

The Denver Broncos Meet the Heavenly Virtues  
(And a Few of the Deadly Sins)  
By Dennis Payton Knight

*Author's Note: If you are not into allegories, please skip to another chapter of this book. However, if you are into allegories but not into Broncos, you can download a special app that will automatically substitute, in the place of "Broncos," team names like Bears, Cubbies, Bruins, Yankees, Warriors, Royal Pains. Anything you want.*

In catechism class, Monsignor taught us sixth graders at St. Laurence School about the seven heavenly virtues: starting with faith, hope and charity, but also prudence, justice, temperance and courage. Then we got his lectures about their opposites: the seven deadly sins of pride, greed, lust, envy, wrath, sloth and gluttony. As I grew up, those lessons clarified themselves as I gained experience in many, if not all of them, and learned life could be safer and longer if I just took a seat in the bleachers and let the Denver Broncos do the living for me. Then I realized I could do it cheaper, too, if I watched from a sofa instead of paying for tickets. And the beauty of it is I arrived at this place in life by exercising for myself the virtues of faith, hope and courage. I tossed in prudence when I picked the couch. Unfortunately, in doing so, I may also have committed the vices of sloth, because of the sofa, and gluttony, if you count the chips and dip. (I do hope St. Peter exercises charity and puts those transgressions on the venial side of my sin ledger.)

From the view on my television screen, there is nothing like a team of cheerleaders hopping on the sidelines serving as our team's heavenly choir, instilling in our boys the winning virtues of faith and hope, justice and courage. Bouncing with them on their pretty shoulders (yes, Monsignor!) are sly little devils suggesting the Broncos also take a try at the sins of greed and wrath.

I should add right here an advisory about your average football stadium. Don't go there expecting to find any virtue called temperance.

Of all virtues, it is fitting that faith is listed first, because without it the Denver Broncos would be holding their services before empty pews in that cathedral we built for them over on Federal. It is faith that makes us Broncos Faithful. Halleluia! Praise Elway!

And how does the lovely virtue of charity play out in the metaphor of football? Well, if the other team throws an interception or gives us a fumble to fall on, that would be an act of charity. They are charitable givers when they miss tackles and field goals, too.

Now if our Broncos commit any of those things, why, that is idiocy, which I think is another cardinal sin, but they neglected to put in the Baltimore Catechism we used at St. Laurence. By the way, is throwing a bowl of chips at the TV considered an act of courage, or wrath?