



Email: bishop@cairns.catholic.org.au

15th October 2021

PASTORAL MESSAGE RE COVID VACCINATION

To the Clergy and People of the Diocese of Cairns

Questions have been raised in parishes about the moral rightness or otherwise of receiving the COVID vaccination.

Some vaccines currently available were tested using cells from fetuses aborted many decades ago. Respected ethicists and moral theologians have considered this and have generally concluded that, tragic though the original act was, it is better now to put that human material to some good purpose: saving other lives.

This is a legitimate and well-considered conclusion from a Catholic moral standpoint. A parallel moral example would be: if I was murdered – would it not be better to have some of my organs *harvested* to give life to others?

Apparently there are also many *on-line* conspiracy theories warning against all vaccinations. These should be regarded with great suspicion.

Those of us of a certain age would remember when, as children, we all received vaccinations or immunisations which rid our country of Polio and Tuberculosis (TB).

A commentary in the old Catechism on the Fifth Commandment stated that we all have *an obligation to take proper care of our own health and life* – and by extension the health and lives of all others.

Hence I would urge everyone for your own sake and for the care of others to become fully vaccinated against *Covid*.

This would be especially important for Eucharistic Ministers and those visiting pastorally in private homes, hospitals and aged care facilities.

Then we may all be able to return to some normality of life rather than continuing to live under the strained existence of the last eighteen (18) months.

This is our Christian obligation and responsibility.

Finally please also do be very careful about going to *Bad News* websites. I fear that these may be becoming for some people another form of *Internet Addiction*.

Yours truly in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, starting with a cross symbol followed by the name 'James' in a cursive script.

+ James Foley
BISHOP OF CAIRNS