

## FROM OUR PASTOR



There has been much discussion at the national and diocesan level about the moral acceptability of receiving the COVID-19 vaccines. The Holy See, the USCCB, and expert moral theologians, such as Fr. Tad Pacholczyk, the Director of Education at the National Catholic Bioethics Center, have all provided guidance in understanding the moral issues associated with the vaccines that are currently available.



Many have understandably expressed concerns about the association between the current vaccines and cell lines derived from an abortion decades ago. While we know that receiving the vaccines under current circumstances is morally licit and the Holy Father has encouraged many to receive the vaccines, we continue to have the moral obligation to express our objection to pharmaceutical companies in the use of these cell lines and to insist that they use alternatives. To that end, I so strongly encourage you to visit our parish website, [www.setonlakeridge.org](http://www.setonlakeridge.org), to find a link to form letters by which you can express your objections and encouragement of ethical pharmaceutical practices. On our website, you can also find responses to a series of "Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)" regarding Covid-19 vaccinations as provided by the Diocese of Arlington.



The **Equality Act** is a comprehensive bill in Congress that would add "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" to a range of federal nondiscrimination laws. It has been introduced in multiple forms in prior terms. In the current 116th Congress, it has just passed the U.S. House of Representatives and is due to be voted on by the U.S. Senate. The Act in its current forms explicitly exempts itself from the requirements and protections of the **Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993**. This would be unprecedented, as no federal law has ever done so before, and it demonstrates the Equality Act's

radical denial of tolerance to people of faith who do not agree to the government's view of sexuality as established by the Act. I strongly encourage you come this **SUNDAY, MARCH 7<sup>TH</sup>, 3:00pm - 4pm in Upper Seton Hall**, to a discussion on the **TRUTH ABOUT THE EQUALITY ACT** given by **DR. THOMAS FARR**, *President of the Religious Freedom Institute*. Dr. Farr will review the key aspects of the Equality Act, what it is and why it is gravely problematic for Catholics to support. There will be time for Q&A with the audience. For a livestream link please visit our parish website.

May we all be one in prayer for our county and beyond ~ Fr. Bashista

## WEEKLY REFLECTION

### Three Ways to Seek Reconciliation

How shall we bring about reconciliation when someone has wronged us? Jesus describes a way that contains three steps (Mt 18:15-17).

The first step is to reason with the other, one on one. If somebody has wronged you, it is not good to immediately involve others by telling them. Reconciliation is more easily reached if you keep it between the two of you. You are to try in private to convince your brother or sister that there is a way of reconciliation, and that you can't continue to live at odds. If that person listens to you, you have won him or her back, says Jesus.

But if your brother or sister will not listen to you, you are to try the second way Jesus suggests: "Take one or two others along with you." You can seek out a couple of wise and discreet persons whom your brother or sister may have great respect for. By standing impartially outside your conflict, they can loosen up the tensions between you and in that way help reach reconciliation more easily.

But if the wrongdoer won't even listen to "outside negotiators," "tell it to the church." By that, Jesus means the group of people who regularly gathers around the Word of God and the sacraments. The direct involvement of the community in prayer and love is not unreasonable when the reestablishment of reconciliation and unity are at stake.

There is no reason to give up even if several attempts at reconciliation fail. The best you can do is untiringly seek new ways to win back your brother or sister.



*This is the Day the Lord Has Made, © Liguori Publications [www.liguori.org](http://www.liguori.org) Used with Permission*