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New missal, bin Laden's killing top stories of 2011

NCR Staff | Dec. 21, 2011

People burn a photograph of al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden in the western Indian city of Ahmedabad May 2 as they celebrate his killing. (CNS photo/Stringer via Reuters)

Two news organizations that cover religion have named their top stories of 2011, highlighting the introduction of the new Roman Missal and the assassination of Osama bin Laden.

Catholic News Service selected the introduction of the English translation of the Roman Missal as the top news story, according to its annual poll of clients.

The continued effect of the global economic downturn was second among the 30 news stories on the ballot, and the Middle East democracy movements, dubbed the Arab Spring, took third place.

Rounding out the top five for religious news stories were the Irish church?s sex abuse scandal and the issue of religious freedom.

The poll was the 50th annual survey conducted by CNS.

Last year, editors chose the recovery and rebuilding effort that followed the devastating January earthquake in Haiti as the top religious story.

In a separate poll, members of the Religion Newswriters Association chose bin Laden?s death as their top 2011 story. Through a press release, the association stated that faith-based groups reacted to the terrorist leader?s death with renewed sympathy for victims? families, scriptural citations justifying the demise of evil, and hopeful prayers for peace among the nations.

Congressional hearings centering on the civil rights of Muslim Americans and alleged crimes against them placed second in the association?s annual end-of-year survey. Members voted third the criminal charges raised against Bishop Robert Finn of Kansas City-St. Joseph, Mo.

The new missal finished fourth, and the Presbyterian Church (USA) allowing the ordination of partnered gay people placed fifth.

This is the 30th year the association has conducted the poll.

CNS selected Pope Benedict XVI as its top newsmaker, a title he?s held since 2006.

Archbishop Timothy Dolan of New York placed second, President Barack Obama finished third and Blessed John Paul II and Fordham University theologian St. Joseph Sr. Elizabeth Johnson were fourth and fifth, respectively.

Religion Newswriters Association members chose not to name a 2011 Newsmaker of the Year, due to a virtual three-way tie among Benedict, radio evangelist Harold Camping and Texas Gov. Rick Perry.

Which story do you think was the top story of the year? Cast your vote here [2].

NCR will announce its person of the year in the Jan. 6-19 edition of the paper.

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