Opinion



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Did you watch the State of the Union address last night? Some religious reaction:

- NCR columnist Michael Sean Winters found much to dislike, especially the president's xenophobic attitudes toward immigration.
- Not surprisingly, evangelical Christians liked the speech, according to this collection of reaction, which also includes the Sisters of Mercy's support of family reunification on immigration.

Last night, Trump said "Americans are dreamers, too." But the story of a young woman terrified of being deported if the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program is ended is not something that most Americans experience.

In other immigration news, a report from the Catholic Legal Immigration Network Inc. (CLINIC) warns that ending temporary protected status for Syrians would send them back to a war zone. And, earlier this week, Catholics joined a protest on the one-year anniversary of Trump’s travel ban aimed at Muslim-majority counties and its subsequent updates.

The news that Pope Francis is sending a Vatican delegate to investigate cover-up of clergy sexual abuse is being praised by advocates for victims, but they are also

wondering what took so long. Earlier this week, a researcher at Rome's Center for Child Protection wondered "Is there hope for real change in the church?" after the pope's accusation of "calumny" against victims during his visit to Chile.

This fascinating interview with Stacie Taranto, author of *Kitchen Table Politics: Conservative Women and Family Values in New York*, highlights the role of white, suburban Catholic homemakers in the rise of "family values" rhetoric and policies in the Republican Party in the 1970s.

ICYMI: I've long known Robert Ellsberg as the talented editor and publisher at Orbis Books, but this profile tells the story of his involvement, as a 13-year-old, in helping his father, Daniel Ellsberg, to release the Pentagon Papers.

The members of the Emergency Religious Delegation to Honduras have delivered their report to the U.S. Embassy after a week of observations, according to a reporter traveling with the delegation.

The controversy behind the appointment of bishops in China has been exposed by a critic of Pope Francis' opening to the government. But the Vatican Press Office responded by insisting that the pope and his aides are united on their approach to the country.

Church leaders in Australia are worried that new laws aimed at curbing interference by foreign states could force bishops, priests and nuns to register as Vatican spies.

It's Catholic Schools Week. Learn about City Connects, an innovative program that helps connect students with services from community partners. Initially started in Boston public schools, it's now being adopted by some Catholic schools.

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Opinion:

Mark Silk applauds the U.S. bishops' recent amicus brief in support of organized labor and ends his column with this: "The tectonic plates are shifting at the Bishops Conference. And if Pope Francis lives long enough to appoint another few dozen

bishops, they’re going to shift a lot more."

January was Poverty Awareness Month, but it's not too late for people of faith to step up to fight for policies that will help poor people, says Jesuit Fr. Peter Gyves.

There are lots of advantages to intergenerational living among religious sisters, says Global Sisters Report columnist Christin Tomy.

Did you know NCR's editor is starting an online 'letters to the editor' post on Fridays? Submit one!

Listen up!

One of my favorite Catholic podcasts (after our own "NCR in Conversation," of course!) is "The Francis Effect," with Chicagoans David Dault and Franciscan Fr. Dan Horan, who discuss current events, both political, cultural and church-related. The show is back after a holiday hiatus, with a discussion of "Salvadoran Refugees, Fire, Fury, and Jerusalem." A new episode is due out today.