

Briefly noted

News in the [May 19, 2009](#) issue

A Reform Jewish seminary is considering closing two of its three U.S. campuses amid what the school's president calls "the most challenging financial position [the school] has faced in its history." Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, with campuses in New York, Los Angeles, Cincinnati and Jerusalem, is facing a deficit of about \$8 million in the next two years, said seminary president Rabbi David Ellenson. He said some endowment funds are "under water" and not generating any income. A final decision is expected by June 23.

Almost 45 percent of candidates for the Catholic priesthood who were planning to be ordained this year said they were discouraged from considering the priesthood, according to a survey conducted by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) at Georgetown University. Of those, nearly six in ten said a family member was the source of the discouragement. Fifty-one percent said a friend or classmate had counseled them against the priesthood, and 15 percent said a priest or other clergy had. The percentages add up to more than 100 because respondents could select more than one category. The number of Catholic priests in the U.S. has dropped steadily since the 1970s.

Germany's top Protestant cleric, Bishop Wolfgang Huber, has castigated his nation for becoming the top armaments-exporting nation in Europe. "The export of arms from Germany has increased by 13 percent from one year to the next," said Huber, who heads the Evangelical Church in Germany, the country's main Protestant umbrella body. "Our country now ranks directly behind the United States and Russia in this trade," Huber said in his Good Friday sermon in Berlin. Berlin's *Tagesspiegel* newspaper had reported on its Web site that foreign customers for German arms were in 126 countries, while arms exports worth \$10.4 billion were approved by the German government in 2007—something which Huber finds unacceptable. "One day soldiers of the Bundeswehr [German army] will be on foreign missions trying to stop violence which is being conducted with weapons made in Germany," said Huber.