

Column021223

Companions on the Journey

February 12, 2023

Dear Friends,

Five years ago, I predicted that the Eagles, even though they were underdogs in the betting world, would win Super Bowl LII. And so they did. And we who lived through that wonderful and exciting game will never forget it. It was one of the most thrilling games ever.

Now here we are today, five years later. And although I am in no way related to Punxsutawney Phil in the arena of prognostication, I tell you this morning that we win this evening as well. It will be a very close game until it is not. Once again the decisive factor for the outcome is the play along our offensive and defensive lines. Our quarterback will be better protected than will the Chiefs' quarterback.

Patrick Maholmes was his usual irrepressible self, executing amazing plays both artistic and accurate. He was all of that until he reinjured his ankle early in the third quarter and was not able to take the field again. AT the time the score was tied 21-21. He was replaced by Chad Henne who had replaced him in the Chargers game when Maholmes first injured his ankle. Henne led his team on a 98-yard touchdown drive that secured their victory that day.

Today he was not so fortunate. For early in the fourth quarter, he too was sacked and was unable to continue to play. This led to the insertion of Shane Buechele the third-string quarterback. The Eagles defense did not allow him to be effective at all and there were no more scores for the Chiefs.

Meanwhile the Eagles scored a field goal at the end of the third quarter to take the lead. In the fourth quarter there was a seven minute and fifty-two second drive, mostly on the ground, to score a touchdown and put the game out of reach. Final Score, 31-21.

The Eagles have now been to the Super Bowl on four occasions. They have won twice and lost twice. But their future looks bright indeed. Allow me to conclude today's column with a quote from five years ago.

And so—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.

In the peace of Christ,

Msgr. McHenry