



Photos by Manuel Orbeago/For the S.F. Chronicle  
Candy Villalobos, 17, holds her face during Mass this month at St. Peter's Catholic Church in the Mission District. Mass attendance dropped by up to 45% earlier this year in immigrant-dominated churches in the Mission.

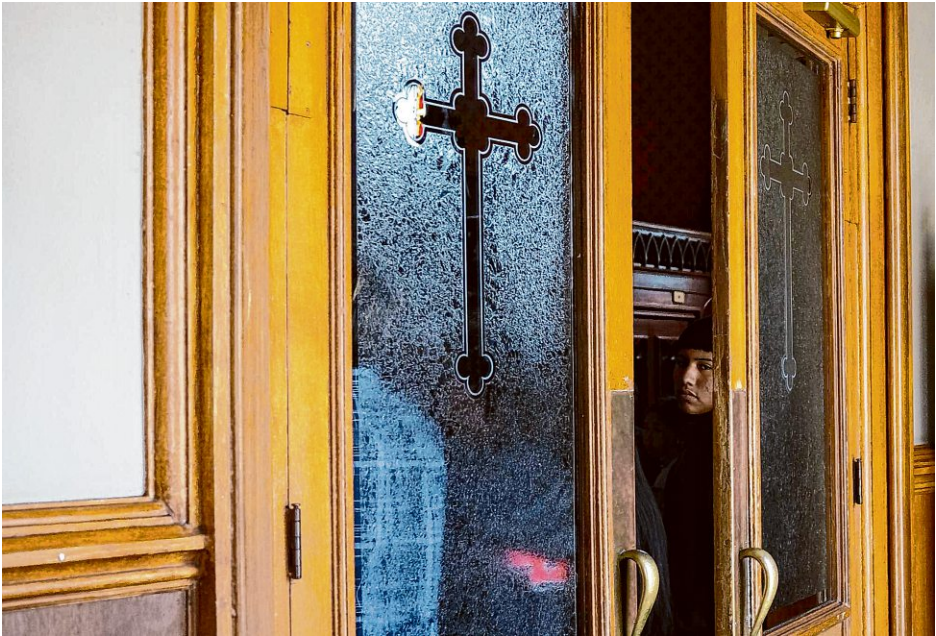
# Triumph and terror for S.F. Catholics

Rise in baptisms, class enrollment offset by migrant crackdown

JOE GAROFOLI  
IT'S ALL POLITICAL

Catholics in San Francisco are reacting in different ways to the chaos of the past four months. This year, the 450,000-member diocese has recorded an increase in baptisms and enrollment in "faith formation" classes, a sign, along with young families flocking to traditional Latin Masses, of people seeking the grounding that religion can provide in uncertain times.

The source of the nation's uncertainty is Donald Trump, a political godsend for ardent Catholics who appointed three Supreme Court justices delivering their top political priority — an end to the national right to an abortion. But Trump's policies also have terrified the newest Christians to come to America: immigrants. Like generations before them, many immigrants often gravitate to houses of faith as a familiar connection to their home country, a safe place in an often uncertain new land. Until they aren't safe



St. Peter's has a largely Latino congregation. Many immigrants long have gravitated to churches as a familiar connection to their home country.

any longer.

Mass attendance dropped up to 45% earlier this year in immigrant-dominated churches in the Mission District, a reflection of the fear many parishioners there felt in leaving their house — even for the presumed safety of a house of worship. The drop came after President Trump reversed a policy in January that restricted Immigration and Customs Enforcement from conducting raids in "sensitive locations" such as churches, schools and hospitals.

"People were so scared," the Rev. Moises Abudo, who presides over three Mission District parishes where he said 99% of the people in the pews predominantly speak Spanish, told me.

"They were scared to go out. They were scared to go to the church. They were scared to send the children to the school. They were scared to take the bus, because they are thinking that ICE is on the bus, is in the school, is in the church."

"Father Moises," as he is known, started noticing that something was different.

# Oakland police overtime examined

Department drawing scrutiny amid focus on fixing city deficit

By David Hernandez and Sarah Ravani

The Oakland Police Department's chronic use of overtime has emerged as a central issue in the ongoing efforts to stave off the worst effects of a massive deficit.

Faced with a shortage of officers and persistent crime concerns, the reliance on overtime represents a problem that's expected to persist as the department struggles to beef up its ranks. Until the city finds a "proper" balance between staffing and reliance on overtime, spending tens of millions of dollars on overtime is necessary to handle the department's workload, Police Chief Floyd Mitchell said.

"It's a major concern," he said of the spending, "and we're doing everything we can to stay within the boundaries that have been set for us."

Little is likely to change in the near future for the department, which consistently blows past its overtime budget. The increasing costs of overtime come as city officials confront an \$89 million budget deficit this fiscal year and an ongoing deficit of about \$140 million annually due to the city's pension obligations, higher insurance premiums, declining revenues and other issues.

The city's finance department said in November that if Oakland failed to rein in costs, it would have to declare a fiscal emergency.

As most of the overspending took place in the

Overtime continues on A9

# Reactions mixed to logging push in national forests

By Kurtis Alexander

The Trump administration is calling in the chain saws at scores of national forests, including the 18 in California, hoping to ramp up timber production in places that millions of Americans visit each year.

But the effort will only get so far.

Despite fears of vicious clear-cutting, forestry experts say too many things are working against today's timber trade to expect a vast expansion of logging, especially in California, whether it's the forests around Lake Tahoe, near Yosemite or at Big Sur.

For starters, the industry has lost capacity to process wood. There are also issues with the trees, which have been degraded by wildfires and drought or set aside for protection. Additionally, recent federal staffing cuts are likely to hobble the Forest Service's ability to prepare logging contracts.

"Operationally, they're not going to get much done," said Bill Stewart, emeritus forestry specialist at UC Berkeley.

The inability to significantly increase timber operations, while sparing trees, comes with downsides. Foremost may be a failure to reduce wildfire

Logging continues on A10

# Most of state facing an 'active fire season'

Heat, thick grasses fuel above-normal inferno predictions

By Anthony Edwards and Greg Porter

California's door for rain is closing quickly, and wildfire season is around the corner.

On the heels of last year's dynamic season, which featured the state's fourth-largest blaze in history and culminated in January's deadly Los Angeles-area infernos, officials expect another year of fierce fires. Above-normal wildfire activity is predicted throughout much of California in July and August, according to the National

Interagency Fire Center.

"Overall, an active fire season is what I'm predicting," said Brent Wachter, a fire meteorologist with the Northern Operations Predictive Services unit.

Officials say the hot summer forecast combined with lush and likely very flammable vegetation is fueling the active outlook.

Grasses are thick across Northern California after a healthy dose of winter rain. Most areas north of Interstate 80 received above-normal precipitation from October through May, which could tame the fire season at first, particularly in forested areas. But grasses are predicted to be

Fire continues on A7



Stephen Lam/S.F. Chronicle  
Horses are evacuated during the Park Fire in the community of Cohasset (Butte County) in July 2024. Officials predict above-normal wildfire activity in much of Northern California in July and August.