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CONCERNING THE COVID VACCINATIONS AND THE CONTINGENT FINDINGS OF THE EMPIRICAL SCIENCES

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Dear Parishioners,

Posted on our website is a Statement from the Bishop's Office concerning vaccination. You should carefully read the Statement and the linked Church documents.

There appear to be three levels of covid "vaccine" or "vaccine like" interventions:

1. Some were *developed from* "cell lines" originating from aborted (that is, murdered) babies in the 1970s and/or 1980s (AstraZeneca and Johnson & Johnson).
2. Others were at some point *tested against* the above referenced morally compromised cell lines derived from those aborted babies (Moderna and Pfizer).
3. Some have *no association at all* with such compromised cell lines. To date this last and morally safest kind are all still in development as far as I know.

These Church documents utilize the moral principles governing "**cooperation or association with evil**" to argue that it can be morally permissible even to accept the tainted vaccines (#1 & #2). The reason is that the vaccine recipient's association or cooperation with abortion is "**material**" (i.e., not formal or sharing the evil intent), **remotely removed**, and **passive**.

Nevertheless, those first two kinds of vaccine remain problematic and so the Church adds two conditions of which you ought to be aware:

1. **CONDITION ONE:** There is a serious or grave reason (this is very subjective).
2. **CONDITION TWO:** One ought to *protest* in some way; e.g., through writing a letter to the company that produced it (the Bishop's document provides a template for such a letter).

As your pastor, I would propose these further considerations:

1. As far as I understand, the vaccines now available are not truly "FDA Approved." Rather, they have "**emergency use authorization.**" Thus, there are legitimate questions being raised by some scientists regarding the long-term health consequences.
2. **The mortality rate seems to be in dispute.** But of those who have tested covid positive in the USA, around .3% (that is, 3/10 of 1%) have died.
3. **We find ourselves in a situation of taking calculated risks.** Since risk-taking is a highly personal and subjective question we should not expect everyone to think and act uniformly. The judgment of conscience is to be respected when there is such a high degree of subjectivity and uncertainty.

4. There may be a **better vaccine or treatment** forthcoming for which one may wish to wait, weighing the risk of contagion against the risk posed by the medical unknowns and the clearly morally compromised nature of the vaccines now available.
5. **No one is morally obliged to accept this vaccination**, especially in the face of the uncertainties. Furthermore, there are scientists asserting that, due to the newness of the “mRNA” model used by some companies, coupled with the “warp speed” with which it was produced, there seems to be an element of experimentation involved.
6. A person’s **level of sensitivity** even to remote, non-culpable association with the evil of abortion can vary. This is a subjective but morally valid factor.
7. **Fully informed consent is necessary in medicine.** This, I fear is not what is commonly happening.
8. One ought to be on guard against dogmatizing and absolutizing the **contingent findings of the empirical sciences.** Such is not in the service of Truth.
9. Consequently, one ought to acknowledge a **legitimate diversity of opinions** in light of the debate within the scientific community itself.
10. **Concern for the common good** is clearly a value to uphold. Applying that principle is quite another matter. Is it truly reasonable to expect - in the face of uncertain science and suspicious politics - that one person radically and continually suspend **otherwise normal human behavior** to accommodate another person’s subjective fears?
11. **Blaming or vilifying other people** for the spread of covid is neither just nor rational. Having a studied opinion that varies from the popular narrative on how best to contend with covid is not the same as “not caring.” One would have to establish a malicious and unambiguous intent to infect another person to impute such blame.
12. One ought not fail to understand that the covid phenomenon is happening in a **broader context which has entailed serious threats to basic human freedoms.** There has been significant collateral damage including: the loss of livelihoods, an increase in neurotic and/or hostile behaviors, division among people who should love one another, depression, anxiety, fearfulness, domestic abuse, crime and even suicide. **Avoidance of contagion is a value, but it is not the only value to be protected.**
13. One ought to ask whether or not what has happened this past year is **proportionate, ordered and just.** To what extent have we fallen prey to manipulation?

May the great St. Joseph, Spouse of Mary and Terror of Demons, intercede for us.

In Christo Domino,

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