

Column020721

**Companions on the Journey**

**February 7, 2021**

**Dear Friends,**

Today is Super Bowl Sunday and to say we have come a long way since that day three years ago when it was finally the Eagles' turn to hoist the Lombardi Trophy. That was a truly wonderful day for Eagles' fans. Our first—and only—Super Bowl victory. As I thought fondly of that Sunday I was reminded of the column I wrote for that Sunday's Paduan for the morning of that Super Bowl Sunday. Do you remember what I said? I wrote it six days before the game was played. It is below.

*The Eagles won the Super Bowl today. The final score was 27-20. The fumble recovery for a touchdown by the Eagles' Brandon Graham was the turning point with the victory assured and once again delivered by the defense. Both teams played a very good game and there was a back and forth flow, highs and lows. Two heavy weights going at it with each side scoring points and being shut down. Each team scored 20 points by means of their offensive prowess. But the Eagles held the clincher and game decider because of the stellar play of the defense.*

*It has been (and it had been) a really long draught for the Eagles. The last time the Philadelphia Eagles were the Champions of the National Football League was 1960 when another great defense led by Hall-of-Fame two-way star, Chuck Bednarik carried the day. He was awesome. The Eagles were awesome enough. I remember that game. I was 13 years old. I remember thinking to myself how great this was and started thinking of how good it would feel for that to happen again. It has been a long wait.*

*That actually was before the Super Bowl even began. And so today's Super Bowl was the 52<sup>nd</sup> Super Bowl. Philly had only played in two prior and they lost both. Today they laid that ghost to rest. I, personally, am very happy for you see, I am now 70 years old and collecting Social Security and they had never won again. Fifty seven years is a really long draught. Really long. But it is over. AND—today begins a new era in Philadelphia Football where we will win more Super Bowls and we will lead all our hometown Sport's teams in a new resurgence.*

*So why am I confident that this is what is happening? When Our Lord said that the last shall be first and the first shall be last, other than the Cleveland Browns who has been more last than the Eagles. But that is in the past and we must ready ourselves for a new era in the lives of our major sports teams. There are different ways to be first. Let us not imitate the bragging and smug sneering that characterizes some of the past winners who love to swagger in your defeat. Let us take a different approach—one of gratitude for having played our best and having played fairly without trying to gain edge by means of subterfuge or spying or tweaking things to our own advantage. Let us set a standard of humility and appreciation giving God the glory and our fans the appreciation.*

*After all, we really are the City of Brotherly Love. Let the real love begin.*

Enjoy tonight's Super Bowl and let us dream again about what we hope will be.

**In the Peace of Christ,**

**Msgr. McHenry**