Opinion

by Mick Forgey

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Our team of copy editors reads and posts most of what you see on the websites for National Catholic Reporter, Global Sisters Report and EarthBeat. The Copy Desk Daily highlights recommended news and opinion articles that have crossed our desks on their way to you.

Back to school with books, masks and liability waivers: Parents of students returning in-person to schools in dioceses and archdioceses across the country have received coronavirus liability waivers. As Alexander Thompson reports, "The forms highlight the precarious balance Catholic schools are striking between returning to the classroom in-person and the ethical and legal consequences of doing so."

Preaching on the election? Mercy is where we start; the common good is what we aim for. For priests and others who want to comment about Catholic voting this fall and provide some guidance, James F. Keenan offers some resources from the Scriptures and the tradition on mercy, the common good and the capability for leadership.

From yesterday: **Church's solidarity with essential workers highlighted at virtual Labor Day Mass.** Bishop John Stowe of Lexington, Kentucky, spoke at a first ever virtual Labor Day Mass, in which top brass of the U.S. labor movement joined forces with Catholic leaders. Stowe told over 1,000 online attendees that Labor Day "calls us to deepened solidarity with those who have been labeled 'essential workers' but too often treated as expendable when it comes to the profit margin."

Award-winning photographer Paul Jeffrey examines the world through the lens of his camera and his faith with **Lens on Creation: Sowing seeds of life in the midst of war.** Amid the violence in Darfur, farmers like Adel Dut did what Jeremiah counseled centuries before, when hope grew dim in his world. She planted seeds.

Michael Sean Winters writes: Jesuit Fr. Antonio Spadaro published an essay at La Civiltà Cattolica on Sept. 5 examining the question "What kind of government does Francis exercise, and how do we interpret it in the light of these seven years?" As we await what will be the Holy Father's second encyclical (not counting *Lumen Fidei*, which was largely written by Francis' predecessor Pope Benedict XVI), and the promulgation of the long-awaited apostolic constitution reforming the Vatican curia, the question could scarcely be more important: **Spadaro describes Francis as a discerning pope, without preset program.**

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