

Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (<https://www.ncronline.org>)

June 22, 2009 at 3:05pm

Jesuit sees convergence of U.S., Vatican policies

by Thomas C. Fox



Reese

President Barack Obama will visit Pope Benedict at the Vatican July 10. That's when Obama will be in Italy for the annual gathering of G8 heads of state. The G8 was created in 1975 for governments of eight nations in the northern hemisphere: Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States.

NCR Editor Tom Fox June 22 interviewed Jesuit Father Thomas Reese, senior fellow at the Woodstock Institute at Georgetown University in Washington DC, about relations between the Vatican and Obama administration and the importance of a possible meeting between the pope and the U.S. president.

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Pope Benedict, meanwhile, is expected to issue a social encyclical on economic matters in early July, raising the ante of the July meetings.

Reese says the Vatican is looking to develop good relations with the United States. He sees a convergence of views between the pope and Obama on a number of policy fronts, including the Iraq war, concern for the world's poor, nuclear disarmament, dialogue with Islam, and a two-state Middle East settlement.

These agreements, according to Reese, overshadow serious differences of views on abortion.

Reese also talks about divisions among the U.S. bishops on how to approach the Obama government. The entire interview can be heard here.

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