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CATHOLIC COMMUNITY  
of ST. THOMAS MORE

## Vaccine Morality Information

There have been some questions about moral issues regarding the Coronavirus vaccine. The [United States Conference of Catholic Bishops \(USCCB\) produced a detailed analysis](#) of the question as it applies to the current group of three COVID-19 vaccines that have been approved for use.

First and foremost, the Bishops reiterate the opposition of the Church to any abortion-related practices in vaccine development. The key issue at hand, though, is that none of the current vaccines reach that threshold. Two of the vaccines, those from Pfizer and Moderna, did not use any abortion-derived cells in their production or development, though they were subsequently tested using such cells. For this reason, the USCCB describes their connection to these immoral practices as “remote” and their use acceptable.

The AstraZeneca vaccine, however, used abortion-derived cells in all phases of development, and so should be avoided wherever possible. This raises the question of cooperation with evil. However, such involvement does not implicate us in the evil itself so long as our own intent is clear that we categorically oppose the practice of using cell lines derived from abortion and pray for a day when that is no longer regarded as “normal” in the medical field.

The USCCB updated their instruction to include the Johnson and Johnson vaccine once it was available: “Pfizer and Moderna’s vaccines raised concerns because an abortion-derived cell line was used for testing them, but not in their production. The Johnson & Johnson vaccine, however, was developed, tested and is produced with abortion-derived cell lines raising additional moral concerns. The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has judged that ‘when ethically irreproachable Covid-19 vaccines are not available ... *it is morally acceptable to receive Covid-19 vaccines that have used cell lines from aborted fetuses in their research and production process.* However, if one can choose among equally safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines, the vaccine with the least connection to abortion-derived cell lines should be chosen. Therefore, if one has the ability to choose a vaccine, Pfizer or Moderna’s vaccines should be chosen over Johnson & Johnson’s. While we should continue to insist that pharmaceutical companies stop using abortion-derived cell lines, given the world-wide suffering that this pandemic is causing, we affirm again that being vaccinated can be an act of charity that serves the common good.”

At the end of day, it is morally permissible to receive any of these vaccines, with a strong preference for avoiding the AstraZeneca and Johnson and Johnson vaccine.