Opinion



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Breaking: Pope Francis has asked Chinese Catholics to trust the Vatican's judgment in signing an agreement with their government. The pope's letter to Chinese Catholics was released just as he returned from a three-day trip to the Baltics. See NCR's coverage of that trip here.

On the plane ride home, the pope initially refused to take questions not related to the trip, but later defended recent measures taken by the church to respond to clergy sexual abuse.

At yesterday's Georgetown event on the sex abuse crisis, organizer John Carr—a longtime advisor to many U.S. bishops—revealed that he had been sexually abused by priests while in a high school seminary. Carr urged Pope Francis to break his silence and act more decisively on the issue.

In other sex abuse news and opinion:

- Columnist Michael Sean Winters said you can tell if conservative Catholics are serious about clergy sex abuse if they mention the church leader who set the pattern for ignoring victims and moving around predator priests: St. John Paul II.

- A past president of the University of Portland was named in the Pennsylvania Grand Jury report. Holy Cross Br. Raphael Wilson, now 93, admitted to one of two charges of abusing boys. The school said it did not previously know about the abuse.

- The eight bishops of Pennsylvania have said they support the creation of an independent fund to compensate survivors of clergy sexual abuse.

El Salvadorans are anxiously awaiting the canonization of Archbishop Òscar Romero next month. But who will be among those representing the government in Rome? A close ally of the man who ordered the archbishop's assassination, Francisco Merino.

Protestant religious leaders in Chicago want an even stronger condemnation of the priest who burned a rainbow flag. Cardinal Blase Cupich had temporarily removed the priest.

ICYMI: NCR's full coverage of V Encuentro, which gathered more than 3,000 Latino Catholics for a national meeting outside Dallas last week.

Reviews in NCR: Martha Nussbaum's new book on fear, which has implications for today's political polarization; and a bounty of new films, plus one religiously-themed TV show, recommended by Sr. Rose Pacatte.

The former editor of Notre Dame Magazine, Walt Collins, has died at the age of 88. One of his classes inspired me to become a journalist. RIP.

On a lighter note, it's almost MLB playoff season. The organization Catholic Athletes for Christ provides chaplains to both Chicago teams. But which team won last Friday's "crosstown classic": the Cubs!

Stay tuned for an episode of the Francis Effect podcast to drop today, in which the hosts interview me about women's issues in the church.

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