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MEDIA RELEASE

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Prayer resource supports faith on the sporting field

The National Centre for Evangelisation (NCE) has produced a new resource designed to help incorporate faith and prayer into the practice of sport at all levels.

Running to God: A Collection of Prayers for Sport features prayers written for and by athletes, officials, coaches, parents and spectators.

It also features short testimonies of faith from Australian athletes, including Olympians Chloe Esposito, Donna MacFarlane and Damien Schumann; Macarthur FC's (A-League) Tomislav Uskok and Wests Tigers' (NRL) Adam Doueih.

Numerous Australian Catholics involved in sport wrote prayers for the resource, including Fr Steve Ardill (Port Pirie), Jenny Brinkworth (Adelaide), Stephen Lawrence (Melbourne) and Fr Jackson Saunders (Sandhurst).

Developed over the past 18 months, the resource is part of a growing focus on sport within the Church, both nationally and globally.

In June last year, the Bishops Commission for Evangelisation, Laity and Ministry released an eight-page statement on sport and faith, titled ['Open the Way to Christ: Fostering a Pastoral Ministry of Sport'](#).

Archbishop Christopher Prowse, Chair of the Bishops Commission for Evangelisation, Laity and Ministry, said sporting communities were a growing mission field in Australia.

"Many people around the country are heavily involved in sport, including people of faith, who have a wonderful, rich opportunity to witness to the Gospel in their sporting communities," he said.

"It is our hope that this resource will provide those involved in sport with a simple and easy way to incorporate prayer into their sporting activities.

"By doing so, each individual will contribute to strengthening the dignity of their sporting communities, which in turn will lead to sport becoming a greater force for harmony and peace."

Donna MacFarlane, who represented Australia at both the Olympic and Commonwealth Games, said she hoped the new resource would be helpful for all those involved in sport.

“When I was at university and in the early stages of my athletics career, I read the testimonies of some accomplished overseas athletes who had a Christian faith,” she said. “Even though they weren't Catholic, it was so encouraging to know that I was not alone.

“This new resource goes much deeper. I hope that it can inspire and encourage everyone involved in sport: professional athletes, school students, local volunteers, and parents.

“Sport can be marked by extreme highs and lows. This resource reminds us to keep our focus on God because His love for us is constant and unconditional.”

Running to God: A Collection of Prayers for Sport can be viewed [online](#) or downloaded from [Google Play](#) free of charge.