Opinion



by Heidi Schlumpf

View Author Profile

Follow on Twitter at @heidischlumpf

Join the Conversation

Send your thoughts to *Letters to the Editor*. Learn more

October 19, 2018
Share on BlueskyShare on FacebookShare on TwitterEmail to a friendPrint

Breaking news: Archbishop Vigano, the former Vatican ambassador to the U.S. who alleged a widespread cover-up for ex-cardinal McCarrick, has issued his response to Cardinal Marc Ouellet. NCR Vatican correspondent says in the latest letter, Vigano also goes on a screed against alleged homosexuality in the priesthood.

NCR's editorial yesterday said that Ouellet's recent refutation of Vigano signals "the end of the pretense of unity with which the hierarchy in recent decades attempted to mask deep divisions in its ranks." Vigano's response only confirms this sad truth.

The big U.S. news yesterday was the launch of a federal probe into Catholic dioceses in Pennsylvania, this after the state-level investigation resulted in this summer's extensive grand jury report of widespread child sexual abuse.

CBS News reported that the U.S. attorney in Buffalo, New York, has also served the diocese there. The focus involves alleged trafficking of minors across state lines for the purpose of sex abuse.

Meanwhile, four survivors have filed a lawsuit against all six dioceses in Illinois, as well as the state's Catholic Conference, alleging cover-up and seeking the publication of all clergy sex offenders, including those who have died and those

belonging to religious orders. Story to come later this morning.

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin has withdrawn from an investment conference in the Saudi capital next week, after facing criticism over his plans to attend after the murder of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi. The slain journalist's editor at the Washington Post said she prays something good comes out of his death. "It will be hard for me to deal if we just kind of turn away and shrug and accept this as just politics, this is just the Middle East. I don't want to be that cynical."

John Gehring, Catholic program director at Faith in Public Life, is concerned about Christians who align themselves with leaders who make an idol of power (he's talking to you, Trump supporters) and urges all to follow Romero's example of challenging oligarchs.

The polarization in U.S. politics is not just about two extremes, but also about a vast "exhausted majority" in the middle, says Michael Sean Winters in his analysis of a new "Hidden Tribes" report, which has implications for the church. "Our country suffers from a deficit of solidarity," Winters concludes.

ICYMI: Our coverage in advance of the midterm elections began this week with a look at young Latino voters in Texas. More stories examining voters around the country to come.

At the synod on youth in Rome, the vice president of the umbrella organization representing the world's Catholic women religious said the group will continue to press for women religious to be granted a vote at the synod. See the interview with Sr. Sally Hodgdon at Global Sisters Report.

The 62-year-old Wisconsin man who created the first Little Free Library has died, just a few weeks after receiving a cancer diagnosis. In an interview before he died, Todd Bol said he was happy to have helped people read books and talk to their neighbors.

Catholic journalism also lost two dedicated servants recently: Mary Anne Castranio, executive editor of the Georgia Catholic Bulletin, died suddenly last week while in Washington D.C. for a meeting with Catholic Press Association and Catholic News Service colleagues. And Gary Morton, longtime editor and staff writer of The Dialog, newspaper of the Wilmington Diocese, died Sept. 29.

Advertisement