

We are a church of peace

The letter headlined “Military critic ignores Catechism” (CR, June 14) exemplifies the tragic disservice we Catholics commit upon our Catholic youth and military members who must make difficult choices – we fail to give them our whole story.

The author writes that a sentence in our Catechism mandates military service, and he condemns those as sinful who fail to concur with his opinion. He conveniently ignores the rest of our Catechism.

Our Catechism teaches the following: “... the spirit of the Gospel is incompatible with hatred of one’s enemy. (1933) ... When he listens to his conscience, the prudent man can hear God speaking. ... Conscience is the ... Vicar of Christ. (1777, 1778) ... Public authorities should make equitable provision for those who for reasons of conscience refuse to bear arms.... (2311)”

The Gospels, church tradition, many of our saints and fellow Catholics, and yes, the Catechism, tell us Catholics that we are a church of peace. We cannot continue to hide this good news as militarism sweeps across America, eroding our values, our spirit and our economy.

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