

## **Faith Community Remains Resolved to Speak Out on Behalf of the Nation's Most Vulnerable; Takes Fight for a Faithful Budget to Super Committee Member Districts**

(Taken from the November 2011 J/P Alert of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men)

**WASHINGTON** - The 11 religious leaders arrested on July 28 while praying on behalf of the nation's most vulnerable in the Capitol Rotunda were in court this morning to discuss the misdemeanor, "Intention to Disrupt Congress," charge brought against them. The United States Attorney agreed to dismiss the charges against the "Rotunda 11" if each religious official stays out of the Capitol Building for next six months.

The faith leaders' peaceful and faithful act of civil disobedience was the highlight of a public policy campaign launched by the American faith community during the height of debt ceiling debate this summer to ensure the administration and Congress do not reduce the deficit by placing an undue burden on the poor while shielding the wealthiest from additional sacrifice.

The faith community's campaign, the Faithful Budget Campaign [www.DomesticHumanNeeds.org](http://www.DomesticHumanNeeds.org) is seeking to encourage the administration and Congress to maintain a robust commitment to domestic and international poverty programs by lifting up faithful voices on behalf of the nation's most vulnerable. In July, the campaign organized high-level meetings with policymakers, a Washington fly-in of religious leaders, daily prayer vigils near the U.S. Capitol Building and culminated with the arrest of 11 faith leaders after praying for 90 minutes and refusing to leave the Rotunda after repeated requests from U.S. Capitol Police. The arrest of the faith leaders came just days before Congress passed the debt ceiling compromise.

Since the arrest of the Rotunda 11, the American faith community has extended the Faithful Budget Campaign into the hometowns of the "Deficit Super Committee" members. As a result, numerous churches, synagogues, mosques and other houses of worship in the states and districts of members of the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction, as well as congressional leadership, are hosting prayer vigils and other demonstrations to encourage "Deficit Super Committee" members to recommend a fair deficit reduction plan that exempts programs from budget cuts that assist the most at-risk families and children in the U.S. and abroad.

The faith community has worked alongside the United States government for decades to protect those struggling to overcome poverty in the U.S. and abroad. The faith community fears without a sustained federal commitment to these programs, houses of worship will not be able to solely support the country's most vulnerable in their time of need.

Additional details about the Faithful Budget Campaign can be found on the campaign's website, [www.DomesticHumanNeeds.org](http://www.DomesticHumanNeeds.org).