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by NCR Staff

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Following are NCR reader responses to recent news articles, opinion columns and theological essays with letters that have been edited for length and clarity.

Priests in Palestine

My heartfelt thanks to Camillo Barone for his excellent article "Under siege, Catholic priests in war-torn Gaza and the West Bank care for the faithful" (ncronline.org, [Jan. 2, 2024](#)). I hope this article sets a new standard of reporting on Palestine for NCR in

2025.

JEFFREY JONES
Hamburg, New York



Pelosi right about China

Former Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi criticized the Vatican over its bishop appointments in China (ncronline.org, [Dec. 10, 2024](#)). Speaking to the National Catholic Reporter, she asked, “Why should the Chinese government be having a say in the appointment of bishops?” While Catholics may not all agree with Mrs. Pelosi’s political views, her criticism of the bishop appointments is not without merit.

As the editorial points out, Chinese Catholics have suffered persecution for decades in post-1949 China. Believers have been imprisoned, church buildings have been demolished and families have been devastated under the Chinese Communist Party’s crackdown on Christianity. At least one Catholic is speaking out against the Vatican’s longstanding courtship with Beijing.

BRIAN STUCKEY
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Catholic voter not real

In the editorial "The Catholic voter is NCR's Newsmaker of 2024", your staff makes a point that Catholics are not unlike the population at large and vote according to individual interests (ncronline.org, [Dec. 26, 2024](#)). However, the essay appears to define Catholics according to political identity which is the opposite, and I think the wrong view. The past election was one of groceries and gas more so than saving democracy or assuring individual agency. These factors, while important, don't rise to the level of the person's lived experience and their reactions to challenges we confront in our everyday lives.

I believe too many individuals, from pollsters to prelates, like to believe the majority of Catholics vote as a monolith and can thereby be influenced according to their demographic identity. Too many pollsters, from what we have seen in recent reviews about the election, prefer to categorize multiple demographics according to blocks. I do not believe people decide to vote according to their identity. I maintain we all vote according to our lived experiences and those are unique.

When the erroneous view is continually presented that a given group or demographic is expected to vote in a particular way it leads people to see themselves as outsiders or perhaps see themselves as reflective of expectations. In either case it demeans what individuals believe and negates personal experience. It might also lead them toward resentment of their peers since it appears others in their group do not share their views begging the question as to whether they have a common bond.

CHARLES A LE GUERN
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