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## MEDIA STATEMENT

Most Rev Timothy Costelloe SDB, Archbishop of Perth

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**Dated:** 18 November 2021

**Subject:** Statement from Most Rev Timothy Costelloe SDB Re: Divine Mercy College

“As the Archbishop of Perth, I am deeply disappointed by reports in the media indicating that the principal of Divine Mercy College in Yangebup has adopted an anti-vaccination stance in relation to COVID-19.

Divine Mercy College, while it offers an education in the Catholic tradition, is an independent school completely separate from Catholic Education Western Australia Ltd. Accordingly, Divine Mercy College is subject to its own governing body.

The position being promoted by the Principal of the College is not the position of the Catholic Archdiocese of Perth and nor does it represent the position clearly enunciated by Pope Francis, who has indicated that it is “an act of love” to receive the vaccination in order to protect the common good and the health and well-being of our community.

The Vatican has formally clarified the Church’s position in relation to the moral question of the vaccines. The use of foetal cell lines derived from aborted fetuses in the early development of these vaccines many years ago does not, in Catholic moral theology, make the reception of these vaccines today morally unacceptable.

The Catholic position is very clear: the deliberate destruction of any human life at any stage is always objectively immoral and unacceptable. It is always a profound human tragedy. But none of us, in receiving the vaccinations today, are in anyway complicit with, or participants in, the abortions from which these foetal cell lines were derived.

Catholics may or may not accept the official teaching of the Church in these matters, but there should be no doubt as to what the Church does actually teach in this regard. The official position of the Catholic Archdiocese of Perth is in complete harmony with the teaching of the universal Church, expressed so clearly by Pope Francis”.

*The Australian Catholic Bishops Commission for Life, Family and Public Engagement issued this document - [https://www.catholic.org.au/images/20210923\\_FAQs\\_and\\_Guidance\\_on\\_COVID-19\\_Vaccination.pdf](https://www.catholic.org.au/images/20210923_FAQs_and_Guidance_on_COVID-19_Vaccination.pdf) - which provides guidance on the receipt of COVID-19 vaccinations, including frequently asked questions.*

Most Rev Timothy Costelloe SDB  
Catholic Archbishop of Perth

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