



SAINT ALOYSIUS PARISH

40 Maple Street · New Canaan, CT 06840 · Phone: 203-966-0020
Fax: 203-972-7691 · www.starcc.com

Some Guidance on the Moral Issues Regarding the COVID-19 Vaccines: A Message from Father Rob

Many have asked me about the moral issues related to the available COVID-19 vaccines. The recent conversations about this derive from particular concerns about the Johnson & Johnson vaccine and its connection to cell lines from aborted fetuses. While Pfizer and Moderna's vaccines raised concerns because these cell lines were used for testing, the cell lines were not used in production of the vaccine. The Johnson & Johnson vaccine was developed, tested, and/or produced with abortion-derived cell lines.

At the suggestion of Bishop Caggiano, I call your attention to a December 2020 statement from the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF). The sum of the CDF statement is that ***when ethically irreproachable COVID-19 vaccines are not available, it is morally acceptable to receive COVID-19 vaccines that have used cell line from aborted fetuses in their research and production process.***

Certainly if one had the option of receiving a particular vaccine, the Pfizer and Moderna are preferred. However, in many instances, there is no choice; we are given the vaccine that is available at the time. Therefore, it is important to make a decision based on an informed conscience and with the help of prayer.

As is often the case in the Catholic moral context, the greater good is an important consideration here. That's why the CDF reminds us that from the ethical point of view, ***the morality of vaccination depends not only on the duty to protect one's own health, but also on the duty to pursue the common good.*** *In the absence of other means to stop or even prevent the epidemic, the common good may recommend vaccination, especially to protect the weakest and most exposed. Those who, however, for reasons of conscience, refuse vaccines produced with cell lines from aborted fetuses, must do their utmost to avoid, by other prophylactic means and appropriate behavior, becoming vehicles for the transmission of the infectious agent. In particular, they must avoid any risk to the health of those who cannot be vaccinated for medical or other reasons, and who are the most vulnerable.*

Bishop Kevin Rhoades who heads the Committee on Doctrine of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops echoes the CDF statement on the matter of the common good: **"While we should continue to insist that pharmaceutical companies stop using abortion-derived cell lines, given the world-wide suffering that this pandemic is causing, we affirm again that being vaccinated can be an act of charity that serves the common good."**

If you have any questions about vaccination, don't hesitate to reach out to me, Father David or Father Franklin. If you would like to read the CDF statement in its entirety, here's the link https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20201221_nota-vaccini-anticovid_en.html.

I continue to pray for you, asking our patron, Saint Aloysius -- who ministered in a pandemic and who is a friend to those who are sick -- to keep you safe.

Father Rob