



Dear friends,

Last week we summarized the core questions around the moral issues of using vaccines. We briefly touched on the Church teaching that vaccines are safe, moral, and indeed part of our responsibility as Christians.

“From the clinical point of view, it should also be reiterated that treatment with vaccines, despite the very rare side effects (the events that occur most commonly are mild and due to an immune response to the vaccine itself), is safe and effective. No correlation exists between the administration of the vaccine and the onset of Autism.”
- *Note on Italian vaccine issue*, Pontifical Academy for Life

This week we touch on a more general but nonetheless common worry - are vaccines **safe** to use? Especially in recent years there has been much speculation about a potential link between vaccines and illness, particularly autism. In its 2017 *Note on Italian vaccine issue*, the Pontifical Academy for Life reiterated that **vaccines are safe and effective**.

One name that often comes up in this area is Dr. Theresa Deisher. Dr. Deisher is to be especially lauded for her efforts to support an ethically sound vaccine to replace the current MMR (**M**easles, **M**umps, and **R**uebella) vaccine, which has direct ties to fetal stem cells obtained from abortion. However, where Dr. Deisher loses credibility - and in fact finds herself in opposition to the Pontifical Academy for Life (among other voices) - is in her assertion that vaccines cause autism.

This claim has been addressed many times over, but for those who would like to dive into the details around why this assertion is false, I recommend the series started by the contributors of the blog ‘Rational Catholic’ ([Part I](#) & [Part II](#) are currently available, along with supplementary articles linked at the conclusion of each part). Both knowledgeable & faithful, the writers at Rational Catholic highlight many of the errors in Dr. Deisher’s studies and conclusions.

Taking in the facts of vaccine safety, may we also pray for the peace of the Christ in our hearts.
- Father Maurer

Reference documents

Dignitatis Personae (On Certain Bioethical Questions), Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, 2008 - https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20081208_dignitas-personae_en.html

Moral Reflections on Vaccines Prepared from Cells Derived from Aborted Human Fetuses, Pontifical Academy for Life, 2005 [https://www.pdcnet.org/C1257D43006C9AB1/file/B3945E0E17A0025085257D94004A597D/\\$FILE/ncbq_2006_0006_0003_0145_0154.pdf](https://www.pdcnet.org/C1257D43006C9AB1/file/B3945E0E17A0025085257D94004A597D/$FILE/ncbq_2006_0006_0003_0145_0154.pdf)

Note on Italian vaccine issue, Pontifical Academy for Life, 2017 <http://www.academyforlife.va/content/pav/en/the-academy/activity-academy/note-vaccini.html>