

Press Release

July 5, 2006

The Catholic Commission for Social Justice joins with the rest of the national community in celebrating the successes of the Soca Warriors at the World Cup Finals in Germany in June 2006.

The Commission wishes to highlight the important lessons that the entire nation can learn from this wonderful experience:

Belief in God along with your God-given abilities and talents is a sure foundation for success in every venture. This was clearly demonstrated by the players who always prayed together before every match.

Sport is a valuable vehicle for the development and enhancement of individuals and their well-being in harmony with the ideal of bringing about friendly relations between nations and cultures. As Father Lixey of the Pontifical Council for the Laity said in an interview on June 20, 2006:

“The World Cup is a school of humanity, given that many countries agree to engage in an activity that respects precise norms and seeks constant improvement in an atmosphere of healthy competitiveness.”

The dedication and commitment of the entire team, including the technical staff, demonstrate the tremendous benefits that can be enjoyed by anyone who is prepared to make the necessary sacrifices and put in the necessary hard work to achieve success. In pursuit of excellence, the principles of fairness, ethical conduct and justice must always be kept uppermost in our minds. The Soca Warriors, both on and off the field, have personified the highest ideals of international sporting competition. Nation-building requires us to be aware of but not incapacitated by distinctions of race, colour, class or political affiliations, in pursuit of the highest good of the country. The unity of all Trinbagonians, both at home and abroad has demonstrated that these potentially divisive distinctions can be overcome in a positive manner, as we all rallied together in enthusiastic support of the Soca Warriors. Sportsmen have a vital responsibility to become a testimony to young people and children, who consider them their models of inspiration and aspiration. The Soca Warriors have demonstrated their appreciation of this responsibility and have made us all very proud by the manner in which they have competed and accepted their collective disappointment. As Pope John Paul II said on the occasion of the blessing of the Olympic Stadium before the 1990 World Cup:

“Sportsmen all over the world are looking at you. Be conscious of your responsibility, not only to be champion in the stadium, but also the man who with his whole person must become the model for millions of young people who have need of leaders, not of idols. They have need of men who are able to communicate to them a taste for the arduous, a sense of discipline, the value of honesty and the joy of altruism. Your testimony, coherent

and generous, can stimulate them to face the problems of life with the same commitment and enthusiasm.”