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12 January 2020

Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord

“I the Lord have called you for the victory of justice, I have grasped you by the hand.” (Is. 42:6).

As Catholic citizens of New York State, we have become used to our state government overreaching its authority and abusing our rights. The areas in which the government does this are too many to mention. One of the latest instances of this was on 13 June 2019, when the Governor signed State Senator Brad Hoylman's bill (S.2994A) which repealed the religious exemption that allowed parents to refuse state-mandated vaccinations for their children. This draconian law was brutal because it bans unvaccinated children from almost every place with other children, including private schools and childcare centers.

And now this same Senator Hoylman is proposing more laws that would further erode a parents' right to decide for themselves whether or not to have their children vaccinated. There are dual bills in the State Assembly and Senate which would demand mandatory influenza vaccines for persons attending daycare. Starting with newborns who are in childcare places, and would extend to children who go to any school. This, despite the fact that flu vaccines have proven largely ineffective and have caused injuries and even death.

Additionally, there is a set of bills that demand that all children born after 1 January 2009 be vaccinated against the sexually transmitted human papillomavirus. The vaccine for this virus, Gardasil HPV has cause thousands of injuries and deaths.

One of the reasons we have for objecting to these vaccinations, is that some vaccinations are made from the cells of aborted babies. In fact, in the case of several diseases, the only vaccinations available in the United States are derived from the aborted children.

Some parents have asked me about the moral permissibility of using these vaccines. In the past, upon doing some research on the question, I relied on the advice of moral theologians and ethicists who claim that they are faithful to the magisterium of the Church, and in full conformity

with her teachings. Their response to my questions was that since these abortions from which the vaccines are derived took place such a long time ago, and since the person using the vaccine had nothing to do with the abortion, the cooperation in the sin of abortion was remote and mediate. Therefore, they concluded, it was morally permissible to use these vaccines.

More recently, however, I have done more research, and have come across authorities with different responses to the question. I want to apologize to those parents who have asked me in the past about using these vaccines. I thought I had gotten the best possible responses from experts whose judgement I trusted. These were not people without the academic credentials and teaching positions that one would rely on for their expertise.

The Holy See has issued some clarifications that have helped me understand the responsibility that we have as Catholics in regard to these vaccines. On 9 June 2005, Bishop Elio Sgreccia, President of the Pontifical Academy for Life issued a letter called “Moral Reflections on Vaccines Prepared for Cells from Aborted Fetuses”. In it, he said that these vaccines may be used only for *an extrema ratio- an extreme reason*. Such a reason would be an epidemic of the disease, such as the 1964 German measles epidemic which caused 20,000 cases of congenital rubella. He points out that even if the moral cooperation in using such vaccines is remote, mediate and material, parents and doctors have the obligation to pressure pharmaceutical companies to make vaccines available that are not derived from aborted babies. He states, “Therefore, doctors and fathers of families have a duty to take recourse to alternative vaccines (if they exist), putting pressure on the political authorities and health systems so that other vaccines without moral problems become available. They should take recourse, if necessary, to conscientious objection with regard to the use of vaccines produced by means of cell lines of human foetal origin. Equally, they should oppose by all means (in writing, through the various associations, mass media, etc.) the vaccines which do not yet have morally acceptable alternatives

creating pressure so that alternative vaccines are prepared, which are not connected with the abortion of a human fetus, and requesting vigorous legal control of the pharmaceutical industry producers.”

At any rate, there is a wonderful organization called Children of God for Life which has been doing a lot of work to explain just what our obligations are as Catholics in this matter. They have a very good website with lots of relevant information, including charts which show which vaccinations are derived from aborted infants, and what diseases they are used for. They also show which vaccines have morally acceptable alternatives.

I have ordered from this organization their brochures on the subject, which I will make available to you as soon as they arrive.

Please note though, on the back of this week's bulletin, the pieces of legislation that are now being presented in the current session of the NYS legislature, and take the action on them that is designated. We cannot let our state continue down the path of compelling us to act against our religious and moral beliefs. Now, as Archbishop Vigano has said, it is OUR TIME to stand up and take our rights back!!!