



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

DIOCESE OF GREEN BAY

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March 9, 2021

Greetings in the Lord Jesus!

As many of you know, questions continue to be raised regarding the reception of vaccines against COVID-19. Recently, additional concerns have arisen regarding the new Johnson and Johnson vaccine and its connection to abortion. In response, both the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) in Rome and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) have addressed the matter of vaccines in recent months. While the Diocese of Green Bay does not advocate for the medical quality of any particular brand of vaccine, the following is provided as spiritual and pastoral guidance to the faithful.

The challenge before us is that the recent Johnson and Johnson vaccine against COVID-19 was developed, tested, and produced using cells derived from an abortion. This places it in a very different moral category from the existing Pfizer and Moderna vaccines both of which were only tested using a cell line from an abortion. However, it is sometimes difficult to choose a particular brand of vaccine since the vaccinations are being done on a highly regulated basis. Also, health care providers might have little or no control over which vaccines are supplied to them.

Taking all of this into consideration and whenever possible, Catholics should choose to receive a vaccine that is the least morally compromised. Thus, if people have the option to choose, they should receive the vaccine from Pfizer or Moderna which are less closely connected to abortion. If there is truly no other option, then other vaccines **may** be received.

In the end, we need to do everything we can to protect the sanctity of human life in all of its stages. As we remain grateful for the many advances of science which help us to fight disease, we also advocate for the development of medicines and vaccines which do not violate one life in order to save another.

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

Most Rev. David L. Ricken, DD, JCL  
Bishop of Green Bay

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