Opinion
News
A group of supporters of President Donald Trump, holding signs and flags, in Atlanta Sept. 5 (

A group of supporters of President Donald Trump, holding signs and flags, in Atlanta Sept. 5 (CNS/Reuters/Dustin Chambers)



by Michael Sean Winters

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In the The Washington Post, an employee alleges that Louis DeJoy, who now heads the U.S. Postal Service, fraudulently reimbursed employees he had pressured to make campaign contributions, burnishing his image as a fat cat fundraiser. This is the man we should trust handling the unusually large number of absentee ballots expected this year?

From NBCNews, polling indicates that the conventions did not alter the perceptions of most voters and, specifically, that President Donald Trump's effort to paint former Vice President Joe Biden as a reckless option is not selling. On the other hand, at The Washington Post, Jonathan Metzl thinks the Republican fear-mongering and disinformation campaigns about racial violence could work. It would be helpful to keep the microphone away from people who want to abolish the police for the next couple of months. And, at Newsweek, the nightmare scenario: Trump appears to win

on election night when the vote-in-person ballots are tallied, but is overtaken as the mail-in ballots are counted. If you thought the Supreme Court's handling of Florida's 2000 results was unseemly, this will make you lose sleep.

Sen. Martha McSally, from Arizona, should not be contemplating a down payment on any D.C. property: A new Fox News poll has her trailing astronaut Mark Kelly by 17 points. McSally narrowly lost her bid for Arizona's open seat in 2018 and was subsequently appointed to the Senate to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Sen. John McCain. It looks like Arizona will have two Democratic senators come January. The poll also shows Trump trailing Biden 40% to 49%.

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At La Croix, Massimo Faggioli looks at the state of the American church in light of the nation's political divisions and contrasts our experience with that of the church in Europe in its battle with fascism. Spoiler alert: Coddling authoritarians never works out well. Whenever you see Faggioli's byline, stop and read it. His phrase "Catholic thurifers of Trumpism" fills me with envy that I did not coin it.

At La Civilta Cattolica, Jesuit Fr. Antonio Spadaro writes about the governance of Pope Francis, and what motivates it. Fascinating read by someone who is one of the Holy Father's closest advisers. More on this tomorrow.

From Atlas Obscura, news that they have begun dismantling the great organ at the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris. Although the organ was not destroyed in the fire that caused unspeakable damage to the church, there was extensive damage from lead dust and from exposure. I am delighted that all the pipes survived, but when the rebuilding is complete, it will be a very different instrument from the one that was playing at Vespers when the fire began.

Need something uplifting? A quartet of singers, Kings Return, goes into a stairwell that happens to have some amazing acoustics, and they sing a modern setting of the ancient hymn "Ubi caritas." Such beautiful voices. Such beautiful music. You can close your eyes and imagine the heavenly angels have come to a stairwell near you! Classic-FM has the recording.

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

Editor's note: *Don't miss out on Michael Sean Winters' latest. Sign up and we'll let you know when he publishes new Distinctly Catholic columns.*