To Whom It May Concern:

In regard to the mandatory COVID-19 vaccine I am being required to take — I, [NAME], request a religious exemption from the immunization requirement.

Although the Catholic Church does not oppose individuals from freely receiving the vaccine and encourages people to safeguard personal and public health, the Church opposes forced vaccination when the vaccine does not align with their moral conscience.

Official Church teachings that demonstrate the religious basis on which a Catholic may refuse certain vaccines include, but are not limited, to the following:

* The free and informed judgment made by a competent adult patient concerning the use or withdrawal of life-sustaining procedures should always be respected and normally complied with, unless it is contrary to Catholic moral teaching.[[1]](#footnote-1)
* Concerning vaccines that are created using human cell lines derived from abortion, there is a grave responsibility to use alternative vaccines and to make a conscientious objection with regard to those which have moral problems.[[2]](#footnote-2)
* Practical reason makes evident that vaccination is not, as a rule, a moral obligation and that, therefore, it must be voluntary.[[3]](#footnote-3)

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches: “Man has the right to act in conscience and in freedom so as personally to make moral decisions. ‘He must not be forced to act contrary to his conscience.’” (CCC, #1782) [[4]](#footnote-4)

The Catholic faith requires each baptized Christian to use their conscience when making informed decisions. When an individual’s conscience—which is a formed conscience with their Catholic faith—is not at peace with receiving the vaccine, an impediment is being placed on the exercising of free will in accordance with their intellect. Being created as a rational being, we have received the dignity and right to exercise such will according to our conscience.

In accordance with the free-exercise clause of the U.S. Constitution’s First Amendment, states are required to respect and accommodate individuals who object to vaccinations on religious grounds. Additionally, a type of “caste” system in which those who elect not to be vaccinated will be prohibited from participating in essential rights—such as the right to work or receive an education—poses a serious threat to the basic human freedoms endowed to us by Almighty God.

I respectfully ask you to consider exempting me from the mandatory vaccination required by your organization since my conscience is not at peace with receiving the vaccine.

Sincerely,

[NAME]

1. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), *Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services* (2018). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. *Moral Reflections on Vaccines Prepared from Cells Derived from Aborted Human Foetuses* (2005) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF), *Note on the Morality of Using Some Anti-COVID-19 Vaccines* (December 17, 2020) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Catechism of the Catholic Church (1782). Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana (2019) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)