

THE VACCINES & THE PRINCIPLE OF THE DOUBLE EFFECT

The act of submitting to injection of a vaccine tainted in its procurement with elements derived from the body of an aborted child involves two effects, one good, the preservation of one's health, and one evil, cooperation in the abusive process which began with the abortion. In his teaching on the licitness of an act of self defence involving death, St Thomas Aquinas says this:

“Nothing hinders one act from having two effects, one of which is intended, the other being beside the intention. Now moral acts take their species according to what is intended, not according to what is beside the intention, since this is accidental... Thus, an act of self-defence may have two effects one, the saving of one's life, the other, the slaying of the aggressor... However, an act proceeding from a good intention may be unlawful if it is out of proportion to the end. Hence, if a man in self-defence was to use more violence than necessary, his act would be unlawful if out of proportion to the end...”¹

The principle which results from this teaching is that of the double effect. It runs as follows. *It is not licit to perform an act involving two effects, one good, the other evil, unless four conditions are fulfilled. First, the act is a good act, or at least morally neutral; second, the good lost by the evil effect is not greater than the good of the good effect; third, good and evil effects flow, at worst, with equal immediacy, but never the evil effect prior to the good; and fourth, the good effect alone is intended.*² It is instructive to consider these four conditions in addressing the question whether one can submit to injection with a vaccine so tainted.

The act is a good act or at least a morally neutral one

If a vaccine is tainted with moral evil this bears on the question whether the act of submitting to an injection with it is a good act. Injection is not analogous with eating or drinking which, because they are natural acts, are inherently good. Injecting, and being injected, are *artificial* acts—acts of human artifice—and depend for their goodness on the reason why they are done because *moral acts take their species according to what is intended*. For instance, one who injects himself with heroin is not performing a good act for the act serves the good of neither his soul nor his body.

If it be said that it is reasonable to submit to such an injection, even though tainted, because it is to protect the subject's health, the objection must be faced that health is not an absolute value. A greater good, the common good of society, may deny the entitlement to its preservation because, as St Thomas teaches, unless a man be well proportionate to the common good he cannot be good.³ A vaccine that derives from elements of the body of a murdered child offends the common good for implicit in it is the contention that the person—an end in himself, comprised of body and immortal soul,—may be used as a means for the welfare of others.

¹ *Summa Theologiae* II-II, q. 64, a. 7

² The conditions can be tricky to remember. I suggest usage of the mnemonic, APII, standing for Act; Proportion; Immediacy; Intention.

³ *Summa Theologiae* I-II, q. 92, a. 1, ad 3

This seems sufficient to deprive the act of submitting to injection with such a vaccine of the character of a morally neutral act. Accordingly, this condition is not met.

The good lost by the evil effect is not greater than the good of the good effect.

The good effect is the preservation of the health of the subject. The good lost is the subject's engagement in proximate material cooperation in an immoral act, part of a process instituted in concert by abortionist and scientist to procure and use elements of the body of a murdered child (the *matter*) for medical and mercantile ends (the *form*), a process which extends from the original abortion to the act of injection. Since proximate material cooperation in evil is morally culpable, this condition is not met.

Good and evil effects must flow at worst with equal immediacy, but not the evil effect prior to the good.

If one assumes that the vaccine will be effective in preserving the health of the subject, the good effect may be taken to flow from the moment of injection—'immediacy' here does not refer to what is temporal, for the good effect will not occur straight away; it refers to what is ontological, i.e., in the order of reality, for the good effect is ensured from the event which precipitates it. The evil effect, the usage of the tainted vaccine, occurs at the same moment. Accordingly, one may assume that this condition is met. There will be doubt as to whether it can be met, however, *if the effectiveness of the vaccine is no more than speculative.*

The good effect alone is intended.

This condition may be regarded as met.

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