

# origins

CNS documentary service

## Statement on Use of Johnson & Johnson Vaccine

### Bishop Rhoades and Archbishop Naumann

*Use of the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine, approved Feb. 27 by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, raises moral concerns because it “was developed, tested and is produced with abortion-derived cell lines,” the chairmen of two U.S. bishops’ committees said March 2. The bishops concluded, however, that “while we should continue to insist that pharmaceutical companies stop using abortion-derived cell lines, given the worldwide suffering that this pandemic is causing, we affirm again that being vaccinated can be an act of charity that serves the common good.” Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades of*

*“If one has the ability to choose a vaccine, Pfizer or Moderna’s vaccines should be chosen over Johnson & Johnson’s.”*

*Fort Wayne-South Bend, Indiana, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Doctrine, and Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kansas, chairman of the USCCB’s Committee on Pro-Life Activities, made the comments in a joint statement. The bishops quoted the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, which judged that “when ethically irreplaceable COVID-19 vaccines are not available ... it is morally acceptable to receive COVID-19 vaccines that have used cell lines from aborted fetuses in their research and production process.” The bishops added, “If one can choose among equally safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines, the vaccine with the least connection to abortion-derived cell lines should be chosen.” The bishops’ statement follows.*

**t**he approval of Johnson & Johnson’s COVID-19 vaccine for use in the United States again raises questions about the moral permissibility of using vaccines developed, tested and/or produced with the help of abortion-derived cell lines.

Pfizer and Moderna’s vaccines raised concerns because an abortion-derived cell line was used for testing them, but not in their production. The Johnson & Johnson vaccine, however, was developed, tested and is produced with abortion-derived cell lines raising additional moral concerns.

The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has judged that “when ethically irre-

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