

If any NFL football team was asked at the beginning of a season, what is your mission for the year? What is your goal? The answer would be: be Super Bowl Champions. Professional football is a billion dollar industry, and all that money is geared towards completing the mission and reaching the goal of becoming champions.

The Kansas City Chiefs and the Tampa Bay Buccaneers are in position to complete their mission and reach their goal this year. Only one to those teams will actually complete their mission and reach their goal this Super Bowl.

Some fun facts: Of the top 10 most watched American television programs of all time, nine of them are Super Bowls ... More than 100 million people worldwide watch the Super Bowl every year... One 30-second commercial aired during the Super Bowl costs at least \$2,800,000... Over 700,000 footballs are produced annually for official NFL use and 72 of them are used for the Super Bowl... 8 million pounds of guacamole is consumed on Super Bowl Sunday... 14,500 tons of chips are eaten along with that guacamole... and Tom Brady holds the record of playing in ten Super Bowls, with six championships already.

The great American “liturgy”—the Super Bowl—will begin at 6:30pm this Sunday. We know what the mission and goal of each team are. What about our Catholic mission and goal? How about becoming Super Bowl Catholics?

Concerning the mission and goal of the Catholic Church with a Big C, I would point to Jesus’ words in Matthew 28:18-20:

“Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

This is, of course, the essence of our particular Small C church mission and goal as well.

The Catholic Church’s mission is to carry out and continue the work of Jesus Christ on earth. The mission consists of preaching and teaching, announcing and testifying, making disciples and bearing witness. The mission focuses on the initial and continuing verbal declaration of the gospel, the announcement of Christ's death and resurrection and the life found in him when we repent and believe. Our Catholic goal is to live life fully here on earth, and to live fully for eternity in heaven.

Also, keep in mind, our Catholic mission has infinitely more at stake than winning the Super Bowl. St. Paul reminds us: *“Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.”* 1 Corinthians 9:25

We will know what team—the Chiefs or Buccaneers—will complete their mission and achieve their goal when the game time runs out. We will know how well our Catholic mission is completed and whether we have reached our Catholic goal when our earthly time runs out. But keep in mind, to have the opportunity to be in the Super Bowl game, the team must play very well all year, so too, to complete our Catholic mission and reach our Catholic goal, we have to **live well** until our time is over.