

Connecticut Senate Hearing—02/19/2020—Fr.Copenhagen

I am Father Michael Copenhagen, a Catholic priest who leads a church in NYS, a high school teacher of philosophy, theology, latin, biology, chemistry, and history. I have a family with six children not allowed to attend the religious school where I teach, effectively quarantined in my home because I refuse to violate the moral law; not just religious sentiment, but the moral law that binds everyone. One such moral issue: various vaccine products, such as MMR, lacking any ethical alternative on the market are produced in live cell cultures, such as WI-38, from aborted fetal remains which even after filtering, retain significant amounts of the child's sub-cellular DNA and protein in the final dose. Dr. Theresa Deisher's affidavit affirms this. Many Catholics and conscientious people upon a thorough moral analysis see clear immediate forced cooperation in the intrinsic evil of theft, desecration, experimentation and trafficking of human remains obtained through violence to produce the product. Regardless of documents and policy statements to date of some individual dioceses or bishop's conferences, this remains a magisterially unsettled question, which means that a catholic of well-informed conscience who judges compliance with such a vaccination morally impossible is **bound** in catholic teaching to refuse the procedure. (Catechism of the Catholic Church #1782/1800)<sup>1</sup>. Cooperation in trafficking of aborted fetal remains is one of a number of complex moral issues, including STD vaccines, and those which constitute extraordinary means where there is no moral obligation to receive them.

While the Church is not opposed to vaccination in principle, informed consent by the patient, free of coercion, is a fundamental pillar of Catholic bioethics and any humane medical ethic. Coercion absolutely undermines informed consent and the most basic tenet of the Hippocratic Oath—to do no harm—because violation of the patient's conscience by overriding refusal of a procedure is violence against the body and the soul. It is the most basic harm. It contradicts and undermines all legitimate public health; it abandon's the

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<sup>1</sup> CCC#1782: "Man has the right to act in conscience and in freedom so as personally to make moral decisions. '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.'"

physician's duty to care for the patient rather than become their master. There is little more hard-lined forceful coercion than your measure to ban an entire segment of the population from public life: from school, daycare, and the standard means of association with peers. Consent is empty if there is no right of refusal, and your proposal makes the price of refusal a permanent state of segregation, isolation, and banishment without even a temporary claimed infectious disease crisis. It makes forfeiture of consent the price of citizenship, which nullifies citizenship and in principle becomes slavery. Your measure not only dissolves constitutional religious protection, it undermines the common good generally—of which public health is only one part—by establishing the principle of state ownership of the citizens in their persons, it dissolves the common good by dissolving the autonomy which is the very essence of citizenship. It logically follows: if mass data is collected from such inoculations, you are engaged in forced human experimentation<sup>2</sup>; if people are injured, you are engaged in forced harm, and those who profit have no public liability or accountability. In the Catholic tradition and every good and free society, parents are the natural God given primary educators and guardians of their children: *not the state*. According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church #2229, parents “have the right to choose a school for [their children] which corresponds to their own convictions. This right is fundamental ... *Public authorities have the duty of guaranteeing this parental right and of ensuring the concrete conditions for its exercise.*” These are not only principles of faith or ethics, but principles of sanity. If you enact this legislation, you bear for all time the full moral weight and responsibility for outlawing the full public practice of the Catholic Faith, for coercion which fundamentally subverts the moral law and rights of citizens, and for undermining the very nature of your own elected office, which is to preserve the good, not to dissolve it.

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<sup>2</sup> CCC 2295: “Research or experimentation on the human being cannot legitimate acts that are in themselves contrary to the dignity of persons and to the moral law. The subjects' potential consent does not justify such acts. Experimentation on human beings is not morally legitimate if it exposes the subject's life or physical and psychological integrity to disproportionate or avoidable risks. *Experimentation on human beings does not conform to the dignity of the person if it takes place without the informed consent of the subject or those who legitimately speak for him.*”