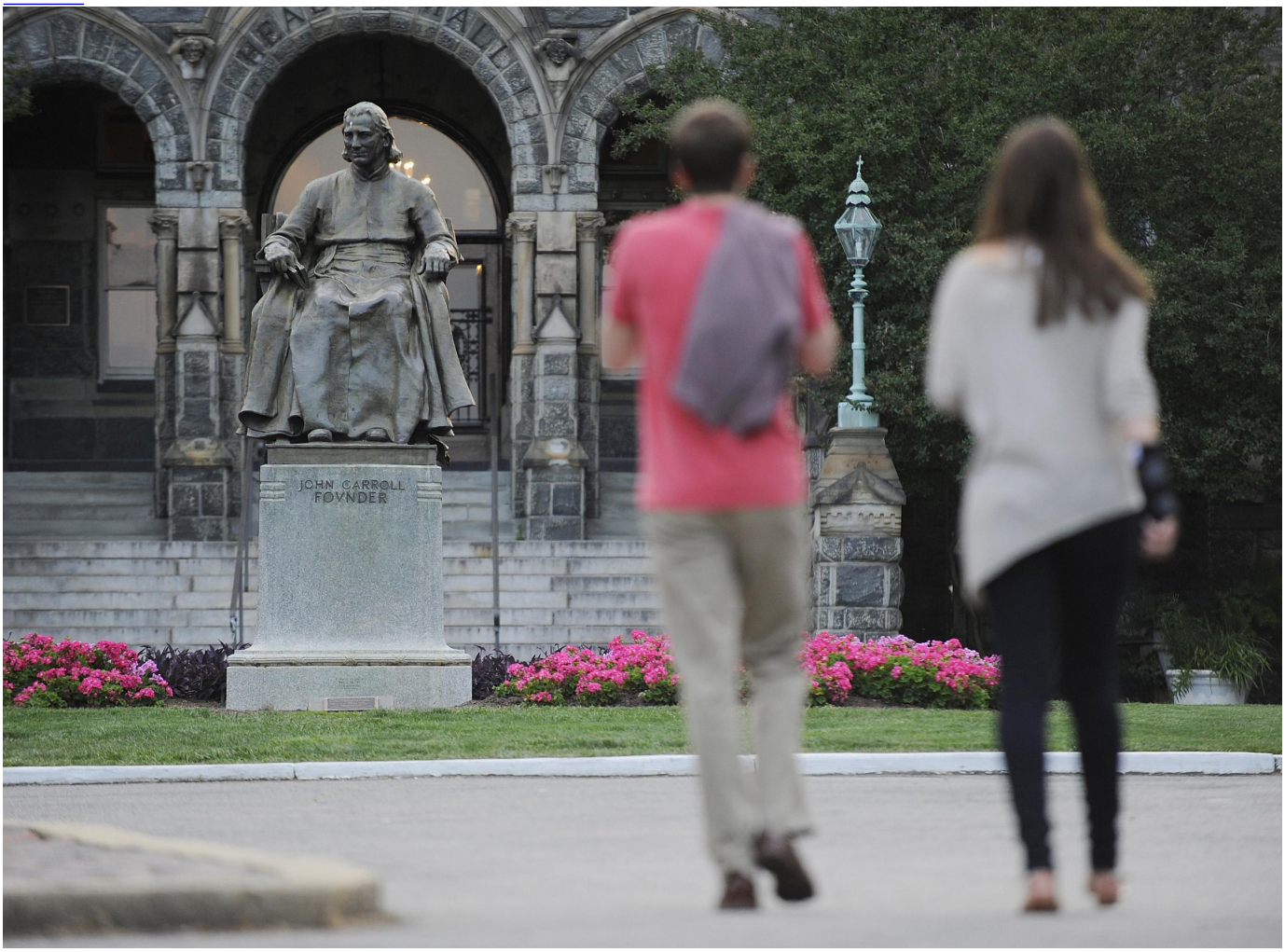
News



People walk on the campus of Georgetown University in Washington in this 2012 file photo. (CNS/Jonathan Ernst, Reuters)



by James Dearie

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VENTURA, Calif.—Thomas Aquinas College has announced that final exams will be postponed until after the Christmas break.

The campus was evacuated last week due to the Thomas Fire, which has burned hundreds of thousands of acres of California woodland in the last week and displaced nearly 100,000 people.

While the college appears to have survived unscathed and authorities have begun lifting evacuation orders in the area where the fire began, firefighters are still working hard to contain the fire before a forecasted wind change could redirect the fire toward the southwest, threatening Santa Barbara, along with tens of thousands of buildings and nearly a quarter million people, according to the Los Angeles Times.

WASHINGTON—Georgetown University is refusing to recognize a group of Ph.D. candidates as employees, or their right to collective bargaining.

The Ph.D. students are often solely responsible for their own classes, which takes a significant amount of time and effort, but are still considered "students" by the university, and are not allowed to unionize.

Georgetown's position is similar to ones taken by other private universities that insist graduate students should not be granted collective bargaining rights, despite an August 2016 ruling by the National Labor Relations Board to the contrary.

WORCESTER, Mass.—College of the Holy Cross is reconsidering its moniker and mascot of the "Crusaders," which has been in place since 1920, according to the college's website.

Many Catholic schools in recent years have changed or considered changing their athletic team names from "Crusader" in light of the term's potential to offend Muslims or seeming endorsement of Islamophobia.

The appropriateness of the moniker has been discussed since the college reconsidered the name of Mulledy Hall, a residence hall on campus named in honor of the college's first president, Jesuit Fr. Thomas Mulledy, who had kept and sold slaves during his time as president of Georgetown University. The building was ultimately renamed Brooks-Mulledy Hall, adding an homage to former president Jesuit Fr. John Brooks, who worked for diversity at the college.

For eight weeks this fall, a working group convened by college president Jesuit Fr. Philip Boroughs gathered input from members of the Holy Cross community regarding the name. The group will present their findings to Boroughs in January, and the board of trustees is expected to make its decision in a February meeting.

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MILWAUKEE—Marquette University will install a new grotto of the Blessed Virgin near St. Joan of Arc Chapel, which will be open by the beginning of next school year, according to a Dec. 8 press release by the university.

Mark Lovell, the university's president, says he was inspired to add the grotto after a recent project catalogued the sacred spaces already present on the campus.

“Throughout my life, Mary has been a steadying guide and a reminder that Jesus is God, but also human like every one of us. When we take time for reflection, Mary teaches us so much about simplicity, grace and strength,” Lovell said in the press release. “My hope is that this grotto will serve as a special and sacred place of devotion, inspiration and prayer for Marquette students, faculty, alumni and staff for decades to come.”

This story appears in the **Campus Notebook** feature series. View the full series.