

## PARISH CONTACTS

**ADMINISTRATOR**  
Fr Lam Vu

**PARISH OFFICE**  
350 Mortimer Road,  
Acacia Ridge QLD 4110

**POSTAL ADDRESS**  
PO Box 12,  
Acacia Ridge QLD 4110

**OFFICE HOURS**  
Monday to Friday  
9.30am to 2pm

**OFFICE PHONE**  
07 3277 2252

**PARISH EMAIL**  
acaciaridge@  
bne.catholic.net.au

**PARISH WEBSITE**  
www.fatimaacaciaridge.org.au

**AWAKEN MINISTRY**  
admin@awaken.org.au  
0437006264

**RISING YOUTH MINISTRY**  
hello@risingyouthministry.org  
0437006264

## MASS TIMES

Tuesday to Saturday 9.00am

Saturday 5pm (Vigil)  
Sunday 9am & 5pm (Spiritus)

**CONFESSIONS**  
Saturday 8-8.50am  
(Or by appointment)

**BAPTISMS**  
10.30am, 2nd Sunday  
of the Month.  
(Baptism Preparation: 6pm,  
first Thursday of the Month)

## PARISH DIARY

**24hour Adoration**  
6pm, Sun 25 Apr to  
6pm, Mon 26 April

**No Bible Study**  
Mon 26 Apr (ANZAC holiday)

**Adoration & Prayers**  
7-8.30pm, Fri 30 April

**No Bible Study**  
Mon 3rd May (Labour Day)

**Adoration & Prayers**  
7-8.30pm, Fri 7 May

**Bible Study**  
7-9pm—Mon 10 May

**Our Lady of Fatima  
Feastday Mass**  
9am—Thurs 13 May

**Adoration & Prayers**  
7-8.30pm, Fri 14 May

**RYM Gathering**  
1-3pm, Sun 16 May



# FATIMA WEEKLY

## OUR LADY OF FATIMA

### CATHOLIC PARISH

350 Mortimer Road, Acacia Ridge QLD 4110

## FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER: 25TH APRIL 2021

### PROPER OF THE MASS

**First Reading:** Acts 4:8-12; **Second Reading:** 1John 3:1-2;  
**Gospel:** John 10:11-18.

### Hello everyone!

Last Sunday was amazing!

Our day began with the gathering at **Rising Youth Ministry** where our children got to learn about the Holy Spirit, who He is and how He leads us in our lives. We also got to dance and sing to some of the children favourite Praise and Worship songs. The Church was alive; even some of the parents got involved in the singing and dancing.

After RYM, our children got to join the Parish at the Spiritus Mass to celebrate the **Awaken Community's 5th birthday**, which the Community invited Archbishop Mark Coleridge to be the main celebrant. It was a blessing to have his Grace's support and presence. The church was full, and the energy of the church was dynamic. It was so good to see the children and parishioners sang and danced to some of the action songs. Even the Archbishop was impressed. The children were looking forward to meeting him, and they absolutely enjoyed the experience. Thank you to the Awaken and RYM teams for an amazing day, and allowing our children to have a wonderful time. Happy birthday Awaken! *See photos of the day on pages 3-6 of this newsletter.*

Starting from this Saturday, and every last Saturday of the month during school terms, at the 5pm Vigil Mass, we will have a **Family Mass**. The liturgy (readings and music) will be led by the school staff and children of our two schools: Our Lady of Fatima School and St Stephen's School. The purpose of this mass is to allow the 2 schools to come together and to encourage the children with their family to participate at Mass. The next Mass will be on Saturday 29th May.

Now that the Easter Triduum is over, we are going back to the **2-square-meter rule** for church gathering. Under the 2sqm rule, our parish can accommodate up to 190 people. The three main problems we experienced with the full capacity rule are: the lack of volunteers and ushers, the confusion in seat booking and allocation before mass starts. We also noticed that some people booked on Eventbrite but do not show up, or even come late for mass; this caused a lot of problems for our ushers, as they have to decide to let people in or not when the church is full. Please make sure you cancel your booking if you know you cannot make it for mass. From now on, if you do not arrive at Mass on time, then your seat will be given away to those waiting.

We have to understand COVID-19 is not going away for awhile, and **online Mass booking** is going to be the norm. Please get use to the booking system, and don't expect to get a seat when you arrive. Please respect our ushers. They are only volunteers who are only trying to make everyone's life easy. We are lucky to have them.

The Fourth Sunday of Easter, is also called "**Good Shepherd Sunday**" because the Gospel at Mass always draws on the image of Jesus as our Good Shepherd. It's also the World Day of Prayer for Vocations. The word "vocation" comes from the Latin word "vocare", meaning "to call", and the word "voice" is closely related – and for us as Christians the most important voice of all is the voice of Jesus, our Good Shepherd.

Pope Francis releases a message for the **World Day of Prayer for Vocations**, and urges all religious and clergy to look to St. Joseph as a model of unreserved fidelity to God's invitation to service. Entitled "Saint Joseph: the Dream of Vocation," the message reminds us that the foster father of Jesus is an "*extraordinary figure, yet at the same time one so close to our own human experience.*" Please join the Church today to pray for good and holy priests and religious to serve in our Church. We pray especially for vocations to our Archdiocese.

This year, the Fourth Sunday of Easter coincides with **Anzac Day**; the day that marks the landing of Australian soldiers at Gallipoli, on the shores of what is now Anzac Cove, in Turkey on the 25th of April 1915. The liturgical norms of the Sunday take precedence, yet let us pray for those who have died in service of our country.

God bless,  
Fr Lam



## In Transition

We remember **Maree Neehouse** who died last Friday. Maree was a generous lady and helped OLOF for many years as a volunteer Parish Secretary. May her soul and the souls of all faithful departed rest in peace.



### Get vaccinated for the common good:

Vaccination against COVID-19 is a morally good thing, providing protection for the person vaccinated and the wider community. Some COVID-19 vaccines are associated with ethically questionable production and research practices, but Pope Francis and the Australian Bishops have advised that it is morally permissible to receive any vaccine made available. More information is available at <https://www.catholic.org.au/coronavirus>

Vaccination against COVID-19 is a morally good thing, providing protection for the person vaccinated and the wider community. Some COVID-19 vaccines are associated with ethically questionable production and research practices, but Pope Francis and the Australian Bishops have advised that it is morally permissible to receive any vaccine made available. More information is available at <https://www.catholic.org.au/coronavirus>

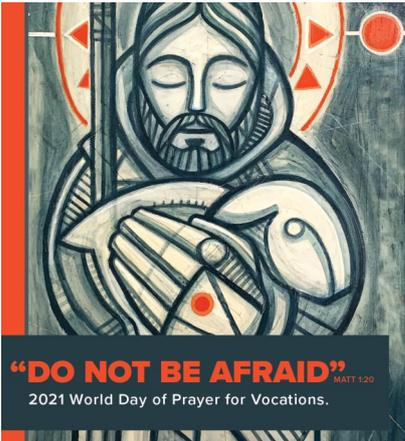
### prayer for vocations

Loving God,

With one voice we lift up our hearts to thank you today for our lives, our vocation and all your gifts to us. Inspire us all to know and live our vocation. Give courage to young people, to listen and follow the call, to serve you in the Archdiocese as your priests, religious and lay ministers.

Bless us, your family of Brisbane. Help those you call to listen to what your Holy Spirit is saying to us. Guide them to serve in your vineyard, that they may fulfill your holy will and make all things new.

Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen



## BRISBANE MARCH FOR LIFE RALLY: SATURDAY MAY 8, 2021

Meet at Speakers' Corner, Parliament House, corner Alice and George Streets, Brisbane, at 2:30pm for COVID check in. 3pm rally. After the rally, a March for Life around the Brisbane CBD, concluding at Speakers' Corner. This year we are specifically rallying and marching for:

- \* Protesting the abortion-to-birth laws passed in 2018, and the tragic result of a 58% increase in abortions in Queensland.
- \* Petitioning the Federal Government to allow the Human Rights (Children Born Alive Protection) Bill 2021 to go to a vote this year.
- \* Petitioning the state government to urgently increase palliative care funding and against legalising assisted suicide in Queensland.
- \* Protesting the fact that sex-selective abortions are occurring in Queensland.

As always it will be a family-friendly event, and Queensland Police will have a presence to help ensure our safety at all times. This event is organised by Cherish Life QLD.

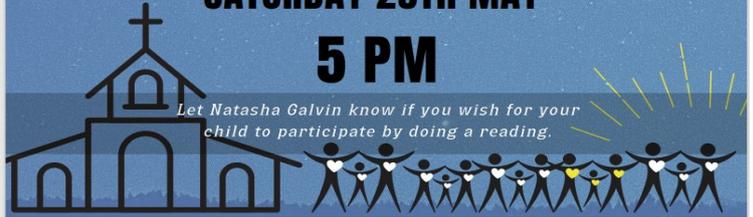
The **Catholic Leader** papers are available at the entrance of the church for \$4. Please put your money in SVP's Poor box.

# FAMILY MASS

SPECIAL EVENING MASSES TO CONNECT WITH OTHER FAMILIES THROUGH FAITH

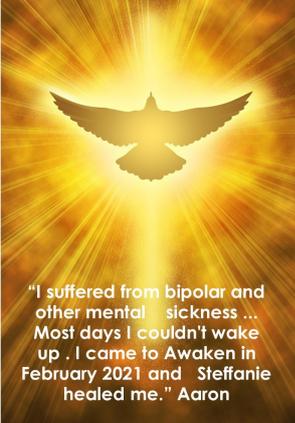
**SATURDAY 24TH APRIL & SATURDAY 29TH MAY**

**5 PM**



Let Natasha Galvin know if you wish for your child to participate by doing a reading.

"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses" Acts 1:8.



"I suffered from bipolar and other mental sickness ... Most days I couldn't wake up. I came to Awaken in February 2021 and Steffanie healed me." Aaron

## Praise & Worship Talks & Healing

Facilitated by Steffanie Le

**THE EVE OF PENTECOST SUNDAY 7PM, SATURDAY 22ND MAY**  
Our Lady of Fatima Church, 350 Mortimer Rd, Acacia Ridge

Register at [fatimaacaciaridge.org.au](http://fatimaacaciaridge.org.au)

Enquiries: [admin@awaken.org.au](mailto:admin@awaken.org.au)  
0437006264



## Rising Youth Ministry

OUR LADY OF FATIMA SCHOOL HALL  
350 Mortimer Road, Acacia Ridge

1pm, Sunday  
16th May



Register @ [fatimaacaciaridge.org.au](http://fatimaacaciaridge.org.au)

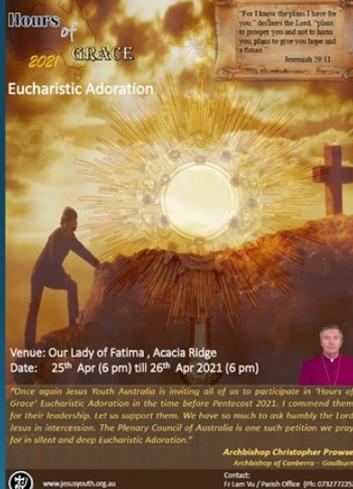


## Hours of Grace-2021 Eucharistic Adoration

Venue:  
Our Lady of Fatima, Acacia Ridge

Date:  
25<sup>th</sup> April 2021 (6pm) to  
26<sup>th</sup> April (6pm) 2021

Contact:  
Gracian Godinho  
Ph: 0406167999



Venue: Our Lady of Fatima, Acacia Ridge  
Date: 25<sup>th</sup> Apr (6 pm) till 26<sup>th</sup> Apr 2021 (6 pm)

"Once again Jesus Youth Australia is inviting all of us to participate in 'Hours of Grace' Eucharistic Adoration in the time before Pentecost 2021. I commend them for their leadership. Let us support them. We have so much to ask humbly the Lord Jesus in intercession. The Plenary Council of Australia is one such petition we pray for in silent and deep Eucharistic Adoration."



[www.jesuyouth.org.au](http://www.jesuyouth.org.au)



## ADORATION & PRAYER

EVERY FRIDAY  
7pm - 8.30pm

Our Lady of Fatima Church  
350 Mortimer Rd, Acacia Ridge

[admin@awaken.org.au](mailto:admin@awaken.org.au)

Awaken Community

0437 006 264









Photos courtesy of  
Alan Edgecomb  
and  
Dominic Chui

Photography by:



ALAN EDGECOMB

0410 555 685  
(07) 3711 3967

photo@purplemoon.com.au  
www.purplemoon.com.au





# The Holy See

---

## **MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS FOR THE 2021 WORLD DAY OF VOCATIONS**

25 April 2021

### ***Saint Joseph: The Dream of Vocation***

*Dear brothers and sisters,*

8 December last, the one hundred fiftieth anniversary of the declaration of Saint Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church, marked the beginning of a special year devoted to him (cf. *Decree of the Apostolic Penitentiary*, 8 December 2020). For my part, I wrote the Apostolic Letter *Patris Corde*, whose aim was “to increase our love for this great saint”. Saint Joseph is an extraordinary figure, yet at the same time one “so close to our own human experience”. He did not do astonishing things, he had no unique charisms, nor did he appear special in the eyes of those who met him. He was not famous or even noteworthy: the Gospels do not report even a single word of his. Still, through his ordinary life, he accomplished something extraordinary in the eyes of God.

God looks on the heart (cf. *1 Sam 16:7*), and in Saint Joseph he recognized the heart of a father, able to give and generate life in the midst of daily routines. Vocations have this same goal: to beget and renew lives every day. The Lord desires to shape the hearts of fathers and mothers: hearts that are open, capable of great initiatives, generous in self-giving, compassionate in comforting anxieties and steadfast in strengthening hopes. The priesthood and the consecrated life greatly need these qualities nowadays, in times marked by fragility but also by the sufferings due to the pandemic, which has spawned uncertainties and fears about the future and the very meaning of life. Saint Joseph comes to meet us in his gentle way, as one of “the saints next door”. At the same time, his strong witness can guide us on the journey.

Saint Joseph suggests to us *three key words* for each individual's vocation. The first is *dream*. Everyone dreams of finding fulfilment in life. We rightly nurture great hopes, lofty aspirations that ephemeral goals – like success, money and entertainment – cannot satisfy. If we were to ask people to express in one word their life's dream, it would not be difficult to imagine the answer: "to be loved". It is love that gives meaning to life, because it reveals life's mystery. Indeed, we only *have* life if we *give* it; we truly possess it only if we generously give it away. Saint Joseph has much to tell us in this regard, because, through the dreams that God inspired in him, he made of his life a gift.

The Gospels tell us of four dreams (cf. *Mt* 1:20; 2:13.19.22). They were calls from God, but they were not easy to accept. After each dream, Joseph had to change his plans and take a risk, sacrificing his own plans in order to follow the mysterious designs of God, whom he trusted completely. We may ask ourselves, "Why put so much trust in a dream in the night?" Although a dream was considered very important in ancient times, it was still a small thing in the face of the concrete reality of life. Yet Saint Joseph let himself be guided by his dreams without hesitation. Why? Because his heart was directed to God; it was already inclined towards him. A small indication was enough for his watchful "inner ear" to recognize God's voice. This applies also to our calling: God does not like to reveal himself in a spectacular way, pressuring our freedom. He conveys his plans to us with gentleness. He does not overwhelm us with dazzling visions but quietly speaks in the depths of our heart, drawing near to us and speaking to us through our thoughts and feelings. In this way, as he did with Saint Joseph, he sets before us profound and unexpected horizons.

Indeed, Joseph's dreams led him into experiences he would never have imagined. The first of these upended his betrothal, but made him the father of the Messiah; the second caused him to flee to Egypt, but saved the life of his family. After the third, which foretold his return to his native land, a fourth dream made him change plans once again, bringing him to Nazareth, the place where Jesus would begin his preaching of the Kingdom of God. Amid all these upheavals, he found the courage to follow God's will. So too in a vocation: God's call always urges us to take a first step, to give ourselves, to press forward. There can be no faith without risk. Only by abandoning ourselves confidently to grace, setting aside our own programmes and comforts, can we truly say "yes" to God. And every "yes" bears fruit because it becomes part of a larger design, of which we glimpse only details, but which the divine Artist knows and carries out, making of every life a masterpiece. In this regard, Saint Joseph is an outstanding example of acceptance of God's plans. Yet his was an *active acceptance*: never reluctant or resigned. Joseph was "certainly not passively resigned, but courageously and firmly proactive" (*Patris Corde*, 4). May he help everyone, especially young people who are discerning, to make God's dreams for them come true. May he inspire in them the courage to say "yes" to the Lord who always surprises and never disappoints.

A second word marks the journey of Saint Joseph and that of vocation: *service*. The Gospels show

how Joseph lived entirely for others and never for himself. The holy people of God invoke him as the *most chaste spouse*, based on his ability to love unreservedly. By freeing love from all possessiveness, he became open to an even more fruitful service. His loving care has spanned generations; his attentive guardianship has made him patron of the Church. As one who knew how to embody the meaning of self-giving in life, Joseph is also the patron of a happy death. His service and sacrifices were only possible, however, because they were sustained by a greater love: “Every true vocation is born of the gift of oneself, which is the fruit of mature sacrifice. The priesthood and consecrated life likewise require this kind of maturity. Whatever our vocation, whether to marriage, celibacy or virginity, our gift of self will not come to fulfilment if it stops at sacrifice; were that the case, instead of becoming a sign of the beauty and joy of love, the gift of self would risk being an expression of unhappiness, sadness and frustration” (*ibid.*, 7).

For Saint Joseph, service – as a concrete expression of the gift of self – did not remain simply a high ideal, but became a rule for daily life. He strove to find and prepare a place where Jesus could be born; he did his utmost to protect him from Herod’s wrath by arranging a hasty journey into Egypt; he immediately returned to Jerusalem when Jesus was lost; he supported his family by his work, even in a foreign land. In short, he adapted to different circumstances with the attitude of those who do not grow discouraged when life does not turn out as they wished; he showed the *willingness* typical of those who *live to serve*. In this way, Joseph welcomed life’s frequent and often unexpected journeys: from Nazareth to Bethlehem for the census, then to Egypt and again to Nazareth, and every year to Jerusalem. Each time he was willing to face new circumstances without complaining, ever ready to give a hand to help resolve situations. We could say that this was the *outstretched hand* of our heavenly Father reaching out to his Son on earth. Joseph cannot fail to be a model for all vocations, called to be the *ever-active hands of the Father*, outstretched to his children.

I like to think, then, of Saint Joseph, the protector of Jesus and of the Church, as the *protector of vocations*. In fact, from his willingness to serve comes his *concern to protect*. The Gospel tells us that “Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night” (*Mt 2:14*), thus revealing his prompt concern for the good of his family. He wasted no time fretting over things he could not control, in order to give full attention to those entrusted to his care. Such thoughtful concern is the sign of a true vocation, the testimony of a life touched by the love of God. What a beautiful example of Christian life we give when we refuse to pursue our ambitions or indulge in our illusions, but instead care for what the Lord has entrusted to us through the Church! God then pours out his Spirit and creativity upon us; he works wonders in us, as he did in Joseph.

Together with God’s call, which makes our greatest *dreams* come true, and our response, which is made up of generous *service* and attentive care, there is a third characteristic of Saint Joseph’s daily life and our Christian vocation, namely *fidelity*. Joseph is the “righteous man” (*Mt 1:19*) who daily perseveres in quietly serving God and his plans. At a particularly difficult moment in his life, he thoughtfully considered what to do (cf. v. 20). He did not let himself be hastily pressured. He did

not yield to the temptation to act rashly, simply following his instincts or living for the moment. Instead, he pondered things patiently. He knew that success in life is built on constant fidelity to important decisions. This was reflected in his perseverance in plying the trade of a humble carpenter (cf. *Mt 13:55*), a quiet perseverance that made no news in his own time, yet has inspired the daily lives of countless fathers, labourers and Christians ever since. For a vocation – like life itself – matures only through daily fidelity.

How is such fidelity nurtured? In the light of God's own faithfulness. The first words that Saint Joseph heard in a dream were an invitation not to be afraid, because God remains ever faithful to his promises: "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid" (*Mt 1:20*). *Do not be afraid*: these words the Lord also addresses to you, dear sister, and to you, dear brother, whenever you feel that, even amid uncertainty and hesitation, you can no longer delay your desire to give your life to him. He repeats these words when, perhaps amid trials and misunderstandings, you seek to follow his will every day, wherever you find yourself. They are words you will hear anew, at every step of your vocation, as you return to your first love. They are a refrain accompanying all those who – like Saint Joseph – say yes to God with their lives, through their fidelity each day.

This fidelity is the secret of joy. A hymn in the liturgy speaks of the "transparent joy" present in the home of Nazareth. It is the joy of simplicity, the joy experienced daily by those who care for what truly matters: faithful closeness to God and to our neighbour. How good it would be if the same atmosphere, simple and radiant, sober and hopeful, were to pervade our seminaries, religious houses and presbyteries! I pray that you will experience this same joy, dear brothers and sisters who have generously made God the *dream* of your lives, *servicing him* in your brothers and sisters through a *fidelity* that is a powerful testimony in an age of ephemeral choices and emotions that bring no lasting joy. May Saint Joseph, protector of vocations, accompany you with his fatherly heart!

*Rome, from Saint John Lateran, 19 March 2021, Feast of Saint Joseph*

Francis



# AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

## Bishops Commission for Life, Family and Public Engagement

### **Catholics in Australia encouraged to receive COVID-19 vaccine**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**April 20, 2021**

Catholics in Australia are being encouraged to receive a COVID-19 vaccine when it becomes available to them, with the relevant Bishops Commission saying it is morally permissible to accept any vaccine.

In a document published today, the Bishops Commission for Life, Family and Public Engagement acknowledges that there are ethical concerns about the way some of the vaccines have been developed or tested. That includes the use of cell lines derived from an abortion in the 1970s.

Despite those concerns, the Commission follows the guidance of the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in urging people to be vaccinated for their own health, and for the health of the wider community.

There is a particular imperative to protect the health of those who are vulnerable.

Citing the Vatican document, the bishops say "it is morally acceptable to receive COVID-19 vaccines that have used cell lines from aborted fetuses in their research and production process".

They add that "if you are only offered one option, you may receive whichever vaccine you are offered, including the AstraZeneca one, with a clear conscience".

For those who have "a serious reason" not to receive the vaccine, they are "morally obliged to do their utmost, by other protective means and appropriate behaviour, to avoid contracting COVID-19 themselves and to avoid transmission of the disease".

The bishops' advice expresses a strong preference for people to have a choice of which COVID-19 vaccine they receive.

When that choice is offered, Catholics should choose the least morally compromised vaccine – which in Australia would currently mean the Pfizer vaccine or, in future, Novavax (if approved).

Archbishop Peter A Comensoli, the chair of the Bishops Commission for Life, Family and Public Engagement, reiterated the Church's view that civil and health authorities should "work ethically with respect for every human person from conception until natural death".

"At all times we oppose the destruction of human life," Archbishop Comensoli said.

"At the same time, remote connection with such actions is an important factor when considering our responsibility to the common good and the health of others."

The document released today, which includes questions and answers about COVID-19 vaccines, encourages people to consult with their own medical practitioner when making decisions about vaccines.

Women who are pregnant or hoping to get pregnant are specifically advised to consult their doctor.

Find the bishops' guidance on the COVID-19 vaccines, including frequently asked questions, at: <https://catholic.org.au/coronavirus>



# AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

## Bishops Commission for Life, Family and Public Engagement

April 2021

### **FAQS and Guidance for the Catholic community in Australia regarding a COVID-19 vaccine**

#### **Key advice:**

1. Vaccination against COVID-19 is a morally good thing, and to be encouraged.
2. While some or all COVID-19 vaccines currently available or intended to be made available in Australia are associated with ethically questionable production and research practices, it is morally permissible to receive any and all vaccines made available.
3. The Catholic Church encourages governments to conduct all medical research and health delivery in moral ways, and to offer patients a choice of options.
4. If you have medical questions about a vaccine, consult with your medical practitioner.

#### **Should I receive the COVID-19 vaccine?**

The decision to receive any vaccine, including a COVID-19 vaccine, is a decision to be made in consultation with your doctor. This Q&A will provide information on moral matters relating to vaccines, but medical decisions are to be made with medical advice.

If a person decides, for reasons of conscience, to refuse a vaccine, they are morally obliged to do their utmost, by other protective means and appropriate behaviour, to avoid contracting COVID-19 themselves and to avoid transmission of the disease, particularly to the most vulnerable or to those who – for medical reasons – cannot be vaccinated.

#### **If my doctor says it is safe for me to get the vaccine, do I have to get it?**

In its [\*Note on the morality of using some anti-Covid-19 vaccines\*](#), the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith is clear that "vaccination is not, as a rule, a moral obligation" and "must be voluntary". No one should be coerced to receive any vaccine.

However, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith goes on to say that the morality of vaccination is not only about your own health, but also the duty to pursue the common good by protecting the health of others, especially the weakest and most vulnerable.

One would therefore need a serious reason not to receive the vaccine.

#### **Which vaccines are or will be available in Australia?**

The Pfizer vaccine and the AstraZeneca vaccine are currently available in Australia. While the Pfizer vaccine and the initial doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine have been sourced from overseas, it is intended that 50 million doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine will be manufactured in Australia.

The federal Government has also entered into an agreement for 51 million doses of the Novavax vaccine. The Novavax vaccine still needs to go through approval from the Therapeutic Goods Administration before being made available in Australia.

Information about available vaccines is updated and accessible from the Australian Government Department of Health: <https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/covid-19-vaccines>

### **What are the ethical issues surrounding the vaccines that will be available in Australia?**

The HEK-293 cell line was used in the development, production and testing of the **AstraZeneca** vaccine. The HEK-293 cell line was used to test the efficacy of the **Pfizer** and **Novavax** vaccines, but not in their development or production.

The HEK-293 cell line was derived from the kidney of an aborted baby girl in the 1970s, and cell lines derived from these cells continue to be used in a broad range of scientific research, including in the production and testing of vaccines.

### **Given that all the vaccines available in Australia have some link to the HEK-293 cell line, is it ethical to use any of them?**

Given the very remote connection of the cell line to its origins, a person may receive a vaccine that uses the HEK-293 cell line or any other cell line derived from aborted fetal cells in its production, development or testing. To do so *would not* be to co-operate in any abortion occurring in the past, nor would it be co-operating in further abortions occurring in the future, and so it can be received with a clear conscience.

However, some people may want to distance themselves as far as possible from the death of the child whose cells were taken to cultivate the HEK-293 cell line and from the fetal tissue industry, and wish to discourage the use of this cell line in future research and production, so would prefer to choose a vaccine that has as minimal a link as possible to this abortion.

### **Most Australians will probably have no choice as to which vaccine is made available to them. What does that mean for my responsibility to choose an ethically-sourced vaccine if one is available?**

If it is possible for people to have a choice, then they *should* be given one, and we urge the Government to respect the consciences of Australians and allow them to make a choice in the vaccine they receive.

Where Australians *are* given a choice, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has said we should choose the least morally compromised vaccine. This would mean preferring the Pfizer or Novavax vaccine over the AstraZeneca vaccine.

Where Australians are given no choice, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith [has made it clear](#) that “it is morally acceptable to receive COVID-19 vaccines that have used cell lines from aborted fetuses in their research and production process.”

Therefore, if you are only offered one option, you may receive whichever vaccine you are offered, including the AstraZeneca one, with a clear conscience.

**I am concerned about the speed at which these vaccines have been developed, and about reports of adverse reactions. Are these vaccines safe to take?**

The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) recently recommended “that the COVID-19 vaccine by Pfizer (Comirnaty) is preferred over COVID-19 vaccine AstraZeneca in adults aged under 50 years”.

These are matters to be discussed with your medical professional; it is not the role of bishops to advise on the safety or efficacy of vaccines.

**I have heard that the effect on fertility is yet unknown. I am a woman of child-bearing age. Should I hold off on getting the vaccine?**

This is a matter to be discussed with your doctor.

**What happens if the doctor won't tell me what vaccine I'm getting?**

It is a basic principle of both medical ethics and medical law today that the patient has a right to information about any medication before it is administered to them, so that they can provide free and informed consent.

The Australian bishops have been assured by the Australian Government that doctors will be transparent and open with their patients, and that Australians will continue to be able to receive clear answers to questions they have about any health product they are receiving, including vaccines.

**Final note**

Catholics and their families have a right to clear and accurate information about vaccines. The bishops remind everyone that we have a duty of care to the most vulnerable. Exercises in misinformation, unbalanced sharing of facts or fear-mongering, whether by electronic communications or other means, are not appropriate and are inconsistent with our Christian commitment to truth and mercy.

***Approved by***

**Archbishop Peter A Comensoli**

Chair, Bishops Commission for Life, Family and Public Engagement



## A Care First approach to 'End of Life'

Moral issues such as abortion and euthanasia are complex. We all have our own human feelings about these perplexing issues but at times like these it is essential we carefully study the Church's teaching. We must ensure we are following the will of God and not our own individual desires.

The Church's teaching is clear: "nothing and no one can in any way permit the killing of an innocent human being, whether a foetus or an embryo, an infant or adult, an old person, or one suffering from an incurable disease, or a person who is dying or suffering senile dementia." (1) (CTS pg25)

At the same time the Church acknowledges it may be tempting to think of euthanasia as more humane, more compassionate, more loving, and does not dispute the fact that many of those who support the idea do so because they really believe that it is a loving solution to suffering....Let us not make the mistake, however, of thinking that we are respecting freedom of choice when we provide the means for someone to kill themselves, or of thinking that we are being loving and compassionate when we intentionally and actively hasten a person's death. We respect freedom of choice only if and when we are sure that our social structures and laws don't make anyone feel that they or society would be better off if they were dead. We are compassionate when we ensure that our society and its laws leave no one feeling that their life is not worth living, they are a burden or they are under some subtle obligation to end their lives. (2) (Archbishop Coleridge quoted in *Love is Stronger than Death*)

Those that support euthanasia, such as Go Gentle and Dying with Dignity, would rather the Church not have a voice in the matter. Even if we did choose to leave the public square they would still have to counter these other quite secular roadblocks to their goal:

- the Australian Medical Association, who are opposed to euthanasia
- 108 of the 109 World Medical Associations who are also opposed to euthanasia
- Palliative Care practitioners, who emphatically exclude euthanasia as any part of their treatments
- a majority of indigenous people, who fear and are culturally opposed to euthanasia
- the inherent social injustice that euthanasia will be made available statewide, but the same access has never been afforded to palliative care services
- the contradictory messages that youth suicide should be prevented but euthanasia is permissible
- the logic that properly funded palliative services available statewide would eliminate the need for euthanasia, at a cost of \$400 million annually when the total health budget is \$16 billion, but they still demand it as a "choice" where none currently exists for palliation

There are many resources the Archdiocese has made available so that parishioners can become better informed on why the Church supports a 'care first' approach on this issue: [archbne.org/dtrl](http://archbne.org/dtrl)

If you wish to discuss this matter further or to take some action then please contact fellow parishioner Noel Sweeney on mobile 0423550052 or email [nsweeney47@yahoo.com.au](mailto:nsweeney47@yahoo.com.au)