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## Love Your Neighbor and Get Vaccinated

### KEY STATEMENTS ON THE RESPONSIBILITY TO VACCINATE IN THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

**Pope Francis Says That Everyone Should Be Vaccinated:** “I believe that ethically everyone should take the vaccine ... It is an ethical choice because you are gambling with your health, with your life, but you are also gambling with the lives of others.” (January 9, 2021)

**Catholic Bishops of California Say Catholics Are Obligated to Get Vaccinated to Protect Family, Friends, and the Community:** “In partnership with the Catholic health systems and Catholic Charities throughout the Golden State, the Catholic Bishops of California urge all Californians to receive a vaccination to prevent the continued spread of the deadly COVID-19 pandemic ... Beyond simply protecting their own health and safety, Catholics also have an obligation to protect their family, friends and community by vaccinating as soon as feasible in accordance with public health guidelines and protocols in their area. One should always consult with their doctor regarding any personal medical concerns.” (January 27, 2021)

**Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith Says Covid-19 Vaccines Can Be Used with Certain Knowledge of Moral Acceptability:** “It must therefore be considered that, in such a case, all vaccinations recognized as clinically safe and effective can be used in good conscience with the *certain knowledge that the use of such vaccines does not constitute formal cooperation with the abortion* from which the cells used in production of the vaccines derive.” (December 17, 2020)

**Vatican Commission on Covid Relief in Collaboration with the Pontifical Academy for Life Says Covid-19 Vaccines Can Be Used with a Clear Conscience:** “We believe that all clinically recommended vaccinations can be used with a clear conscience and that the use of such vaccines does not signify some sort of cooperation with voluntary abortion. While the commitment to ensuring that every vaccine has no connection in its preparation to any material originating from an abortion, the moral responsibility to vaccinate is reiterated in order to avoid serious health risks for children and the general population.” (December 29, 2020)





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## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT THE COVID-19 VACCINES

### Why should I get the COVID-19 vaccine?

Vaccines are medications to prevent you from getting sick from an infection. Getting the vaccine will help protect you, your family and friends and all of God's children from catching COVID-19 and getting sick. People with medical problems, people over 65, and pregnant women and their unborn children are at high risk of getting sick and dying from COVID-19. Getting the vaccine is a way to follow Jesus's command to love your neighbor. (Pregnant women and anyone with questions should consult their health care provider.)

### Is the vaccine safe?

Yes. Before the vaccines can be administered to the public, they must complete comprehensive testing and receive Food and Drug Administration (FDA) certification to demonstrate that they are effective at preventing you from getting sick and dying from COVID-19. "Millions of people in the United States have received COVID-19 vaccines under the most intense safety monitoring in U.S. history." (CDC, February 15, 2021) There are very rare immediate reactions that you will be monitored for right after you get the vaccination. There is no live virus in the vaccine and you cannot catch COVID-19 from getting the vaccine.

### Are there side effects?

Most people are experiencing only mild side effects, especially after the second dose. It is normal to be sore in the area where you get the injection. You may also have some aches, fever and chills for a day or two. This is a sign that the vaccine is working with your immune system. Everyone is different. If you have questions, consult your health care provider, your local health department or the California Department of Public Health.

### Is it morally acceptable for me to get the vaccine?

Yes. All the vaccines being used in the US are morally permissible and can be used in good conscience according to the Vatican, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and the California Catholic Conference. (Visit [catholic.org/coronavirus](http://catholic.org/coronavirus) for complete information, including links to the moral and ethical analysis)

### What steps do I need to take after receiving the vaccine?

For the time being, continue to wear your mask, avoid large indoor gatherings, and maintain social distance. Encourage other people to get the vaccine who are able to do so. Stay informed with reliable information from your health care provider or public health authorities in your area.

### Is the vaccine free? Can I get it if I don't have insurance?

Yes, the vaccine is free and you can get it if you don't have insurance. There should be no co-pays or expense for registering for the vaccination.

### Where can I sign up?

- **Statewide:** California has a website, [myturn.ca.gov](http://myturn.ca.gov), to find registration information and to determine your eligibility. or call the CA COVID-19 Hotline at 1-833-422-4255 (M-F 8AM-8PM, Sa-Su 8AM-5PM) for assistance.
- **Local:**

**Continue to follow public health recommendations on how to stay safe!**