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by NCR Staff

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In NCR's latest editorial, we write that "everyone has a moral obligation to get vaccinated against COVID-19 unless they have a legitimate medical condition prohibiting them from doing so," and that "requiring the vaccine should be part of the church's pro-life witness." Following are NCR reader responses that have been edited for length and clarity.

As a tenured associate professor of the Catholic University of America, I applaud your editorial. I am a licensed nurse practitioner with a research doctorate from Johns Hopkins University, the president of the CUA faculty assembly, and the incoming CUA academic senate representative for the Conway School of Nursing.

The majority of CUA faculty favor a mandatory COVID-19 vaccine policy as evidenced by two passed academic senate resolutions, a nursing faculty position statement, a professional school survey by board of trustees faculty representatives, and a position statement of the CUA faculty assembly. All remain ignored by President John Garvey.



Faculty are mandated to teach in person this fall in an environment that makes classroom social distancing impossible and provides no mechanism to assure masking of the unvaccinated. Faculty questions about safe in person teaching remain unacknowledged by our provost.

Garvey's current decision to not implement all possibilities to prevent transmission of coronavirus, especially with the rapid spread of the Delta variant, is unconscionable. A mandate for all students to upload their COVID-19 vaccination status to a student health portal by July 31 is laudable. Shortly after your editorial, Garvey emailed faculty/staff to self-report COVID-19 vaccination status, but unlike students, no proof required.

The CUA administration's failure to acknowledge faculty questions and their lack of concern for the common good is discouraging. Creating a hospitable situation for emerging coronavirus variants is morally reprehensible.

JANET SELWAY

Millersville, Maryland

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Thank you for a succinct, well-reasoned, and morally convincing editorial. As the American Catholic Church becomes more and more polarized, your article could not have come at a better time.

I hope your message is embraced by every pastor of every church and every president of every university in this country. What better way to promote the common good and begin to heal our fragmented church?

DARIA G. FITZGERALD

Milford, Connecticut

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In the editorial, you are reasoning in such a way as to make a reasonable request to unreasoning hierarchs. These are the men who overwhelming oppose reformer Pope Francis and President Joe Biden, two men trying to unite; one our church, the other our country.

The opposing bishops do not want unity, they want pre-Vatican II, Baltimore Catechism unquestioning loyalty and conformity in the style of former president Donald Trump. Reason, maturity, respect for others, or God's creation has not, does not, and never will be a part of their unreasoning existence. They will splinter before they will bend. Ergo, the disassembling church they give us today.

By their works they are known. They reap what they sow. God help us all.

MICHAEL J. McDERMOTT

Tyler, Texas

Advertisement

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Another way to force faithful Catholics out of the church. I'd never show up again if the paranoids pull this off.

PATRICK O'BRIEN

Denver, Colorado

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I read with interest and envy the comments of Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, the second highest-ranking member of the Moscow Patriarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church, in which he stated that refusing to take the COVID-19 vaccine is a sin. His reasoning is the harm that an unvaccinated person could bring by spreading the virus to others when their accepting the vaccine could prevent that.

Since we have very little of that leadership among American bishops, I would like to propose that Pope Francis and Russian President Vladimir Putin meet and arrange a trade. We receive Hilarion in exchange for any one of about 125 silent American bishops. Actually, if Putin insists, he can have as many as he wants.

Desperate times call for desperate measures.

BILL KRISTOFCO

Parkville, Maryland

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