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Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops  
2500 Don Reid Drive  
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Your Eminencies and Excellencies,

My name is Jeff Gunnarson. I'm the national president of Campaign Life Coalition, Canada's largest pro-life organization. We defend, primarily through political means, the sanctity of human life against threats posed by abortion, euthanasia, reproductive and genetic technologies, cloning, eugenics, population control, and immoral medical experimentation. We also run the National March for Life each year in our nation's capital.

I'm writing to you today to express my concern, and the concern of many of our supporters, about policies adopted in some dioceses and archdioceses throughout our country that require those in priestly ministry to receive a COVID vaccination and/or require the faithful to receive a COVID vaccination to enter a church and receive the sacraments.

As of this writing, all COVID vaccines currently approved for use in Canada (Moderna, Pfizer, AstraZeneca, and Johnson & Johnson) are tainted by abortion, that is, they are produced and/or tested with cell lines originating from children who were murdered via abortion. <sup>(1)</sup>

Please bear with me as I spend a moment addressing this matter.

Fetal cell line **HEK-293**, used in research for and development of the **Moderna, Pfizer, and AstraZeneca** vaccines, originated from a healthy girl <sup>(2)</sup> electively aborted at a minimum of 12-weeks gestation in the Netherlands in the early 1970s. <sup>(3)</sup> She was targeted for her organs. Her Human Embryonic Kidneys (HEK) were first harvested and then later "minced with scissors" <sup>(4)</sup> by Dutch molecular biologist Dr. Alex van der Eb and Canadian biologist Dr. Frank Graham in their production of an "immortalized" cell line.

States Dr. van der Eb about the harvesting of this girl's body parts: "So the kidney material, the fetal kidney material was as follows: the kidney of the fetus was, with an unknown family history, was obtained in 1972, probably. [...] The fetus, as far as I can remember was completely normal. Nothing was wrong. The reasons for the abortion were unknown to me." <sup>(5)</sup>

Allow me to introduce you to the baby behind cell line HEK-293.

The pro-life movement has named her **Johanna**, <sup>(6)</sup> meaning "God is gracious." This precious child was created in the image of God *to be loved* and *to love*. Johanna had her own DNA, her own fingerprints, her own *beautiful smile*. We'll never know the colour of her eyes. She would have been in her early 50s today, perhaps with children and grandchildren of her own, had she been given a chance to live. While Johanna was killed for her body parts so many years ago, her living cells <sup>(7)</sup> were used to create a cell line that is still used today – and all of this, without her consent.

Let us take a moment to remember and honour Johanna and lament the injustice committed against her...

Fetal cell line **PER.C6**, used in research and development of the **Johnson & Johnson** vaccine, originated from a "healthy...completely normal" <sup>(8)</sup> boy electively aborted at 18-weeks' gestation in the Netherlands in 1985. The boy's embryonic retinal cells (Primary Embryonic Retinoblasts or PER) were used for the creation of this cell line.

States Dr. van der Eb about the harvesting of this boy's body part: "So I isolated retina from a fetus, from a healthy fetus as far as could be seen, of 18 weeks old...the cells were frozen, stored in liquid nitrogen, and in 1995 one of these was thawed for the generation of the PER.C6 cells." <sup>(9)</sup>

Allow me to introduce you to the baby behind cell line PER.C6.

We've named him **Dan**, meaning "God is my judge." He would have been 37 years old had he not been murdered and his body parts harvested. Dan came into this world seeking *love and protection*, but all he found were contempt and rejection. He had his own *unique gifts and talents* to offer the world, but we'll never know what they were. By this time, Dan could have been a father, a professor, a musician, perhaps a consecrated layperson or even a priest. But he was robbed of everything. Instead of Dan and all his body parts being laid to rest in peace, cell lines produced from his living cells are being used today in a crime against Dan and the dignity that he is owed as a human being.

Please, let us take a moment to remember and honour Dan...

The murder, dismemberment, and exploitation of Johanna and Dan for their body parts is not rare or isolated. Countless preborn children have been targeted by elective abortion for their brain, lungs, eyes, skin and other tissues as part of a horrific international trade that continues unabated to this day. <sup>(10)</sup> And, it's happening right here. In fact, one research centre in Canada was documented in 2020 as using fetal tissue, including fetal lung stem cells, obtained from babies aborted in the United States and shipped here. <sup>(11)</sup>

Adding to this horror is the documented evidence that preborn babies targeted for organ harvesting are *aborted alive* so their body parts are as fresh as possible. <sup>(12)</sup> Biologists know that a living cell line cannot be established from dead tissue. <sup>(13)</sup> The scientific literature shows gruesome instances where researchers extract fetal tissue while the baby's heart is still beating. <sup>(14)</sup>

When it comes to discerning the morality of various medical interventions, the Catholic Church makes it clear that a person may be required to *refuse* such a medical intervention, including an abortion-tainted vaccination, when guided by an informed conscience that comes to a sure judgment. <sup>(15)</sup> Spiritual leaders do grave harm when they coerce those who have declined abortion-tainted COVID vaccines — lay-faithful or priests — to violate their consciences.

Many Catholics, both laity and ordained, aware of the murder and exploitation deliberately perpetrated against Johanna, Dan, and many other pre-born children, refuse to take any COVID vaccines that are in any way connected to this barbaric and horrific slaughter of the innocents. For many Catholics, taking an abortion-tainted vaccine is to cooperate with a culture of death that sacrifices children to facilitate other people's health, safety, and well-being. In this way, the culture of death is not much different from ancient pagan cultures whose gods demanded child sacrifice to avert calamities and keep people safe. Many Catholics today refuse to take abortion-tainted pharmaceuticals because to them it's equivalent to child sacrifice.

The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF), aware of the controversy of using vaccines connected to abortion, stated in a 2020 note that "vaccination is not, as a rule, a moral obligation and that, therefore, **it must be voluntary.**" <sup>(16)</sup> (emphasis added)

Moreover, the CDF in this same note "encouraged" pharmaceutical companies and governmental health agencies "to produce, approve, distribute and offer ethically acceptable vaccines that do not create problems of conscience for either health care providers or the people to be vaccinated."

When it comes to the matter of attending church and receiving the sacraments, the Catholic Church is clear that the faithful, on account of their baptism, have "rights within the Church: to receive the sacraments, to be nourished with the Word of God and to be sustained by the other spiritual helps of the Church." <sup>(17)</sup> These rights apply as much to the vaccinated as the vaccine-free who, according to a well-informed conscience, refuse to take abortion-tainted injections.

It would be a mistake to substitute a *vaccine passport* for a *baptism certificate* when it comes to deciding who can be admitted into churches to receive the sacraments.

St. Paul teaches that the baptized faithful are called to be one in Christ. Yet, policies requiring vaccination either for ministry or to receive sacraments are dividing the body of Christ, pitting Christians against one another. The Christian faith teaches that in Christ, there is "neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus." (Gal. 3:28) And, might I be so bold as to add, that *in*

*Christ there is neither vaccinated or un-vaccinated:* all are called to be one in Christ. We must put away those things that needlessly divide us. Unity comes from God; division from Satan.

Your Eminencies and Excellencies, I ask that you respect your priests and lay-faithful who have decided in good conscience to refuse COVID-19 vaccines because they are tainted by abortion. Please respect and accommodate their consciences along with their free and informed decision. Please keep the churches open to everyone, no matter what their vaccination status is. I also ask this of you as a Catholic who has chosen to follow my conscience in taking a stand for Johanna, Dan, and all other pre-born victims deliberately killed so their organs can be harvested, trafficked, and experimented on.

As a leader of our country's oldest pro-life organization, I want to let you know that we're throwing our support behind a growing movement of pro-life men and women around the world who are advocating for alternatives to any pharmaceutical product connected in one way or another to aborted babies. I invite you to join our movement and to stand up for pre-born babies, who, even today, are still targeted for abortion and harvesting of their body parts for research and experiments.

Johanna, Dan, and many like them need champions like you and me. They deserve to have their lives remembered, acknowledged, and honoured. The crimes against their dignity as human beings must come to an end. These crimes must not be perpetuated through ignorance, cowardice, or lack of caring.

Catholics who decide against taking COVID vaccines because they're tainted by abortion not only give what one spiritual leader called "prophetic witness" <sup>(18)</sup> against the culture of death, but, in taking this stand, they are also building up a culture of life where all human life is respected, especially life in the womb.

With God's help, may we all live to see a day where safeguarding our health and safety includes, first and foremost, safeguarding the health and safety of those most vulnerable among us, the pre-born.

In this spirit, I ask you to steer clear of or cease policies that mandate COVID vaccines tainted by abortion. And, if you have coerced priests and laity you spiritually guide to participate in medical interventions contrary to their consciences, I urge you to make remedy.

I'm open to communicating with you further on this matter prior to the distribution of these concerns to a wider audience.

For life and family,



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Cc:  
All Catholic Cardinals, Archbishops, and Bishops of Canada  
Archbishop Ivan Jurkovič, Apostolic Nuncio to Canada

## Footnotes

- (1) The Canadian-based *Children of God for Life* and U.S.-based *Lozier Institute* detail COVID-19 vaccines that utilize aborted fetal cells. See the following websites: <https://cogforlife.org/guidance/> and <https://lozierinstitute.org/update-covid-19-vaccine-candidates-and-abortion-derived-cell-lines/>
- (2) News Medical, *HEK293 Cells: Applications and Advantages* by Hannah Simmons, M.Sc., last updated January 8, 2019: <https://www.news-medical.net/life-sciences/HEK293-Cells-Applications-and-Advantages.aspx>
- (3) The National Catholic Bioethics Center, *The Ethics of HEK 293* by Alvin Wong, M.D., 2006: [https://www.pdnet.org/C1257D43006C9AB1/file/5265B61D5497F52585257D94004802BB/\\$FILE/ncbq\\_2006\\_0006\\_0003\\_0077\\_0099.pdf](https://www.pdnet.org/C1257D43006C9AB1/file/5265B61D5497F52585257D94004802BB/$FILE/ncbq_2006_0006_0003_0077_0099.pdf)
- (4) See testimony by Dutch molecular biologist Alex van der Eb, top researcher in the creation of HEK 293 and PER.C6 cell lines, to the FDA's advisory committee on vaccines and related biological products at the FDA's Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research on May 16, 2001: [https://web.archive.org/web/20170516050447/https://www.fda.gov/ohrms/dockets/ac/01/transcripts/3750t1\\_01.pdf](https://web.archive.org/web/20170516050447/https://www.fda.gov/ohrms/dockets/ac/01/transcripts/3750t1_01.pdf)
- (5) *ibid.*
- (6) Centre for Bioethical Reform UK, *Don't Forget Johanna - Abortion / Vaccine Link*, February 11, 2021: <https://www.cbruk.org/dontforgetjohanna>
- (7) CatholicCulture.org, *Abortion-Linked Vaccines: A Moral Analysis—Michael Pakaluk, Jay Richards*, May 27, 2021: <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=12522>
- (8) Testimony of Dutch molecular biologist Alex van der Eb, top researcher in the creation of HEK 293 and PER.C6 cell lines, to the FDA's advisory committee on vaccines and related biological products at the FDA's Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research on May 16, 2001: [https://web.archive.org/web/20170516050447/https://www.fda.gov/ohrms/dockets/ac/01/transcripts/3750t1\\_01.pdf](https://web.archive.org/web/20170516050447/https://www.fda.gov/ohrms/dockets/ac/01/transcripts/3750t1_01.pdf)
- (9) *ibid.*
- (10) See investigations from U.S.-based Centre for Medical Progress: <https://www.centerformedicalprogress.org/human-capital/>
- (11) See 2016 documents obtained by attorney Mike Seibel and published online on September 30, 2020 at *Abortion on Trial*: <https://www.abortionontrial.org/post/breaking-transfer-agreements-show-unm-sent-baby-body-parts-to-universities-across-the-us-and-canada>
- (12) Catholic World Report, *Exploring the dark world of vaccines and fetal tissue research*, by Monica Seeley, May 17, 2021: <https://www.catholicworldreport.com/2021/05/17/exploring-the-dark-world-of-vaccines-and-fetal-tissue-research-part-1/>
- (13) The Stream.org, *The Cell Lines Used for COVID-19 Vaccines Came from Carefully Planned Abortions, Not Miscarriages*, by José L. Trasancos, Ph.D., April 30, 2021: <https://stream.org/the-cell-lines-used-for-covid-19-vaccines-came-from-carefully-planned-abortions-not-miscarriages/>
- (14) Catholic World Report, *Exploring the dark world of vaccines and fetal tissue research*, by Monica Seeley, May 17, 2021: <https://www.catholicworldreport.com/2021/05/17/exploring-the-dark-world-of-vaccines-and-fetal-tissue-research-part-1/>
- (15) The National Catholic Bioethics Center, *Vaccine Exemption Template Letter*, July 7, 2021: <https://www.ncbcenter.org/ncbc-news/vaccineletter>
- (16) Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Note on the morality of using some anti-Covid-19 vaccines*, Dec. 21, 2020: [https://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc\\_con\\_cfaith\\_doc\\_20201221\\_nota-vaccini-anticovid\\_en.html](https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20201221_nota-vaccini-anticovid_en.html)
- (17) *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, para. 1269
- (18) Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann, chairman of the U.S. bishops' pro-life committee, in letter published on the Archdiocese of Kansas City website, August 27, 2021: <https://archkck.org/archbishop-naumann-on-covid-vaccine-mandates/>