



***Theology on Tap* teams with Participant's Countdown to Zero Nuclear Weapons Information Sheet**

Countdown to Zero offers a sobering look at the dangers of nuclear weapons today. It shows us how the existence of nuclear weapons poses a threat to security both domestically and internationally. For almost fifty years, the Catholic Church has consistently sought to reduce the threat of nuclear weapons. This has been done through a number of statements and teachings and by advocating not just for nuclear deterrence, but for moving toward disarmament and the elimination of nuclear weapons. All of this has been done with the hope that by eliminating nuclear weapons we can reach toward a lasting peace.

Pope Benedict XVI stated, "Peace, in fact, rests on trust and on respect for promises made, not only on the balance of power. In this spirit I encourage the initiatives that seek progressive disarmament and areas free of nuclear weapons, with a view to their complete elimination from the planet." (United Nations Conference on Non-Proliferation, May 2010)

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, through its Office of International Justice and Peace, has gathered information and suggests action steps that Catholics can take to inform themselves about and take action in response to Catholic social teaching regarding nuclear weapons. To learn more, please visit

<http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/international/warandpeaceind.shtml>.

As Catholics, we are called to both pray for and work toward peace. The threat of nuclear weapons stands in stark contrast to our commitment to peace. By viewing *Countdown to Zero* and educating ourselves on issues surrounding nuclear weapons, we can better advocate for their elimination and begin the task of securing a peaceful future for our planet. For more resources about *Countdown to Zero*, as well as action steps available, see

<http://www.takepart.com/countdowntozero>.

In a spirit of prayer, we bring to mind these eloquent words from the Catholic bishops of the United States:

In the words of our Holy Father, we need a 'moral about face.' The whole world must summon the moral courage and technical means to say 'no' to nuclear conflict; 'no' to weapons of mass destruction; 'no' to an arms race which robs the poor and the vulnerable; and 'no' to the moral danger of a nuclear age which places before humankind indefensible choices of constant terror or surrender. Peacemaking is not an optional commitment. It is a requirement of our faith. We are called to be peacemakers, not by some movement of the moment, but by our Lord Jesus. The content and context of our peacemaking is set, not by some political agenda or ideological program, but by the teaching of his Church.

--The Challenge of Peace, no. 333, 1983

We at *RENEW International Theology on Tap* invite you to take advantage of this unique opportunity to engage this important topic by spreading the word about *Countdown to Zero* and the suggested resources on Catholic social teaching.