

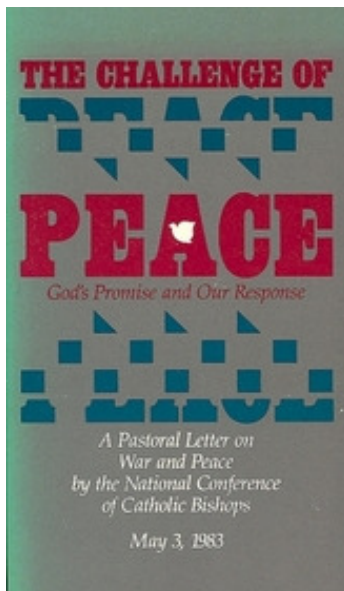
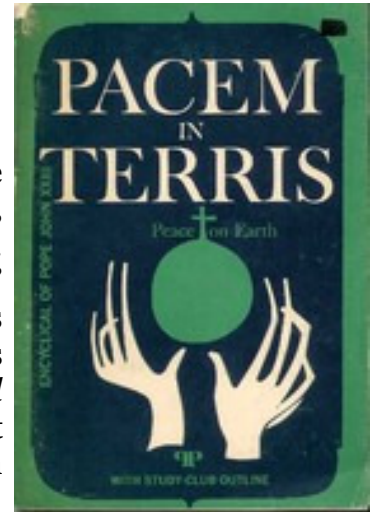
## From Nuclear Weapons to Drone Warfare...

### Catholic Thought on Peace and War

This spring we mark two important anniversaries in our Church's teaching on social issues--

The 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the papal encyclical *Pacem in Terris* and  
The 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our U.S. Bishops' pastoral letter  
*The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response*

*Pacem in Terris*, written by Blessed John XXIII, is noteworthy as the first encyclical addressed to all people, not just to Catholics. In 1963, Pope John was writing in the midst of the Cold War and the arms race. He reminds us that humanity longs to live in peace, but that "peace" based on fear and preparation for war and in all sides trying to possess an equal supply of armaments, is false, empty peace. The encyclical's sums up the way to true peace in its full title: *On Establishing Universal Peace in Truth, Justice, Charity and Liberty*. Only through commitment to those values, at work in the human heart and in governments, can peace be achieved.



Twenty years later, in their 1983 pastoral letter our U.S. Bishops cry out against the continuing arms race. They explain and hold up the Just War theory and the principles of non-violence, noting that both approaches to conflict aim to serve the Common Good.

Both documents also focus specifically on the evils of nuclear weapons, seen as the great international threat of those times. Many Catholics may be surprised to hear that John XXII specifically wrote:

**"Nuclear weapons must be banned."** The U.S. Bishops declared, "We do not perceive any situation in which the deliberate initiation of nuclear war, on however restricted a scale, can be morally justified" and questioned even the possibility of so-called "limited" nuclear war. The potential for widespread destruction of human life propelled these Church leaders to speak out on this issue.

Military weaponry continues to evolve. In our current times, the use of unmanned aerial vehicles, known as **drones**, has become a central tactic in the War on Terror. Hundreds of drone strikes have been carried out over the last 10 years, some by the U.S. armed forces, others by the CIA. Despite their growing prominence, drones have not gotten a lot of attention as a moral issue, but they raise many ethical questions.

*Do they save lives? Do they keep us safer? Do they kill too many civilians? Do they make war look like a video game, leading us more readily to resort to violence? Is the policy of targeted assassinations carried out by drones even legal?*

Our Diocesan Public Policy Committee is asking Catholics to study this issue so we can form our opinions on them based on the Gospel and Church teaching. To learn more, see next page →

The U.S. military is now training more drone pilots than aircraft pilots. Drones are directed from Air Force installations around the country, including Hancock Air Field in Syracuse, right next door to our diocese. Missiles fired from drones have been used in attacks in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia. This military tactic is having broad implications on United States' military and foreign policy, and how other countries interact with our country. While people of good will might arrive at different conclusions about drones, it's clearly too important an issue to ignore.

### **As Catholics we must pay attention.**

You can find the Public Policy information packet on these peace issues, including reflections, bulletin announcements and prayers of the faithful, at the diocesan web site

<http://www.dor.org/index.cfm/catholic-charities/public-policy/peace-education/>

"In simple terms, we are saying that **good ends** (defending one's country, protecting freedom, etc.) **cannot justify immoral means** (the use of weapons which kill indiscriminately and threaten whole societies).

We fear that our world and nation are headed in the wrong direction. More weapons with greater destructive potential are produced every day. More and more nations are seeking to become nuclear powers.

In our quest for more and more security, we fear we are actually becoming less and less secure."

*-The Challenge of Peace*

"...true and lasting peace  
among nations  
cannot consist in the possession of  
an equal supply of armaments  
but only in mutual trust."

*-Pacem in Terris*

### ***Drones and The Right to Life***

*presented by Mary Ellen O'Connell*

**Thursday May 30, 7:00 p.m.**

**St. Bernard's School of Theology and Ministry**  
120 French Road, Rochester, NY 14618

*Live streaming available to*

*Hornell, Watkins Glen, Elmira, and Auburn*

**Reservations required for these sites, so RSVP with**

**Kathy Dubel at 607-734-9784 ext. 2135 or KDubel@dor.org**

Mary Ellen O'Connell is Research Professor of International Dispute Resolution at the Kroc Institute for Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame, and has served as a professional military educator for the U.S. Department of Defense.

Her research is in the areas of international legal theory, international law on the use of force, and international dispute resolution. She has extensively studied the international law implications of military attacks by unmanned drones.

Don't miss the opportunity to learn from an expert about this new drone technology and to form your conscience on this issue.



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