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2431 S. ACADIAN THRUWAY, SUITE 250
BATON ROUGE, LA 70808

(225) 344-7120
(225) 383-9591/FAX

EXEC@LACCB.ORG
WWW.LACCB.ORG

STATEMENT ON COVID-19 PFIZER AND MODERNA VACCINES

Our national and international news continues to be filled with reports surrounding the approval, availability, and arrival of COVID-19 vaccines. In many respects, this is indeed good news which brings with it a great sense of hope and optimism as the world continues to face a health crisis.

With these recent and ongoing developments, the worthy question of the ethical nature of such vaccines along with whether or not it is morally permissible to receive them, has already been and continues to be raised. This is both a complex and highly delicate issue as it generally focuses on whether or not the vaccines were developed in such a manner that utilized cell lines from aborted babies.

A thoughtful, detailed evaluation and analysis of this question has been completed by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committees on Pro-Life and Doctrine stating that the two vaccines produced by Pfizer and Moderna only are found to be "morally justified." Their extensive conclusion is offered below:

"The world is currently facing a health crisis. The number of deaths from COVID-19 is now almost one and a half million worldwide. In the United States, the toll is approaching 300,000. Given the urgency of this crisis, the lack of available alternative vaccines, and the fact that the connection between an abortion that occurred decades ago and receiving a vaccine produced today is remote, inoculation with the new COVID-19 vaccines in these circumstances can be morally justified.

For our part, we bishops and all Catholics and men and women of goodwill must continue to do what we can to ensure the development, production, and distribution of a COVID-19 vaccine without any connection to abortion and to help change what has become the standard practice in much medical research, a practice in which certain morally compromised cell lines are routinely used as a matter of course, with no consideration of the moral question concerning the origins of those cell lines."

As individuals consider whether or not to receive these vaccines, we remind the faithful to exercise prudence while consulting with their personal health care professional.

The full statement may be found on the USCCB's website:
<https://www.usccb.org/moral-considerations-covid-vaccines>