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Morning Briefing

by Caitlin Hendel

NCR Today

The Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project has released results of a survey of how people feel about Pope Francis as he heads into his first anniversary a week from today. The results? "People overwhelming like the pope," Fr. Tom Reese says in his report on the Pew poll. "Eighty-five percent of Catholics and 60 percent of non-Catholics view the pope favorably, numbers that would make politicians green with envy. Among Catholics, Pope Francis' ratings are up there with those of Pope John Paul II, who had favorable ratings between 91 and 93 percent in 1987, 1990, and 1996."

Included in the Pew project was this report on U.S. Catholics "in their own words."

And, Pew Research Center's Journalism Project joined in, reporting on Francis' visibility, saying he "ranked among the top global newsmakers in major U.S.-based digital news outlets" as media interest in him started out high and kept climbing over year.

Many, many interpretations of what Pope Francis said in his interview with the Italian daily *Corriere della Sera* on same-sex couples and civil unions. The *Sydney Morning Herald* says Francis "hints at Catholic Church rethink" on the issue. This CNN blog said the pope suggested the church could support some civil unions, and included a statement later in the day from the Vatican saying the pope was speaking in "general terms." The full statement can be found here.

Speaking of same-sex marriage, check out this interactive map on changes in law across the U.S.

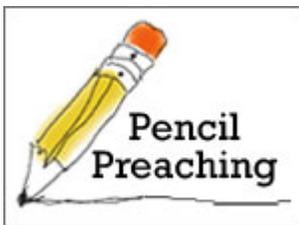
Francis on human trafficking: "The human person ought never to be sold or bought as if he or she were a commodity."

Archbishop Tutu wants an international investigation into human rights violations in Sri Lanka.

Iran's foreign minister says his country and Indonesia will discuss Australian policy on asylum seekers after the Feb. 17 death of an Iranian man at an Australian detention center.

Analysis: Facebook plan to regulate gun sales on its site may not be enough.

In one of his final poems, theologian Dom Sebastian Moore, who died last week at the age of 96, took shots at the revised liturgical translations.



Looking for a little inspiration to begin your day? *NCR's* sister publication,

Celebration, gives you two options, both based on the Scripture readings of the day:

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Pencil Preaching is a blog in which *Celebration* editor Pat Marrin combines Scripture and sketching to reflect on the Word.



Daily Bread is a series of short

reflections written by four authors who meet regularly to share the readings. Daily Bread is intended to help daily preachers and others who pray from the assigned Scriptures each day to orient themselves to the Living Word addressed to the church in the world. It's a great way to begin the day.

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