

[Opinion](#)



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December 29, 2017

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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.