Opinion



by Tracy Abeln

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Recommended for you today, from the NCR/GSR/EarthBeat copy desk:

During its two-century history, St. Mary's Seminary and University in Baltimore has stayed open during wars, pandemics and city riots. So in the face of COVID-19, the country's oldest seminary is preparing to do what it's always done each fall: welcome a cohort of new seminarians. Yet Fr. Phillip Brown, rector of St. Mary's, acknowledges that when this year's new seminarians arrive on Aug. 25, things as the seminary will not just be "business as usual." Read this report from NCR's national correspondent Christopher White about how leaders are dealing with teaching priests to have 'smell of the sheep' — while socially distanced.

On EarthBeat today: Did you know that when it comes to going solar, churches in Virginia are leading the way? Things that help include having the headquarters of Catholic Energy nearby and having the support of your diocese. Read this report from EarthBeat staff writer Brian Roewe.

In this commentary, Fr. Jeremy Leatherby and the politico-theological complex, columnist Michael Sean Winters says the excommunicated Sacramento priest's

misconduct is all of a piece, and that piece is all related to the anti-Francis craziness that has taken hold among some on the Catholic right.

NCR book review: Unlike many accounts of U.S. evangelicalism that trace the movement's roots to the Protestant Reformation or Puritan revival, Daniel Vaca begins with the mid-19th century, when evangelists such as D.L. Moody harnessed the power of the press to mass produce sermons and other devotional materials. Vaca follows the industry's development to the present day by telling the histories of evangelical publishing companies, whose leaders held on to what they believed was a divine mandate to evangelize as they navigated the twists and turns of U.S. commerce.

Of course they did! Congregations have pooled economic impact payments sisters have received from the U.S. government during the coronavirus pandemic, and they've used the funds to establish grants for vulnerable communities. Read about it on Global Sisters Report.

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