

June 2026

PRAYING WITH *the Holy Father*

Monthly Resource

for small group gatherings or classroom use



Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network

UNITED STATES

APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER

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June 2026

For the values of sports

Opening Prayer

- Begin with the Sign of the Cross
- Prayer: The Daily Offering



Good Father, I know you are with me. Here I am on this new day. Place my heart once more with the Heart of your Son Jesus, who gives himself for me and who comes to me in the Eucharist. May your Holy Spirit make me his friend and apostle, available for his mission of compassion.

I place in your hands my joys and hopes, my works and sufferings, everything that I am and have, in communion with my brothers and sisters of this Worldwide Prayer Network.

With Mary, I offer you my day for the mission of the Church and for the prayer intentions of the Pope and my Bishop for this month. Amen.

Introduce Intention

The Holy Father's June 2026 Intention

Let us pray that sports be an instrument of peace, encounter, and dialogue among cultures and nations, and that they promote values such as respect, solidarity, and personal growth.

The Pope Video

- If time allows, watch the Pope Video produced for this month.
- The video is available at <https://www.popesprayer.va/praywiththepope/>

Reflection

Jason Holt Exec. Director

Chaplain INDYCAR Ministry - indycarministry.org

Where the Checkered Flag Meets the Cross

There are 8.15 billion souls, and the Lord knows each one by name. He knows every fear, every dream, even every hair on their head.

Yet if we're honest, division is woven into our nature. From the very beginning, humanity has fractured along the lines of race, religion, and pride. A "me first" mentality has carved the world into competing camps, leaving chaos and strife in its wake.

And still, in his creativity, God has wired us for community. Then he gave us sports.

Sports become bridges. They draw strangers into a unified roar, collapse differences in a single moment of celebration, and remind us that we were made for something *together*. For followers of Jesus, this is more than entertainment. It is an opportunity. It is a mission.

In the world of INDYCAR Racing, our mission field, there is real chaos, real division, real heartache. Yet beneath all of it burns a shared passion for racing that no rivalry can extinguish. Week in and week out, we enter the track as missionaries, carrying the hope of Jesus into a culture that desperately needs it.

We pray with drivers before they strap in and accelerate toward 240 miles per hour. We stand with crews who change four tires in seven seconds, their hands constantly moving even as their hearts carry the sting of defeat. There is power in presence. God has opened the door. Racing is the meeting point, and his grace is what moves through it.

Now consider your seat in the stands. Whether it is an MLB stadium or a T-ball game on a Tuesday evening, what if you saw it not as a place of entertainment, but as your mission field? What if you became a bearer of the Kingdom right where you are?

The checkered flag waves. The crowd erupts. And somewhere in that roar, Jesus is already present.

Will you join him?

Sacred Scripture

- Philippians 4:13- "I have the strength for everything through him who empowers me"
- 1 Cor 9:24- "Do you not know that in a race all the runners compete, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it!"

Saint Connection

St. Pope John Paul II (1920- 2005)

- He was the first non-Italian pope in over 450 years, coming from Poland, and played a major role in inspiring resistance to communism in Eastern Europe.
- He was a strong advocate for human dignity and frequently spoke about the importance of culture, youth, and sports in building unity among people.
- Before becoming a priest, he was an athlete and loved outdoor activities like hiking, skiing, and soccer, which shaped his belief that sports can form character and bring people together.

Discussion Questions

- What does it mean to see yourself as a "missionary" in everyday environments like sports, school, or work?
- How can sports help form virtues like discipline, humility, and teamwork in a way that carries into the rest of life?
- The reflection says "there is power in presence." How can simply being present to others in sports settings become a way of sharing Christ?

Closing Prayer

- Prayer: Lord of life, we thank you for the gift of sport, for those who glorify you through the exercise of their bodies, for the friendships born on the field, and for the joy of playing as a team. You teach us that in life, as in the game, no one is saved alone. We need others to grow, to learn respect, to overcome our limits, and to celebrate together the victories we achieve. We ask that sport may always be a school of fraternity, not of empty rivalry, a space of encounter, not exclusion, and a path of peace, not violence. Lord Jesus, may every sport become a parable of life lived with you, working with joy and effort, living with humility in defeat and with gratitude in the victory you offer in your Resurrection. May your Spirit never be lacking in us, making us one team, united with you to build communion and fraternity in history. Amen.
- End with the Sign of the Cross