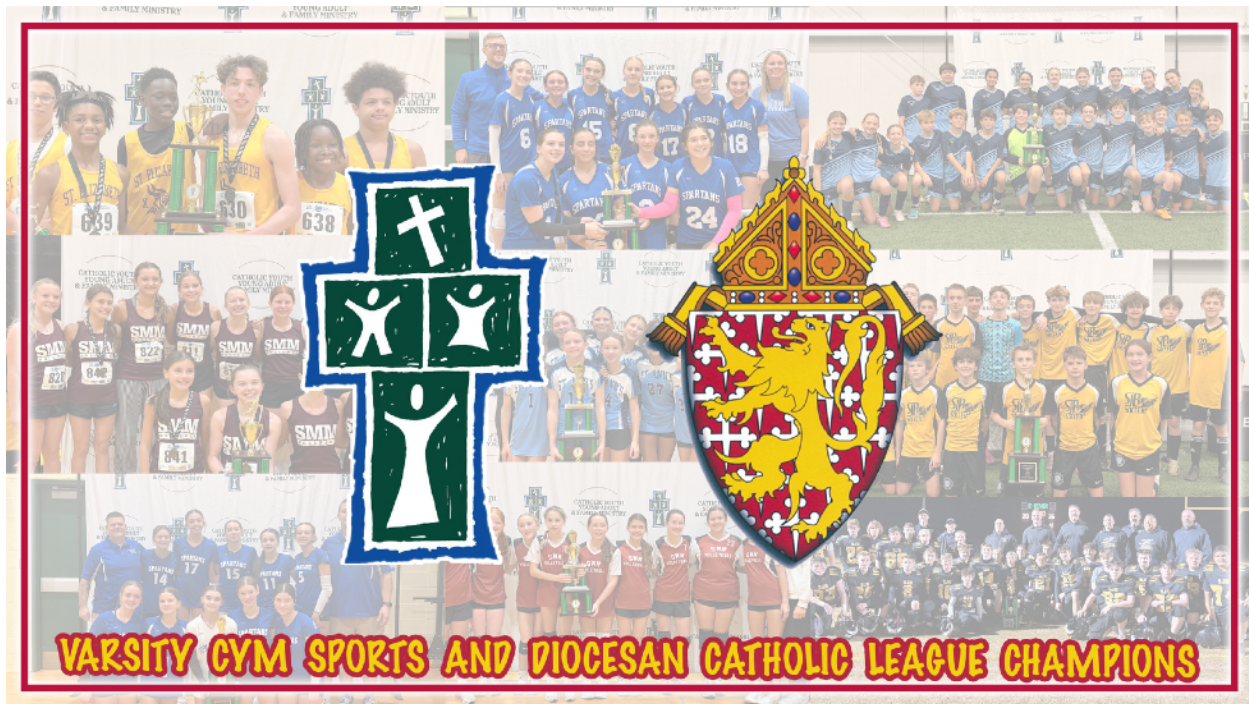




PRESS RELEASE: CYM Sports Concludes 2025 Fall Season and Continues Growth

WILMINGTON, DE - The Office for Catholic Youth, Young Adult & Family Ministry and CYM Sports program ended their fall campaign for the 2025-2026 sports season earlier this month.

More than 1700 youth participants from across 15 parishes and schools participated in football, soccer, cross country, and volleyball for the fall time, seeing over 500 scheduled competition events.

The fall season also saw 525 volunteer coaches step-in, an increase of 10% from 477 just 12 months prior.

“It has been an incredible blessing to see the reach of CYM Sports as one of the largest active ministries for young people in the Diocese of Wilmington. We have seen an increase in engagement and communication at all levels, as well as a strong drive to increase the presence of Catholic values in all of our programs,” said Dan Pin, Director of Catholic Youth, Young Adult & Family Ministry. Pin continues, “We hope that our collaboration with schools and parishes continues to bring young people to an authentic encounter with Jesus Christ through the ministry of athletics. As the Church draws nearer to the conclusion of the Jubilee Year of Hope, the great potential of Catholic youth sports will carry that light forward on the tracks, fields, and courts of the Diocese of Wilmington.”

Ministry through athletics in the Diocese has seen an uptick in growth over recent years. During the 1970s and 1980s, the CYM Sports program (then known as CYO Wilmington) bolstered an impressive 26 parishes and 4900 participants. Despite a decrease in local parishes and

schools chartered, the modern program has seen an 8.4% growth since 2018, and is serving 4,500 youth in the Diocese of Wilmington community.

“We are in a position to expand our reach to our parishes, schools and community (through ministry in athletics) and provide an opportunity year-after-year to promote our mission,” said Don Tees, CYM Sports Coordinator. Tees continues, “This season saw changes to help promote that mission and provide necessary logistical support for a growing athletics program. While we still face challenges in an ever-changing youth and sports environment, the feedback of positive change reminds us that our faith journey and outreach is continuing to impact our community by the thousands. Our number one objective is always to provide a great opportunity for our youngsters, and finding a relationship with our Lord.”

With the season completed, final end-of-season meetings with coaches are set to wrap-up the season on November 18th-20th. A survey is additionally being prepared for parents to provide feedback for the first-time in recent years. Transparency, when possible, has been an increased goal for the program to help better understand the communities thoughts and review the direction CYM Sports programming is heading. Minutes of those meetings can be found at www.cymsports.com.

CHAMPIONSHIP SUMMARIES



In football, all roads went through St. Mark's High School this postseason, as four teams went on their quest to hoist the title. On Sunday, November 9th, #1-seed St. John the Beloved (5-1) took to the gridiron against #2-seed Holy Angels Paris & School (4-2). After a back-forth game over the first three quarters, fog fell on the Spartans home stadium, and through that fog, the Eagles soared ahead. The 36-20 victory for St. John the Beloved ended a 17-year championship drought, last lifting the varsity football trophy in 2008.



In soccer, the CYM Sports Co-ed program saw two classics occur. Hosted for the first time at the Chase Turf Fields on Saturday, November 1st, the C-Division Championship saw #1-seed St. Ann's (7-1-0) kick-off against #2-seed Christ the Teacher (6-2). An early goal by St. Ann's placed the Mustangs on the board, but was almost erased in the final seconds on two excellent opportunities by Christ the Teacher. A final two shots in the dying efforts by Christ the Teacher hit off the woodwork and just over the net as time expired, and seeing the Mustangs hold on to the 1-0 victory.

In the Diocesan Catholic League, the #2-seed St. John the Beloved (4-2-2) matched up against undefeated #1-seed Immaculate Heart of Mary (8-0). An early goal off a 20-yards free-kick from Nate Soloman of St. John the Beloved proved to be the difference, completing the upset for the Eagles and raising the Diocesan trophy.



In cross country, a beautiful Sunday, October 26th in Wilmington saw St. Elizabeth's Boys' and St. Mary Magdalen Girls' hoist the Diocesan Catholic League Championship. St. Elizabeths saw Wiley Blevins III, Dwayne Williams, Liam Good-Daniels, Kent Blair and Dante Albano all place in the top-15 for the boys. For St. Mary Magdalen, the combination of Casey Hamill, Vivienne Mooney, Cecilia Szczerba, Eliza DiSabatino, and Carolina Stewart proved to be enough to hoist the team trophy for the girls.



In volleyball, the 2025 season saw some changes from recent years within the third largest program offered in CYM Sports. A focus on divisional placement, competition, and placing emphasis on the CYM Volleyball brand was top priority for the office. With the elimination of Y-2 Division and the alignment of the Diocesan Catholic League, the CYM Sports Championships and Diocesan Catholic League Championship saw five team's match-up at host St. Mark's High School for the first time in nearly two decades, on Sunday November 2nd.

The O-Championship saw the #5-seed St. Mary Magdalen (5-4) upset the #2-seed St. Elizabeths (7-1) in two sets.

In the Y-Championship, #4-seed St. Anns (5-4) defeated #1-seed Mt. Aviat (7-2) in the semifinals, advancing and overcoming #3-seed Holy Angels (5-4) in a three set final.

The C-Championship saw a classic, between #5-seed Immaculate Heart of Mary (7-2) and #6-seed St. John the Beloved (4-6). During the season, Immaculate Heart of Mary moved up from the Y-Division in one of the final division swaps authorized by CYM Sports. (2025 fall season sees the end to mid-season division swaps by programs) For the Eagles of St. John the Beloved, they defeated #3-seed St. Elizabeths (7-2) in the first round, and #2-seed St. Mary Magdalen (7-2) in the semifinals to advance to the final. Ultimately, the cinderella story ended as the Eagles fell short in three sets, and Immaculate Heart of Mary coming out victorious.

The senior volleyball division offers a unique opportunity for high schoolers across the community to experience an organized league and championship experience in the fall. This year's senior championship saw #2-seed St. Mary Magdalen (6-4) defeat #1-seed St. Margaret of Scotland (8-1) in three sets.

The primetime slot for the evening at St. Mark's High School featured a Diocesan Catholic League showdown between undefeated #1-seed Immaculate Heart of Mary (9-0), and the #2-seed St. Anns (8-1). On October 4th midway through the season, the team's faced off with Immaculate Heart of Mary winning that meet-up, two sets to one. In the rematch, the Spartans did not allow the Mustangs the same opportunity, winning in just two sets and bringing home a second championship back to Immaculate Heart of Mary in volleyball.



SPORTSMANSHIP SUMMARY

In early 2025, the Office for Catholic Youth, Young Adult & Family Ministry established a Catholic Diocese of Wilmington Team Sportsmanship Award to highlight those teams that embody the mission and core values of the program. The recipients for the Fall, 2025 season were both in Co-ed soccer, honoring Holy Angels and Mount Aviat Academy.

In commenting, Coach Andrews of Mount Aviat highlighted the importance of the award: "Receiving the 2025 CDOW Team Sportsmanship Award is a great honor for our team as well as our school! It truly



reflects all of the core values that Mount Aviat Academy instills in its students, not only to be good student-athletes but to be good human beings by [Living Jesus] daily.” Coach Andrew continues: “Our student athletes are always told to offer up [No more or No Less than their very best] with every action that they perform. The sportsmanship and team camaraderie that our kids have shown this season truly exudes the essence the Catholic Faith. I would like to thank the CDOW, all MAA Coaches, parents and players for their commitment and efforts throughout this great season.”



Photos and videos of Fall Championship action can be found on the CYM Sports [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

CYM Sports programming now turns to winter sports and basketball season. Divisions and schedules are currently underway and participants can find out more about the athletics program at www.cdowcym.org and www.cymsports.com.