

## [Opinion](#)



by Tracy Abeln

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Do you know what UNANIMA International is? Before joining us, Ursuline Sr. Michele Morek, Global Sisters Report's current liaison to women religious in the United States (and coordinator of "The Life" series and sisters' columns) was coalition coordinator for UNANIMA: a coalition of Catholic congregations at the U.N. focused on concerns of women, children, migrants and the environment. Read about how the global problem of [homelessness and affordable housing will soon get more attention](#) at the United Nations.

May 24, Pope Francis appointed the first women consultants to the secretariat of the Synod of Bishops, three of them religious sisters. We have a column by one: [Xaviere Missionary Sr. Nathalie Becquart](#) (one of the seven sisters who took part in the Synod of Bishops on young people).

Eugene Cullen Kennedy, who died June 3, 2015, was one of the most prolific and insightful observers of the Catholic Church in the modern era. NCR has two pieces on the clergy culture and the sex abuse crisis that were part of a larger work underway when he died. The [manuscript](#), last worked on in January 2015, was shared with NCR by his widow, Sara Charles Kennedy.

Remembering Rachel Held Evans. [Her funeral was June 1.](#)

Some different news about Syria: ["The World between Empires: Art and Identity in the Ancient Middle East"](#) offers a potential historical interpretation of Jews, Christians and polytheists living in "peaceful pluralism" on sites like Dura-Europos. As they jostled to control lucrative and important Middle Eastern spice trade routes between 100 B.C. and A.D. 250, the Roman and Parthian (ancient Iranian) empires have earned Scylla- and-Charybdis-like reputations. So narrow was the room thought to be between them that other faith traditions and people in less-prominent locations have been brushed aside as mere footnotes to the great two.

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