



## AMERICAN NATIONAL CATHOLIC CHURCH

### **The Most Reverend George R. Lucey, FCM, Presiding Bishop of the American National Catholic Church, Urges COVID Vaccinations**

12 August 2021

Memorial of St. Jane Frances de Chantal, Religious

In the name of the Father, and + the Son, and the Holy Spirit!

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ

As I write this, COVID is making an unwelcome and frightening comeback in the United States. Infections, hospitalizations, and deaths are on the rise. What began as a joyful spring season that promised the pandemic's end has mutated into a summer of alarm at its resurgence.

Medical experts agree that the primary cause of this new wave is the large percentage of citizens who reject vaccinations and/or refuse to observe precautions such as mask-wearing. The vast majority of new patients infected by Delta, the latest COVID variant, falls into this category. Because Delta is one of the most highly transmissible respiratory viruses we've ever encountered, it spreads like wildfire among the unvaccinated.

A very small percentage of people cannot take the vaccine because of preexisting medical conditions. And, sorrowfully, vaccine for children under 12 has not yet been approved by the FDA. But most unvaccinated people are so out of choice, refusing inoculation because of misinformation and falsehoods spread, deliberately or otherwise, by social media celebrities, politicians, and cable television pundits. Sadly, some of the most vehement purveyors of vaccination falsehoods are Christian clergy.

So, it's appropriate to remind ourselves that, as Christians, we are morally called to be our sisters' and brothers' keepers, charged to behave in ways that recognize their inherent dignity, preserve their lives, promote their well-being, and proclaim solidarity with them.

In more theological language, as members of the Body of Christ we have a shared responsibility and privilege to lovingly care for one another. In St. Paul's beautiful exhortation, "Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others." (Philippians 2:4)

In this current surge of the Delta variant, looking out for ourselves and others—especially our children—means getting vaccinated. Right now, this is what the Lord's commandment to love calls us to do. This is how we protect the common good and publicly demonstrate our fidelity to the Lord's commandment that we love one another as he loves us. (John 13:34) Let's pray that God will move the hearts of vaccination resisters so that this terrible scourge we've endured for a year-and-a-half might be finally vanquished.

Most Reverend George R. Lucey, FCM  
Presiding Bishop