Opinion

News



Protesters in Hong Kong rally in support of Xinjiang Uighurs' human rights Dec. 22, 2019. (CNS/Reuters/Lucy Nicholson)



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EWTN's News Nightly, which claims it presents the news from a Catholic perspective, started a report on migration the other night with comments from Republican senators who were touring the border in an effort to paint the situation as a national security crisis. It is a humanitarian challenge and a political crisis. Interesting that EWTN would begin with anti-immigrant politicians. How is that consistent with "a Catholic perspective?"

How rapacious is modern capitalism? This story at Portside, by Loretta Graceffo, looks at how multinational fashion and apparel corporations exploited their workers during the pandemic, enforcing clauses that allowed them to cancel orders at any time, including for work already done. The workers fought back, and the companies have so far turned over $22 billion to the workers. This kind of story needs sustained attention because it shows precisely what is wrong with our modern global economy as well as many of our trade pacts.

In The Washington Post, a look at the Chinese government's intimidation and propaganda efforts to divert attention from their labor practices in the province of Xinjiang. We tend to get diverted by a million concerns, but we in the West should always remember that an open society, though flawed, is always, always better than a closed one.

Relatedly, at The New York Times, the Chinese government is only too happy to lead an emerging "alliance of autocracies." I am not sure that "autocracy" is the correct word — authoritarian is closer to the reality — but the issue is vital and will define the future for our children's children. I fear that the West may not be up for the fight, and I pray that I shall be proven wrong.

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From the Associated Press, Evanston, Illinois, is the first city in the U.S. to offer reparations to its Black citizens for discriminatory housing policies in the 20th century. The proponents of this measure are getting blowback from both those opposed to reparations in any form and those who argue the Evanston proposal is

insufficient. More on this complicated issue, about which our Catholic moral and intellectual tradition has much to say, soon.

I deplore the idea that simply because they are famous, actors are people whose opinions on anything other than their craft should be sought. I adore Meryl Streep in any role she plays, but I do not care what she thinks about politics and nor should you. What is worse? Actors running for office — and apparently Matthew McConaughey is thinking of doing just that. Actors learn how to manipulate the emotions of an audience. In my lifetime, two actors have been president and both were disasters: Ronald Reagan and Donald Trump. Politico shows why everyone should stay in their lane, by trying to figure out what kind of politician McConaughey would be based on the roles he has played.

I am mesmerized by these videos of the volcanic eruptions in Iceland posted at the Weather Channel. As a rule, I think drones are horrible things, and on balance they should be banned, but you need one to take these kinds of images and those images are mesmerizing.

Here is something to get you through what we all hope will be the waning days of the pandemic. From Trip Trivia, a look at some of the best virtual tours of the world's leading museums. Looking at Titian's "L'homme au gaunt" in the Louvre or the ancient sculpture "Laocoon and his sons" at the Vatican Museum on the screen is not the same as seeing them in person to be sure. Texture does not convey well through a screen. But, it is more edifying than watching "Karen Walker bloopers" on YouTube (which, I confess, are very addictive)!