

(Date)

(Name of Institution)

(Address)

Reference: Religious Exemption

To (Administrator):

In that I am a member of the Catholic Church, I hereby submit this letter of religious exemption for vaccination. I have sincere religious beliefs that prohibit me from submitting to and receiving any Covid-19 vaccines that have been tested, developed or use aborted fetal cell lines. This also applies to any future vaccines that might use the remains of aborted children as well. I cannot in good conscience use any such products.

The Catechism which Pope John Paul II declared to be the "sure teaching norm of the Catholic Church" contains the tenets of our faith and our duty to adhere to these teachings regarding conscience states:

*1776 Deep within his conscience man discovers a law which he has not laid upon himself but which he must obey. Its voice, ever calling him to love and to do what is good and to avoid evil, sounds in his heart at the right moment.... For man has in his heart a law inscribed by God.... His conscience is man's most secret core and his sanctuary. There he is alone with God whose voice echoes in his depths."*⁴⁷ (1954)

1777 Moral conscience, present at the heart of the person, enjoins him at the appropriate moment to do good and to avoid evil. It also judges particular choices, approving those that are good and denouncing those that are evil. It bears witness to the authority of truth in reference to the supreme Good to which the human person is drawn, and it welcomes the commandments. When he listens to his conscience, the prudent man can hear God speaking.

1778 Conscience is a judgment of reason whereby the human person recognizes the moral quality of a concrete act that he is going to perform, is in the process of performing, or has already completed. In all he says and does, man is obliged to follow faithfully what he knows to be just and right. It is by the judgment of his conscience that man perceives and recognizes the prescriptions of the divine law:

Conscience is a law of the mind; yet Christians would not grant that it is nothing more; I mean that it was not a dictate, nor conveyed the notion of responsibility, of duty, of a threat and a promise.... Conscience is a messenger of him, who, both in nature and in grace, speaks to us behind a veil, and teaches and rules us by his representatives. Conscience is the aboriginal Vicar of Christ.

1779 It is important for every person to be sufficiently present to himself in order to hear and follow the voice of his conscience. This requirement of interiority is all the more necessary as life often distracts us from any reflection, self-examination or introspection. Return to your conscience, question it.... Turn inward, brethren, and in everything you do, see God as your witness.

1806 Prudence is the virtue that disposes practical reason to discern our true good in every circumstance and to choose the right means of achieving it. Prudence is 'right reason in action,' writes St. Thomas Aquinas. It is called *auriga virtutum* (the charioteer of the virtues); it guides the other virtues by setting rule and measure. It is prudence that immediately guides the judgment of conscience. The prudent man determines and directs his conduct in accordance with this judgment.

I am also taught through the teachings of Papal Encyclicals that conscience is the Divine Law which is inscribed into the heart and soul of man by God. For example:

"The natural law is written and engraved in the soul of each and every man, because it is human reason, ordaining him to do good and forbidding him to sin...But this command of human reason would not have the force of law if it were not the voice and interpreter of a higher reason to which our spirit and freedom must be submitted." (Leo XIII *Libertas Praestantissimum*, 597)

*"On his part, man perceives and acknowledges the imperatives of the divine law through the mediation of conscience. It is through his conscience that man sees and recognizes the demands of divine law. He is bound to follow this conscience faithfully in all his activity so that he may come to God, who is his last end. Therefore he must not be forced to act contrary to his conscience. Nor must he be prevented from acting according to his conscience, especially in religious matters. The reason is **that the exercise of religion, of its very nature, consists before all else in those internal, voluntary and free acts whereby man sets the course of his life directly toward God.** Acts of this kind cannot be commanded or forbidden by any merely human authority."* (*Dignitatis Humanae*, Pope Paul VI, 1965)

Synod of Bishops' address to the United Nations October 2, 1979:

*"In accordance with their dignity, all human beings, because they are persons, that is, beings endowed with reason and free will and, therefore, bearing a personal responsibility, are both impelled by their nature and bound by a moral obligation to seek the truth, especially religious truth. They are also bound to adhere to the truth once they come to know it and to direct their whole lives in accordance with its demands" (*Dignitatis humanae*, 2). "The practice of religion by its very nature consists primarily of those voluntary and free internal acts of conscience by which a human being directly sets his course towards God. No merely human power can either command or prohibit acts of this kind"*

Pope Paul VI, 1965 Gaudium et Spes:

"For its part, authentic freedom is an exceptional sign of the Divine image within man. For God has willed that man remain "under the control of his own decisions, so that he can seek his Creator spontaneously, and come freely to utter and blissful perfection through loyalty to Him. Hence man's dignity demands that he act according to a knowing and free choice that is personally motivated and prompted from within, not under blind internal impulse nor by mere external pressure."

Fourth Lateran Council:

"The Divine Law," says Cardinal Gousset, "is the supreme rule of actions; our thoughts, desires, words, acts, all that man is, is subject to the domain of the law of God; and this law is the rule of our conduct by means of our conscience. Hence it is never lawful to go against our conscience; as the Fourth Lateran council says, 'Quidquid fit contra conscientiam, aedificat ad gehennam.' ["Whatever is done in opposition to conscience is conducive to damnation."]"

Further, the Church teaching on Social Justice upholds my beliefs that using products from manufacturers engaged in aborted fetal research and vaccine production is wrong from both a personal and a societal perspective. Not only does it violate Catholic teaching on the grave sin of abortion and aborted fetal research, my use of these products also provides capital dollars for the industry to continue these practices, as evidenced with current clinical trials by Moderna, Pfizer, Sanofi/GSK and Johnson & Johnson, all of which are using aborted fetal cell lines in either the testing or the product itself.

Social justice can never be attained when society submits itself to the depravity of using the remains of aborted children for personal benefit or worse, corporate profit. It would be a direct violation of my conscience to purchase any products from these companies and in direct contradiction to the teachings founded in our Catholic faith. The Vatican expounds on this right stating:

"[T]here is a grave responsibility to use alternative vaccines and to make a conscientious objection with regard to those which have moral problems."

And finally, as Scripture and the writing of the Saints states:

"The kingdom of God is within." (Luke 17:21)

"Everyone who knows what is the right thing to do and doesn't do it commits a sin" (James 4:17)

"If we sin after receiving the truth judgment remains." (Hebrews 10: 26-27).

"It is better to perish in excommunication than to violate one's conscience." (St. Thomas Aquinas).

In that the use of these vaccines would be a violation of both Scripture and Catholic Doctrine on the duty to adhere to moral conscience, therefore, under the laws of the Catholic Church to which I am religiously and morally bound, I submit this exemption for vaccination.

Sincerely,

Respectfully,

(Signature)