

## **US Bishop's chairman on Doctrine clarifies Just War Theory.**

Bishop James Massa issues a statement in response to public comments regarding the Church's teaching on war and peace

Vatican News

Given the recent public comments regarding the Catholic Church's teaching on war and peace, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) posted a statement on their website on April 15, 2026, of Bishop James Massa, chairman of the USCCB's Committee on Doctrine, who stated the following:

“For over a thousand years, the Catholic Church has taught just war theory, and it is that long tradition the Holy Father carefully references in his comments on war. A constant tenet of that thousand-year tradition is a nation can only legitimately take up the sword ‘in self-defence, once all peace efforts have failed’ (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 2308). That is; to be a just war it must be a defence against another who actively wages war, which is what the Holy Father actually said: ‘He does not listen to the prayers of those who wage war.’

“When Pope Leo XIV speaks as supreme pastor of the universal Church, he is not merely offering opinions on theology, he is preaching the Gospel and exercising his ministry as the Vicar of Christ. The consistent teaching of the Church is insistent that all people of good will must pray and work toward lasting peace while avoiding the evils and injustices that accompany all wars.”