenging.

Following the contest, the top performers in each division were invited to Marian College for the Honors Music Recital.
CYO SCIENCE FAIR

The CYO Science Fair is open to students in the seventh and eighth grades from throughout the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. Students may enter exhibits in categories of physical and biological science.

Science expands the limits of the mind and the CYO Science Fair is a program which children can develop an appreciation for the sciences by developing and proving a hypothesis through a proven scientific method. It is a program where teachers and parents alike get involved with the children to promote the sciences in their school.

Following completion of the projects, the students must present and explain their projects to adult professionals working in the sciences, answering in-depth and detailed questions about the projects. The judges from the Central Indiana area are asked to judge each project on creativity, scientific value, the students' knowledge and development and the neatness and organization of the exhibit.

This past year 19 parishes and 115 students participated in the CYO Archdiocesan Science Fair. It should be noted that nearly 1000 students participated in science fairs at their own schools prior to the CYO fair.

ONE ACT PLAYS FESTIVAL

The One Act Plays Festival is a CYO tradition that dates back to the 1950's and has remained a vital part of the CYO cultural programming. The program which features youth groups performing one act plays on stage in front of a live audience provides young people the opportunity to increase their self-confidence, speaking skills and acting abilities in a challenging and fun atmosphere.

High school and junior high groups may enter plays in either drama or comedy divisions and volunteer judges rate the plays and present awards in the following categories: Best costume and makeup, best direction, best actor and actress, best actor and actress runner-up and best play.

CYO CHESS PROGRAM

The CYO introduced a new cultural activity to the CYO calendar this past year. The CYO chess program featured academic competition between schools over a five week league season with a post season tournament to conclude the program. During the inaugural season eight schools entered 13 teams into the CYO Chess Program. Almost 200 youth participated.

The chess competition is based on team play with each team consisting of four players, with boys and girls competing together. Competitors were divided into three separate age categories, 3rd grade and under, 6th grade and under and 8th grade and under.
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