

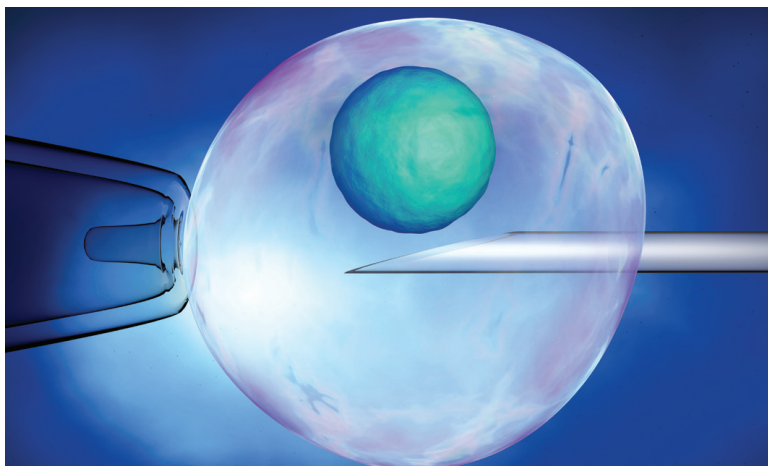


TWIN TRAGEDIES. Paris was the center of two attacks by Muslim extremists: On Jan. 7, brothers Saïd and Chérif Kouachi killed 11 people and wounded 11 others at the offices of the weekly underground newspaper *Charlie Hebdo*. On the evening of Nov. 13, three suicide bombers struck in St. Denis, followed by suicide bombings and mass shootings at cafés, restaurants and a music venue. In all, 130 people were killed. Yet the world was united in prayer. Above, a girl prays outside of Le Petit Cambodge restaurant the day after the November attack. Antoine Antoniol/Getty Images



'MIRACLE OF THE ORDINATION.' Residents of a small village outside Kathmandu, Nepal, were spared from the ravages of the April 25 earthquake by attending the ordination Mass of Jesuit Father Tek Raj Paudel, the village's only Christian. Father Paudel kneels before his parents during his Mass of ordination in the Nepalese village of Tarkerabari. Courtesy of the Society of Jesus/Sunny D'Costa

Lights in the Darkness



'THREE-PARENT' CHILDREN. Britain's House of Commons voted, 382-128, to become the first country in the world to legalize the creation of IVF babies with DNA from three people. The Catholic bishops of England and Wales said there were 'serious ethical objections' to the procedures and warned that this would be 'a further step in commodification of the human embryo and a failure to respect new, individual human lives.' Press Association via AP Images



IRISH INJUSTICE. Irish Minister for Justice and Equality Francis Fitzgerald (l) and Tanaiste (deputy prime minister) Joan Burton display the commencement order for Marriage Act 2015 on Nov. 10, following a popular vote earlier in the year that accepted the redefinition of marriage. Press Association via AP Images

2015 IN REVIEW

While Ireland was redefining marriage, Islamic fundamentalist groups expanded their reign of terror in Europe, the Middle East and Africa, and Great Britain's House of Commons okayed three-parent embryos for in vitro fertilization, there were glimpses of hope for the faithful around the world, as the Church stood strong. Pope Francis brought his message of hope and mercy to South America and Africa; prayer vigils were held across the globe for the victims of two terrorist attacks in Paris; martyr Archbishop Oscar Romero was beatified; and the pro-life movement in Europe continued to grow.



MARTYR FOR THE FAITH. Huge crowds filled the square in San Salvador, El Salvador, for the beatification ceremony for Archbishop Óscar Romero (1917-1298) in May. Blessed Romero was cut down by an assassin's bullet 35 years ago and declared a martyr for his faith this year by Pope Francis. AP photo/Moises Castillo

MODERN-DAY EXODUS.

Syrian refugees Wael Al-Awis (r), 31, his wife, Reem Haskour, 30, and their son, Ali Al-Awis, 6, visit the harbor in Hamburg, Germany, in October. Streams of refugees, who number in the thousands, fled the strife-torn Middle East to seek some semblance of normalcy in Europe, the United States and Canada.

Astrid Riecken/Getty Images



AFRICAN ELATION. Women and children rescued by Nigerian soldiers from Boko Haram extremists in the northeast of Nigeria arrive at the military office in Maiduguri in July. Nigerian troops rescued 178 people — 101 children, 67 women and 10 men — from Boko Haram in attacks that destroyed several camps of the Islamic extremists in the northeast part of the country. AP photo/Josy Ola file



DAMAGED BUT NOT BROKEN. A religious sister surveys the damage to the Church of the Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes after a June 18 arson attack on the shore of the Sea of Galilee in Tabgha, northern Israel. Israeli police arrested a number of suspects, believed to be Jewish extremists, for vandalizing one of the most popular stops for Christian pilgrims visiting the Holy Land. AP photo/Ariel Schalit, File



DEMOGRAPHIC WINTER. To address a rapidly aging and decreasing population and the economic consequences therein, China announced the end of its one-child policy in October, but human rights and Catholic critics warned that the announcement would not curtail the U.S. tax-supported regime of forced abortion, sterilization and contraception — or save the country from demographic ruin. Kevin Frayer/Getty Images



'ETERNAL MEMORY ...' Thousands of Lebanese of Armenian descent, holding banners and Armenian flags, honor the dead as they march to mark the 100th anniversary of the Armenian genocide at the hands of the Ottoman Turks, in Antelias, north of Beirut, Lebanon, in April. Historians estimate up to 1.5 million Armenians were killed. Turkey, however, denies the deaths constituted genocide, saying the toll has been inflated and that those killed were victims of civil war and unrest. AP photo/Bilal Hussein

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