

ADDENDUMS

KEEPING FAITH IN SPORTS

**Helping Athletes Glorify God
Sport at the Service of the Spirit**

Helping Athletes Glorify God...

Every time we step out onto the field, we need to think of Him.

We can't walk without Him. We can't play without Him. We can't even breathe without Him. Everything then should be for His glory.

Sounds good.

How do we do this? Sometimes when we compete, or coach, or even watch a competition, the last thing we are doing is glorifying God. Here are 9 ideas:

1. We can *start* by remembering God when we compete. Use a memory device - find an image during practice or games that reminds you of God every time you see it – cross bars, the goal, etc. This will help you remember to play for Him.
2. Write something on your shoes, tape, or wrist bands that inspires you, like your favorite Scripture quote. Again, this will help gather our focus back on Christ rather than ourselves.
3. Develop a sense of gratitude. God gave us the ability to walk, run, and compete. A grateful heart will be one that brings glory to God. Create the habit of thanking Him.
4. When we compete in a Christian manner (with gratitude, with love towards our teammates and opponents, with respect for those around us, etc.), we compete in a way that pleases God. This is another way we can glorify the Lord - by living in imitation of Him when we compete.
5. Don't be happy about a loss, but be at peace, trusting in the Lord and His plan and remembering that it is just a game.
6. Give 100% of yourself 100% of the time. Persevering in discipline is another way we can show Him glory. Again, He gave us the opportunity, so we should take FULL advantage of it.
7. To be fully humble, recognizing all your talents come from God. This honors Him and brings Him glory. A proud heart is not pleasing to God. Give Him praise and thanksgiving for your gifts.
8. Find a consistent time in competition to say a short prayer. At the free throw line, before a serve, etc. Developing this habit can be one of the easiest ways to keep God in our sport.
9. Seek to offer our sufferings in our sport to Jesus on the Cross. We can offer our lack of playing time, our injuries, our whatever to the suffering of Jesus. What a valuable opportunity. Perhaps even offer it for someone on our team, in our family, or a friend.

St. Ignatius used the Latin motto *Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam* (AMDG) - All For the Greater Glory of God. This should be the motto of every Christian athlete and coach...it is a great motto!

“Sport, properly directed, develops character, makes a man courageous, a generous loser, and a gracious victor; it refines the senses, gives intellectual penetration, and steels the will to endurance. It is not merely a physical development then. Sport, rightly understood, is an occupation of the whole man, and while perfecting the body as an instrument of the mind, it also makes the mind itself a more refined instrument for the search and communication of truth and helps man to achieve that end to which all others must be subservient, the service and praise of his Creator¹.”

- Pope Pius XII

Sport at the Service of the Spirit, July 29, 1945

