



by Teresa Malcolm

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Back in 1969, the Vatican held a conference to address atheism — "among the most serious matters of our time," said Pope Paul VI — and to hold a dialogue with nonbelievers. The idea is back: [\*\*Fifty years later, Catholic Church reckons again with unbelief\*\*](#). The 2019 conference, planned for May in Rome, will talk about a recent research project on "Understanding Unbelief."

[\*\*Women of Courage honoree Sr. Orla Treacy is a beacon of light in South Sudan\*\*](#), writes Callista Gingrich, ambassador to the Holy See. Gingrich nominated the Irish Loreto sister for the State Department award, which was given to 10 women from around the world in a ceremony yesterday in Washington, D.C. Stay tuned for GSR reporting from the event.

Sr. Susan Rose Francois began Lent this year without a Lenten intention. But something came to her while in prayer on Ash Wednesday, a focus on [\*\*finding beauty amid life's mess\*\*](#).

**The words of the Mass do matter**, and they often bring NCR contributor Amy Morris-Young to tears.

Coverage of the clerical sexual abuse crisis continues, and NCR readers have things to say: **Your thoughts on turning to the Pietà, Jason Berry's reporting**.

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