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**Editor's note:** NCR executive editor Heidi Schlumpf has joined "The Francis Effect" for its seventh season as a co-host with Franciscan Fr. Dan Horan and David Dault. The podcast airs every other Wednesday and will be available on NCR's site as well as on various podcast apps.

NCR executive editor Heidi Schlumpf has joined Season 7 of "The Francis Effect" podcast. She joins co-hosts Franciscan Fr. Dan Horan (columnist for NCR's "[Faith](#)

[Seeking Understanding](#)") and David Dault, executive producer and host of "Things Not Seen: Conversations about Culture and Faith."

In this episode, Dault, Horan and Schlumpf discuss some last-minute surprises from the U.S. bishops, the grassroots nature of sainthood, and why this year it might be OK to put up your tree as early as you want.

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