



DIOCESE OF SACRAMENTO

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OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

August 13, 2021

Dear Brothers:

I instruct you not to sign any letter affirming or granting a religious exemption for those who choose not to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

Doctrinal and moral guidance by both the [Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith](#) at the Holy See and the Doctrine Committee of the [United States Catholic Conference](#) have provided the clergy and faithful with clear teaching that Catholic men and women may receive the COVID-19 vaccine in good conscience. Anyone with personal medical concerns about the vaccine should consult with a health care professional.

Both offices have reminded us of the moral obligations of charity. The individual disciple of the Lord Jesus should not only look to one's own personal benefit but also to the common good of public health that will be served by receiving the vaccine.

Anyone who chooses not to receive the vaccination for religious reasons does so on basis of their own personal conscience. The pastor is not obligated to provide his personal or ecclesial endorsement for such a personal choice.

Members of the faithful who choose not to be vaccinated are encouraged to properly inform their conscience. They should also keep in mind the moral obligations of charity to care for others in the community, especially the most vulnerable. Charity will require reasonable, concrete actions to protect others from possible infection such as wearing masks and limiting social contact.

I hope these instructions are clear and helpful. Join me in asking God's mercy to bring an end to the pandemic, grant healing to all the afflicted, perseverance to all who care for them, and comfort to all who mourn. May the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Mercy, grant to us the wisdom and charity of her Son, Jesus.

Respectfully,

+Jaime Soto
Bishop of Sacramento