Opinion
News



by Michael Sean Winters

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Paul Kane at the Washington Post looks at the consequences of Rep. Joe Crowley's surprising defeat in the Democratic primary in New York. Crowley, chair of the Democratic caucus, a likely future Speaker of the House and a helluva good guy, had never really faced an election challenge and it showed. He was out hustled by a candidate, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortes, who had never before run for office and who promised ridiculous things like eliminating the Immigration and Customs Enforcement bureau. This article, however, shows what happens when a reporter relies overmuch on one source — in this case, Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-California) or someone close to her. He mentions three possible candidates to take Crowley's place in leadership but fails to mention the most obvious person — the vice chair of the caucus, Rep. Linda Sanchez (D-California), who would not be on the top of Pelosi's list.

Also in the Washington Post, Michelle Boorstein notes how many religious liberty groups were strangely silent on the Supreme Court's decision to uphold the travel ban on refugees from majority-Muslim countries. I disagreed with the court's logic: If you are not going to find the rationale for a president's actions in his own words,

where do you find it? And, it should be noted that groups like the Becket Fund do spend a lot of time and energy defending the rights of Muslims in this country. But, to hear Ralph Reed repeat the White House talking points about Islamic extremism is a bit much.

According to a new study, Washington, D.C. has the highest concentration of psychopaths in the country. Is anyone surprised? And, a distant second is the great state of Connecticut. No word on whether the study was conducted before or after I moved from the former to the latter. Politico has the story.

NCR has spent considerable time documenting the links between conservative Catholic organizations and rightwing political groups that depart from Catholic social teaching. I thought I was past the point of being surprised anymore, but I confess, this surprised me: The director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement at the Department of Health and Human Services, Scott Lloyd, a political appointee, came to the Trump administration from the Knights of Columbus. When Lloyd was considering the job, did any of his colleagues at the Knights point out the degree to which the administration was not exactly in line with church teaching?

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Emma Green, at the Atlantic, looks at the reactions to the Supreme Court's decision in *NIFLA* v. *Becerra*, which held crisis pregnancy centers do not have to alert their clients that the state might pay for their abortion. It was a win for the pro-life movement, to be sure, but even more a victory for the First Amendment. The government should not be able to suppress speech it doesn't like or force it. Regrettably, there are those on the left as well as on the right who are only too willing to try.

We'll close with an oldie but goodie that relates to President Donald Trump's win at the Supreme Court and his decision to double down on his anti-immigrant stance for the midterm elections.

[Michael Sean Winters covers the nexus of religion and politics for NCR.]

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