Opinion



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Welcome to the Rome-centric version of your weekly international edition of the daily briefing, where we highlight the most recent news out of or about the Vatican.

First: This season, NCR is joining with our sister publications, Celebration and Global Sisters Report, to share Advent resources. Whether you're looking for Scripture study, some meditative reflections or an inspiring read, check out our Celebration of Advent page.

Pope Francis' commission on clergy sexual abuse is back in the news this week. **Suspended member Peter Saunders said Dec. 13 that he will resign** ahead of the expiration of his term of office Dec. 17. Another member has suggested **the commission itself will cease to exist, at least until 2018,** until Francis appoints new members or renews the current members' terms.

Italian Jesuit magazine La Civiltà Cattolica Dec. 14 released the text of Francis' talks with Jesuits during his recent trip to Myanmar and Bangladesh. The pontiff told his confreres the Catholic Church's missionary work in today's era **must include reaching out to countries in Europe that have closed their borders to migrants and refugees**, hoping to convince their people to open their hearts to those in need.

Francis also reveled in some of his trademark humor. Asked why he spends time with Jesuits in nearly every country he visits, he responded: "To not forget that I am a missionary and that I must convert sinners!"

The pope celebrated **the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe at the Vatican Dec. 12**, saying in his homily for the Mass that the yearly occasion shows Mary is close to those on the margins.

In a Dec. 8 assessment, **European financial watchdog Moneyval praised the Vatican** for its updated legislation against money laundering but said the effectiveness of the Vatican efforts could not be proven until its courts actually prosecuted someone for a crime.

Two more fun Vatican stories: **Two Raphael paintings unearthed at the Vatican after 500 years** and **Hold the phone: Vatican says Pope Francis doesn't use WhatsApp.**

And for something different: **NCR contributor Peter Feuerherd spoke to WNYC** Dec. 14 about the New York Archdiocese's new approach to abuse claims.

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