On December 14, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades of Fort Wayne-South Bend, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ (USCCB) Committee on Doctrine, and Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City in Kansas, chairman of the USCCB’s Committee on Pro-Life Activities, issued a statement on the new COVID-19 vaccines. In their statement, the bishops address the moral concerns raised by the fact that the three vaccines that appear to be ready for distribution in the United States all have some connection to cell lines that originated with tissue taken from abortions.

With regard to the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, they concluded:

“In view of the gravity of the current pandemic and the lack of availability of alternative vaccines, the reasons to accept the new COVID-19 vaccines from Pfizer and Moderna are sufficiently serious to justify their use, despite their remote connection to morally compromised cell lines.

“Receiving one of the COVID-19 vaccines ought to be understood as an act of charity toward the other members of our community. In this way, being vaccinated safely against COVID-19 should be considered an act of love of our neighbor and part of our moral responsibility for the common good.”

With regard to the AstraZeneca vaccine, the bishops found it to be “more morally compromised” and consequently concluded that this vaccine “should be avoided” if there are alternatives available. “It may turn out, however, that one does not really have a choice of vaccine, at least, not without a lengthy delay in immunization that may have serious consequences for one’s health and the health of others,” the bishop chairmen stated. “In such a case … it would be permissible to accept the AstraZeneca vaccine.”

At the same time, the bishops also warned that Catholics “must be on guard so that the new COVID-19 vaccines do not desensitize us or weaken our determination to oppose the evil of abortion itself and the subsequent use of fetal cells in research.”

The full statement from the bishop chairmen may be found at: https://www.usccb.org/moral-considerations-covid-vaccines

— Public Affairs Office, USCCB
Upcoming Events

01|07, 14, 21, 28 Thursdays
Vermont Catholic Book Club: Silence
via Zoom • 7:30 - 8:30 pm
This January, join us as we read Shusaku Endo’s Silence. Two missionary priests secretly travel into 17th century Japan at a time when Christians are being persecuted harshly. What does it mean to be faithful to Christ in difficult times? This question and many others are posed in this challenging and gripping novel. We will meet four times to discuss the book and how we might learn from it. Bring a friend! Register: vermontcatholic.org/event/book-study-silence/

01|13, 20, 27 Wednesdays
Family & Faith in the Home
via Zoom • 8 - 9:30 pm
Parents are invited to attend an interactive webinar sponsored by the Diocese of Manchester with guest speakers Mike and Alicia Hernon of the Messy Family Project. Mike and Alicia have 10 children, and have much to share with parenting while living the Catholic faith. The webinars are as follows:
January 13, 8-9:30 p.m. – Communication in Marriage
January 20, 8-9:30 p.m. – Messy Parenting 101
January 27, 8-9:30 p.m. – Evangelizing Your Children
Register: vermontcatholic.org/event/family-faith-in-the-home/

01|20 Wednesday
Vermont Catholic Professionals Virtual Event
via Zoom • 8 - 9 am
Our January guest speaker is Deacon Pete Gummere – Bioethicist and Director of the Permanent Diaconate for the Diocese of Burlington. He will be presenting, “Discernment: Family, Career and Service to the Church.” Register: vermontcatholic.org/event/vermont-catholic-professionals-virtual-event/

01|21 Thursday
“Just Mercy” Book Study Group
via Zoom • 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm
Mercy Corps, a newly formed group of parishioners at Saint John Vianney Catholic Church, is hosting an online book study for Just Mercy by Bryan Stevenson. The series will meet monthly, January through June. Saint John Vianney Church will have copies of the book available for $10/copy. For more information, to make arrangements to pick up a copy of the book, or to register, please contact Connie McDonald at SJVGoodNews@gmail.com.

Christ Our Hope Campaign Update
To learn more or make a gift visit: christourhopevt.org.

DEC. 27, 2020 – JAN. 2, 2021
Challenges To Grow Your Marriage

Our Savior is Here.
How do you welcome him into your home?
Together, create a “Welcome to Our Home” feast to honor the Holy Family. Keep those holiday decorations displayed to help celebrate!
vermontcatholic.org/marriagechallenge

Thank you to all those who have made a gift already. We are more than 20% behind our goal and ask those that can to please consider a gift before the end of the year.
You can make a gift online: vermontcatholic.org/donate

2020 Bishop’s Annual Appeal Goal: $2,651,157

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As of December 16: $2,068,325