News



by James Dearie

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Editor's Note: *Welcome to NCR's college roundup, where every Friday we bring you the latest news in Catholic college and university life. Do you have news you would like to share? Email James Dearie at jdearie@ncronline.org.*

SOUTH ORANGE, N.J. — In a letter to the campus community, Seton Hall University interim president Mary Meehan noted recent verbal abuse of seminarians on campus and demanded that it end, NJ.com reported Oct. 17.

"Recently my office has been informed of several instances of foul language and incivility being aimed at members of our Immaculate Conception Seminary. This is unacceptable and cannot be tolerated," Meehan said in her letter.

The harassment comes as several prominent members of Catholic clergy find themselves embroiled in the church's sex abuse scandal, either for accusations of abuse or of covering it up.

Seton Hall itself has not gone untouched by the controversy. The former president of its board of trustees, former Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, was removed from active ministry by the Holy See in June, amid accusations that he abused both children and seminarians during his ecclesial career.

WASHINGTON — A report on Catholic campus ministry at United States colleges and universities found nearly nonexistent ministry at the nation’s community colleges, Catholic News Service Reported Oct. 11.

The report, "A National Study on Catholic Campus Ministry 2017," was issued Oct. 9 by the U.S. bishops' Secretariat on Catholic Education.

"The Department of Education reports there are more than 3,000 four-year colleges and universities in the United States. The Catholic Church has a pastoral presence at approximately 1 in 4 four-year institutions," the study said. "With the Department of Education data reporting 1,500 community colleges, the Catholic Church's pastoral presence drops to 1 in 60 for community colleges."

It added, "For growth, Catholic campus ministers need to reach far more campuses than they currently serve. Community colleges present a particularly urgent need."

The community college gap is a "significant absence," said Barbara Humphrey McCrabb, assistant director for higher education in the secretariat.

"Forty-eight percent of Hispanics who attend college do so at a community college. If we as church are arguing that, given the Fifth Encuentro ... that we want to better engage Latinos, campus ministry is a great way to do that, but we're not where they are," she said.

ST. CLOUD, Minn. — Former St. John's University head coach John Gagliardi, the winningest coach in college football history with nearly 500 victories, died Oct. 7 at the age of 91, the Star Tribune reported Oct. 8.

Gagliardi, who retired after the 2012 football season, led the Johnnies to two national championships in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics in 1963 and 1965, and later two more in the National Collegiate Athletic Association's Division III, in 1976 and 2003. In a career spanning 64 years, 60 of them at St. John's, he compiled a record of 489-138-11.

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PHILADELPHIA — Chestnut Hill College will host its seventh annual Harry Potter Academic Conference, "the country's only interdisciplinary academic symposium where faculty, students and community members present scholarly papers and works of art based on J.K. Rowling's world-renowned book series," the college announced in a press release Oct. 18.

"The nonprofit conference, held over the course of two days at the College, seeks to create a dialogue that goes beyond the books," the announcement says of the event, taking place Oct. 19-20. "Presentations and panel discussions cover numerous topics, including ethics, politics and the ways Harry Potter can be interpreted through and employed by multiple academic disciplines. The conference features presenters who span across multiple fields, such as science and philosophy, and range from Ph.Ds. to high school students."

The event will also feature a 10-team Quidditch tournament, to take place Oct. 20 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

LOS ANGELES — Loyola Marymount University has sold $90 million dollars in "green bonds" that will go toward financing new sustainable buildings on its campus, the university announced in an Oct. 15 press release.

The bonds, "financing instruments that earn the special green designation because their proceeds will be used for environmentally friendly or sustainable projects," were sold through the California Educational Facilities Authority, making the university the first to issue bonds through the authority. The new buildings will be environmentally-friendly dormitories, replacing older student housing on campus.

The university also says that the new development will "increase the number of students living on the main LMU campus, thus reducing its carbon footprint by cutting down the number of car trips taken by non-resident students commuting to and from campus."

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