



Current Issues in Prayer

June 2026

Welcome! The Pope invites people of good will to come together and 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.**



Getting started:

I slowly become aware of my body and feel the tension ebb away. I read the story.



Short story:

Nour is a Palestinian girl who plays basketball with a local team. She is passionate about basketball and has recently started coaching a group of younger children, providing them with a safe space amongst the turmoil in Palestine, in which they can practice sports and rest mentally from the insecurities and tension of living in a warzone. Her friend, Fatima, is running a similar programme in football. The two girls have grown in self confidence since they started practicing sports, and now they are developing leadership skills whilst sharing their passion with younger children.



Nour wasn't always like this. Her family is very conservative, her parents expected her to limit her activities to those they considered as suitable for a girl. At first her parents were shocked when Nour announced that she had started playing basketball in a programme run by the organisation *Palestine: Sports for Life*. The leaders in the programme eventually managed to convince Nour's parents to allow her to participate. Gradually, they started seeing their daughter become more outgoing and happier. They couldn't have been prouder when Nour's team won the national championship. Nour's most significant moment, however, came when *Palestine: Sports for Life* organised a match with an Israeli team. Nour met Israeli girls on an equal basis for the first time in her life, and as she conversed with them, she realised that their dreams and expectations weren't so different from her own. Despite the war, she still manages to communicate online with a couple of them. They dream of a time when they can practise basketball together in peace.



Time to reflect:

How can sports be an instrument of peace in my country?



Let us pray:

Lord, we pray that sports is freed from over commercialism, and that all nations rediscover the value of encounter through sports and use it as a means of promoting peace. Transform the strength and endurance of all athletes into strength of character, and their competitiveness into a quest for excellence and a joyful celebration of achievement.



Inspiration:

Sport has the power to change the world.

Nelson Mandela



Hands on:

This month I will seek to encounter people from a different background to mine through playing sports or as a spectator.

If I can access it, I watch and reflect on the first episode of the series This is Football <https://www.amazon.com/This-is-Football-Season-1/dp/B086HVDZKX>