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People are seen from above walking from rafts that had crossed the Rio Grande River toward

People are seen from above walking from rafts that had crossed the Rio Grande River toward Penitas, Texas, March 6, 2021. (CNS/ Reuters/Adrees Latif)



by Michael Sean Winters

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If you watch Fox News or read conservative media, you are being warned about a crisis at the border, and the situation is difficult. But the fault lies entirely, 100%, with the challenge of unravelling the cruel immigration policies of the Trump years. And the fear-mongering about immigrants bringing COVID-19 is obscene. This article at Buzzfeed looks at the case of one Honduran family and what they had to endure because of Trump's "Remain in Mexico" policy. They were tested for COVID-19 more times than I have been. More importantly, can anyone doubt that this man and his family will be a blessing to America having endured so much to get here?

It is not often I can highlight an article at The New Yorker for its insight into religion, but Michael Luo's look at how the history of Protestant Christianity in America disposed Evangelicalism to the kind of conspiracy theories found prominently in conservative political circles today is a must read. The article is littered with quotes

from two of my favorite scholars, Richard Hofstadter and Mark Noll. I wish Luo had included a more substantial parenthetical, calling attention to the many evangelical scholars like Noll who do not fit the depressing mold he outlines. But even they admit they are a minority. Is it any wonder young people turn away from faith if the evangelical obscurantists are the face of Christianity in the public square?

Last week, as the Holy Father began his trip to Iraq, Rachel Maddow set it up with a long segment on the life and death of Fr. Emil Kapaun, whose remains were found on Friday, 70 years after his death during the Korean War where he served as a chaplain. Maddow is not someone you find cheerleading for the Catholic Church most days, but what brought her to the verge of tears last Friday? Kapaun and Pope Francis. It is a stunning segment. It makes you wonder about what Catholics who criticize Francis choose not to see.

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In The New York Times, Jim Tankersley looks at the economic assumptions embedded in the COVID-19 stimulus bill that has now passed both houses of Congress. After 40 years of trickle-down economics, President Joe Biden's proposal "is a declaration of his economic policy — one that captures the principle Democrats and liberal economists have espoused over the past decade: that the best way to stoke faster economic growth is from the bottom up." Amen, amen. "Trickle up" is a misnomer. How about we call this "*Fratelli tutti* economics?"

At Politico, Nick Niedzwiadek looks at Sen. Joe Manchin's proposal to keep the filibuster to make it more difficult to use. Many people hear the word and conjure memories of Jimmy Stewart in "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington." Today, however, senators are not expected to stand and hold the floor until they drop. It is time to return to the old way, which could slow something down but not, ultimately, obstruct it.

At The Washington Post, E.J. Dionne Jr. congratulates Biden for lowering the temperatures in the culture wars and keeping his focus on fighting COVID-19 and rebuilding the economy. Dionne correctly notes how Biden includes racial disparities within economic discussions, making it harder for Republicans to blame white, rural Americans' economic difficulties on a racialized scapegoat. Let's hope Biden keeps it up. If next year's midterms are a referendum on helping struggling Americans

versus fussing about the decision to stop publishing six Dr. Seuss books no one has ever heard of, the Democrats might not lose as many seats as the party that controls the White House usually does.

At RealClear Politics, Chris Crawford provides a perfect example of the kinds of considerations we all need to make if we hope to retrieve a commitment to truthfulness in public life: Republicans are free to pursue their campaign for "election integrity," but such a campaign must begin with a repudiation of the "big lie" about the 2020 election lacking such integrity. Prominent conservative Catholic Ken Cuccinelli is leading one such campaign with funding from the Susan B. Anthony List, a Republican pro-life organization, and the American Principles Project, which was founded by conservative Catholic darling Robert P. George. And, as Crawford points out, Cuccinelli has so far failed the "big lie" test. Hard to promote integrity when you have none.

Good news from the BBC and Yorkshire: The refurbishment of the great organ at York Minster is complete, and the organ is be ready to welcome the faithful as COVID-19 restrictions are lifted. English organs have a distinctive sound, and I have never been able to find the right adjective(s) for it. French organs are rich and round. North German and Dutch baroque organs are crisp and assertive. I love English organs, not least because they seem better than their continental counterparts at accompanying hymns, but I still have not settled on a word or two that adequately describe the sound.