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Chicago gang members shoot hoops, not guns, at St. Sabina

by Robert McClory

NCR Today

Fr. Michael Pflieger, pastor of St. Sabina Church on Chicago's South Side, invited rival gangs in the area to participate in a peace-themed basketball tournament in the church's gym Saturday. He even provided bus transportation so the gangs would not have to pass into enemy territory to attend.

The goal, he said, was to bring youth together on common ground and show them there is another way to live than through violence on the streets. The event proved a tremendous success, drew a standing-room crowd in the gym and was given extensive coverage in the local media.

Among the VIPs in attendance were Chicago Bull stars Derrick Rose, Joakim Noah and Taj Gibson. The tournament proceeded without incident, with the players sharing high fives and hugs as the games progressed and the spectators cheering loudly. Sponsors offered jobs to some of the players. Pflieger said the event was just the beginning of a new effort to change the mindset and perspectives of many young people.

Read the full story here.

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