Opinion



by Heidi Schlumpf

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The Trump administration's recognition of Honduras' incumbent right-wing president as the winner of an election riddled with allegations of fraud is concerning, say human rights activists, Latin American experts and even some members of Congress. The decision came a day after Honduras and only seven other countries in the United Nations supported the U.S.'s recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

Meanwhile, a Honduran doctor is appealing to U.S. citizens to help stem further bloodshed in the aftermath of what many Hondurans believe was a stolen presidential election.

In a case that is similar to one currently being considered by the U.S. Supreme Court, the Oregon Court of Appeals upheld a fine on two Christian bakers who refused to make a wedding cake for a lesbian couple. The bakers had argued that making the cake violated their rights of free expression as artists.

The Leadership Conference of Women Religious has named Sr. Carol Shinnick of the School Sisters of Notre Dame as interim executive director while it continues its search for an executive director.

ICYMI: Deportation was a big topic at the Detroit *encuentro* gathering for Latino Catholics. In fact, some people without legal documentation were afraid to travel outside their neighborhoods for the event. "The number of people being detained is through the roof," said one priest.

Natural disasters were one of 2017's big stories. Global Sisters Report followed up with religious women who have been assisting victims of Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria and found them still hard at work.

More "Year in Review": this time on war, peace and nuclear weapons, sexual harassment and the death penalty. In one of his "year in review" columns, Michael Sean Winters examines how religion and politics intersected in 2017. (View our whole "Year in Review" series here.)

At least 23 church workers worldwide were killed in 2017, most in robberies in Nigeria or Mexico.

Looking ahead to 2018, Pope Francis has foreign trips, a focus on the rights and needs of migrants and refugees and a Synod of Bishops dedicated to young people on his calendar. Cartoonist Pat Marrin has the pope declaring 2018 a year of hope.

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Opinion:

My 9-year-old wondered this last Christmas: Was there a doctor in the stable? Probably not, but Christine Schenk thinks there were likely "wise women" or midwives helping Mary with Jesus' birth.

Another vision of Nicholas Black Elk, whose sainthood cause was officially opened last fall, from The New Yorker. Curiously, his great-granddaughter says she doesn't care if he's made a saint or not.

It's a little late for Christmas giving, but I love this list of social justice books for kids, arranged by age, compiled by the National Network of State Teachers of the Year. A great resource for parents and teachers.

This inspirational quote in Global Sisters Report's Visual Life series is appropriate for Christmas and the darkness of this time of year.

A New Year's blessing as we approach the new year from Sr. Colleen Gibson.