

Dear Parishioners of St. Eulalia and St. Gabriel Partnered Parishes,

I am penning this letter in response to the numerous phone calls that I have received and continue to receive regarding covid-19 vaccine mandates. I have literally spent hours on the telephone with Catholics and Non-Catholics from this region and elsewhere seeking assistance in requesting and obtaining an exemption from covid-19 vaccine mandates which have been issued by the government and various businesses and places of employment.

As your pastor, I am here to support you in your faith. I provide this support in various ways. First, I strive to educate you and teach the sound doctrine of the Church in its fullness. Secondly, I celebrate the Church's sacraments, which nourish, strengthen, and sustain your faith and fortify it with supernatural grace. Lastly, I am here to help you to live that faith and to apply that faith to the concrete realities of life with all their complexities.

To those who read and followed the guidance I provided in my initial statement on the use of covid-19 vaccines and who out of serious concern for their own personal health or out of care and concern for others have been vaccinated, I wish to assure you that you were acting in good faith and with the full allowance of the Holy See and its advisers as well as Pope Francis himself, who not only granted permission or an allowance for the use of covid-19 vaccines, but encouraged the lay faithful in the strongest language possible to get vaccinated. Additionally, I want to extend the same assurance to those who because of deeply held religious convictions have exercised their right to conscientiously object to the covid-19 vaccine and/or mandates issued by the government or various businesses and places of employment. We can't have an either/or way. If those who receive the vaccine are hailed as virtuous, then those who object for deeply held religious beliefs must also be considered under a moral light. In other words, if taking the shot is considered noble, it is only because there is an ethical and moral dimension to the decision and it was a decision not a mandate. Furthermore, if one has the right to accept the vaccine than one must have the right to refuse the vaccine, otherwise the right to accept the vaccine was never a right at all, but rather mandatory.

I want to be clear, as regards the use of our facilities and even speaking on the matter of vaccinations, I have only taught what the Church teaches and have otherwise remained neutral on the matter of being vaccinated. However, as a priest and moral leader, I do not have the luxury of remaining neutral in the face of an injustice. Vaccine mandates while well intended are unjust. The loss of life and the public health concerns that face our society are serious. However, such concerns as grave as they may be cannot justify unjust mandates. People have the freedom to accept or reject what is put into their body within the realm of the Moral Law and its antecedent, the Divine Law. If this principle is denied than one can be injected with anything and everything, even a lethal dose of medication. I am not employing a logical fallacy and reducing to the absurd or warning of a slippery slope. Such a scenario isn't a possibility but rather a reality today, as our country for some time now has allowed for legalized euthanasia in some States.

Furthermore, a person has the right to an informed consent. Allow me to put the emphasis on two separate words here, namely, informed and consent. It is not difficult to understand how someone can be made to feel uncomfortable making a decision at this time given the fact that science and medical professionals have not come to an overwhelming consensus on the efficacy and safety of the vaccines. Additionally Universities, Hospitals, and Medical Research Facilities have issued conflicting statements

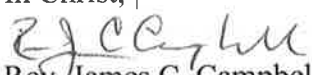
about the vaccines. Even if this were not the case and people were given this impression because of misinformation campaigns, then we must acknowledge the reasons one may legitimately have for being hesitant about the vaccines. Additionally, the FDA only recently approved a vaccine and only one of the four most widely used vaccines obtained approval from the FDA and even that one has not yet been approved for all ages. Moreover, there are alternative treatments which have been studied and found successful thereby opening the door to other possibilities.

Now, if we put the emphasis on the word “consent” then we enter into the Natural Law, which states that the human person, being endowed with an intellect, reason, and free-will is duty-bound and obligated to act reasonably, that is, in accord with their own reason. To deny a person the right to informed consent is to deny their humanity, their personhood, their identity as a “moral being” not only capable of making moral decisions, but also responsible for making their own moral decisions. Moral decision making can neither be delegated nor assumed by another. Each person will be held accountable before God for their own moral choices. We can’t say, “The government made me do it” or “my boss or place of employment made me do it.”

Lastly, Pope Francis and the Vatican would not have had to issue any statement whatsoever if there was nothing morally compromising about the vaccines. The fact is each and every vaccine is tainted and has either a proximate or remote connection to abortion and the pharmaceutical buying and selling of fetal cells of aborted babies. The AstraZeneca and Johnson and Johnson vaccines have a proximate connection because fetal cells from an aborted baby are used in the production of those vaccines. The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines have a remote connection because fetal cells from aborted babies were used in the testing phase only and not in the production of the vaccines.

For employers or the government to quiz, interrogate, or grill someone simply because they are exercising their right to conscientiously object is bad enough, but I have been privy to conversations between employees and government officials and other employers and they have gone so far to suggest that a Catholic shouldn’t have any moral dilemma because Pope Francis has spoken and has been very adamant about the matter. This line of thinking shows a gross lack of understanding of the Catholic Faith and the complex process of moral decision making. It trivializes our faith and oversimplifies it to a degree that is inexcusable and insulting. If your employer manifests such ignorance, I urge you to call him/her out and to kindly inform them that you do not belong to a cult of mindless robots or pet monkeys that ape and parrot commands but the One, True, Faith instituted and established by Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who’s apostles and disciples built Western Civilization and radically transformed the world.

To conclude, I am writing this letter to inform you that you do not have to put up with this overreach or apologize for being Catholic. As your pastor, I support you in your efforts to live the Catholic faith, whether that means getting vaccinated for legitimate and serious reasons or exercising one’s right to conscientiously object and seek alternative treatment or therapy. I hope that all of our decisions and actions are motivated by love, carried out with love, and directed toward love. Please continue to pray for all those affected by the virus especially the sick, the dying, and the hospitalized. I can be reached by e-mail at jamescampbell316@gmail.com

In Christ, †

Rev. James C. Campbell