



Brother Priests,

Over these past months, the Pastoral Center has received numerous inquiries from the faithful throughout the diocese seeking guidance and support from the Church on the COVID-19 vaccines. There are some Catholics who have expressed concern or a moral objection to the COVID-19 vaccines due to use of abortion-derived cell lines in their development. However, the Holy See, through the [Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith](#), has affirmed COVID-19 vaccines now available are morally permissible and can be used in good conscience. [The Bishops of California have asked all Catholics who are able, to be vaccinated.](#)

That being said, there is no basis for a priest to issue a religious exemption to the vaccine. Issuing a religious exemption to the vaccine would be a direct contradiction to the findings of the Holy See and could have serious consequences. If a college student or laborer received a religious exemption from the vaccine and contracted the virus which later spread among their campus or place of employment, the priest that issued the exemption would be participating in an act that could have serious consequences for others and might risk personal liability on the priest.

Do not issue any religious exemption from the vaccine. Rather, I encourage you to support those who are receiving the vaccine.

In the Peace of Christ,

Bishop Myron J. Cotta