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Dear Parishioners; I was asked about the vaccines the other day and I told the person that Pope Francis and the Church have told us to get in line and take the brand that is offered to us.

Now, I'm no doctor, in fact I failed out of high school. My teenage years weren't all that productive. In fact, if there wasn't a shortage of priests I doubt they would have given me a chance. And I know that that is true for sure if we still had to learn Latin.

So I don't know a lot about medicine and how pills are made, but I know that there are some very smart people in Rome just looking for the chance to tell us what to do. So when they say that it's OK from a faith based perspective, then I take their word for it and get in line.

And I think that we should be praying for all those here at home and around the world who are hesitating, and those who are refusing, to get the vaccine. I got the vaccine and I only cried a little.

Actually, I got caught lying to the nurse when I got my shot. It was only a little white lie but I was mortified nonetheless. I wanted the nurse to know why I was getting the shot before some other more deserving people, and so I told her that I visit the hospital and hospice. And then I told her that I give myself a shot of Humira, which is an immune suppressant drug, every two weeks because I have Crohn's disease.

I thought that that would be the end of it, but then she asked; "So did you speak with your doctor about getting the vaccine?" And there it was. The moment of truth. It is when the mind picks up speed and starts thinking really, really fast. If I tell the truth, is she going to send me a way to come back another day? I don't want that. So I said yes.

But you see, I have been in the health care game for longer that I have been a priest. My Crohn's started back in the early 1980's and so I

have come to know that a person has to be their own advocate and we have to take responsibility for our own health care. (*rationalizations*)

So when I told the nurse that; “Yes, I had spoken with my doctor”, what I meant was, “Don’t worry, I am taking full responsibility for this decision”. But then the nurse said; “Ok, great, I’ll just put in the records that you spoke with your doctor.” And that is when I started to sweat.

At least I can say that it took less time for me to admit to the nurse that in fact I had not spoken to my doctor, than it did to speak the lie. But I was mortified. I had my clerical shirt on and I always try to give a good impression when people know who I am because these days, Catholics and all people of faith need good P.R. My only hope is that my eventual honesty will leave a better impression than the rest of me.

So the moral of the story is; go get your vaccine and do it for the rest of us, even if you have to pay a price and you don’t want to. At least there isn’t much chance that you will be like me and leave feeling mortified, just a little sore in the arm.

The following is a prayer offered by Pope Benedict XVI that is meant to encourage us in the little we are able to contribute.

It helps, now and then, to step back and take a long view. We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God’s work. Nothing we do is complete. We plant the seeds that one day will grow. We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise. We lay foundations that will need further development. We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that. This enables us to provide an opportunity for the Lord’s grace to enter and do the rest. That is the difference between God the master builder and us the worker. We are grateful for the works of others, and, we are prophets of a future not our own. So may we do what is asked of us with courage and for the good of others. Amen.

May God be gracious to us and bless us, now and forever.

Pat Monette/Pastor