



THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE

Office of Communications • *The Long Island Catholic* • *Fe Fuerza Vida*

50 North Park Avenue, Rockville Centre, NY 11570

Tel: 516-678-5800, ext. 221 • Fax: 516-594-0984 • www.drvc.org

STATEMENT

DATE: March 8, 2021

RE: Statement – Covid-19 Vaccines

FROM: Sean P. Dolan

On March 3, 2021, the Diocese of Rockville Centre issued a memo to clergy and the faithful in response to concerns of the faithful that was intended to provide clarification on the hierarchical preference of available vaccines based only on their connection to the gravely evil act of abortion. That statement is consistent with statements from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), the entity that represents the U.S. Bishops. According to the USCCB statement, “if one has the ability to choose a vaccine, Pfizer or Moderna’s vaccines should be chosen over Johnson & Johnson’s” (USCCB – March 2, 2021 statement [-https://www.usccb.org/news/2021/us-bishop-chairmen-doctrine-and-pro-life-address-use-johnson-johnson-covid-19-vaccine](https://www.usccb.org/news/2021/us-bishop-chairmen-doctrine-and-pro-life-address-use-johnson-johnson-covid-19-vaccine)). 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. Therefore, if alternative vaccines are not reasonably available, individuals may choose to receive the Johnson and Johnson’s vaccine.

Vaccine safety, efficacy, medical circumstances, etc. were not the focus, nor did this memo claim to provide guidance on the decision to vaccinate. Consent to vaccination is a prudential judgment that should be based on a well-formed conscience of which this memo provided one aspect for discernment. **Such a decision also must be made in consultation with one’s own physician.** The memo clearly states this is not a comprehensive evaluation of the vaccines and, to this end, other resources were provided for further information. It is the position of the Catholic Church and the responsibility of all Bishops to instruct the faithful in the truth that abortion is a violation of natural law. It is a gravely evil act because it is the deliberate killing of an innocent human being. The Church teaches that corpses of all human embryos and fetuses, directly aborted or not, must be treated with the same dignity and respect as all other human remains. In this, it also teaches that the sacrifice of human life for therapeutic purposes is wholly immoral and incompatible with human dignity because it is the exploitation of one human being in the involuntary service of another. Therefore, abortion is a morally evil act which cannot be voided or reduced in gravity even by the good intention to help others (i. e. as vaccine production).