



## DIOCESE OF CHEYENNE

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From: Bishop Steven Biegler  
Subject: Vaccines for Covid-19  
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On November 23, 2020, the following statement regarding vaccines for Covid-19 was sent to all U.S. Bishops from Bishop Kevin Rhoades, Chairman of the USCCB Committee on Doctrine, and Archbishop Joseph Naumann, Chairman of the Committee on Pro-Life Activities.

“There appears to be some confusion in the media regarding the moral permissibility of using the vaccines for COVID-19 developed by Pfizer Inc. and Moderna. We would like to offer some clarifications. Neither the Pfizer nor the Moderna vaccine involved the use of cell lines that originated in fetal tissue taken from the body of an aborted baby at any level of design, development, or production. They are not completely free from any connection to abortion, however, as both Pfizer and Moderna made use of a tainted cell line for one of the confirmatory lab tests of their products. There is thus a connection, but it is relatively remote. Some are asserting that if a vaccine is connected in any way with tainted cell lines then it is immoral to be vaccinated with them. This is an inaccurate portrayal of Catholic moral teaching.

There are three documents from the Holy See that treat the question of tainted vaccines: 1) the 2005 study by the Pontifical Academy for Life, "Moral Reflections on Vaccines Prepared from Cells Derived from Aborted Human Foetuses"; 2) paragraphs nos. 34-35 in the 2008 Instruction on Certain Bioethical Questions (*Dignitatis Personae*) by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith; 3) the 2017 Note on Italian Vaccine Issue, by the Pontifical Academy for Life.”

Bishop Rhoades and Archbishop Naumann drew upon key points from the doctrinal resources. They said that while it is immoral to use tissue taken from an aborted child for creating cell lines, moral responsibility principally lies with those involved in designing and producing the vaccine. Recipients of such a vaccine, especially if there are no alternatives and there is a serious risk to health, may morally accept vaccination with it.

As stated above, neither the Pfizer nor the Moderna vaccine involved the use of cell lines that originated in fetal tissue taken from the body of an aborted baby at any level of design, development, or production. Nevertheless, the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines made use of a tainted cell line for one of the confirmatory lab tests of their products. Thus, they involve a relatively remote connection, so they are morally permissible.