

Catholic Exchange and American Family Media

PRESENT

# CHAMPIONS OF FAITH

BASEBALL EDITION

## THE **BIG GAME**

A Special Retreat Experience for Fathers and Sons

**FATHER-SON**



**RETREAT**

For all the fathers and sons who like to 'have a catch' in the backyard or watch the game at the ballpark - this **day-long retreat** is the perfect summer event to bring families together. Generations of baseball fans and the church's faithful will come together to share this day of teamwork, prayer and fellowship to help build strong relationships between fathers and their sons.

*Champions of Faith: Baseball Edition* retreats are a simple way to celebrate the baseball season and unite the generations in a faithful, nurturing environment.

# THE BIG GAME

A Special Retreat Experience for Fathers and Sons

## Quick Overview of The Big Game.

*Champions of Faith: Baseball Edition* is a powerful film that showcases the faith of Major League Baseball's premiere players and coaches. We're invited to be participants in *The Big Game*. We're all playing for the Eternal League Pennant. We're all wanting to hit a Home Run. Life is busy and we often miss what it's all about. The specific purpose of this retreat is to help fathers and sons take a step back and reconnect. Our Owner and Manager, the Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus are inviting us to reconnect with them, in whom we discover who we are and what we are suppose to do.

Corresponding to the titles in *Champions of Faith: Baseball Edition*, below are some proposed theme-segments for you to choose from in developing your retreat. Read through them and select the ones that are most applicable, interesting and/or fit your timeline. There is not a lot of detail. We recommend that you share this with a few other men and your parish priest (etc.), and collectively pray about a day that would be most meaningful for you. The important thing is to set aside some meaningful time as fathers and sons to reflect, recreate, pray and rediscover God's plan for manhood.

**Invite fathers and sons to The Big Game.** Before scheduling, make sure to check various activity calendars to pick the best date. Include bulletin announcements, flyers, releases to your local media and, most importantly, make personal phone calls and send personal emails. Set a deadline for response. Persevere in your invitations. Ideally this will take place on a Saturday or Sunday, but could be an evening, or multiple-evening sessions. Encourage participants to bring balls, bats and gloves if the weather cooperates and if this is part of your design.

### Basic Checklist:

- » An indoor location of appropriate size, that is comfortable, with chairs, with some grounds outside to throw around a baseball
- » Television and DVD player
- » A copy of *Champions of Faith: Baseball Edition*
- » Nametags with some baseball motif—perhaps a baseball diamond
- » Boom box and some classic baseball music if available (organ)
- » Coffee, pop and water available, and peanuts and popcorn
- » Bible and Catechism of the Catholic Church
- » Enough “Questions and Challenges” cards, with corresponding “Commitments” on the other side, per segment (see *Round The Big Game Bases* section below) – one per father/son unit
- » Have lunch prepared, with people on hand to take care of logistics

## Make Time Stand Still – the Purpose of Retreat

(use in leader recruitment, promotion, or the retreat itself)

*“A child arrived just the other day,  
He came to the world in the usual way.  
But there were planes to catch, and bills to pay.  
He learned to walk while I was away.  
And he was talking ‘fore I knew it, and as he grew,  
He’d say, I’m gonna be like you, dad.  
You know I’m gonna be like you.”*

**Harry Chapin, “Cats in the Cradle”**

**It’s about time.** Most of us fathers can name some of our kids’ activities, but we fall short in really *knowing them*--- understanding what they’re going through, their hopes and dreams, their concerns and anxieties. Let’s face it. There will never be a perfect time. We’ll always be busy. Here is an invitation for us to see what’s most important and to make it happen. At the end of our lives we won’t regret the promotion we didn’t get, the boat we didn’t purchase, so much as we’ll regret the opportunity missed in relationships with our families.

**Retreat!** Through most of life we’re charging forward. It’s easy to lose sight of where we’re going. We easily become detached from God, ourselves and others. It’s time to get away from the demands of every day life to recover what’s most important. Retreat shouldn’t be a “once in awhile” thing. God gave us this command: “Remember the Sabbath Day, to keep it holy.” He designed us. He knows what makes us tick. This commandment has to do with us staying plugged-in to Him and those He’s given us to love. Without this weekly connection we lose our bearing.

**Fathers and Sons.** God has a particular role for men. As such, fathers and sons are connected in a particular way. While intimately united, Jesus constantly turned to His Father in Heaven, for strength, inspiration and guidance. In turn, Jesus became a certain “Father” to spiritual sons whom he empowered to continue the mission of fatherhood throughout the ages. Baseball is a great setting to help men fully discover who they are, to live out the identity and mission of manhood.