

# Canopy of Prayer

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Author

Prof. Dr. med.  
Wolfgang Rathmann



## Dear Prayer Partners in Europe

**"He loves righteousness, the whole earth is filled with his goodness!" (Psalm 33:5)**

In the Bible, the understanding of justice is characterised by attention to the weak so that they too can share in the general prosperity. God presents himself in the biblical texts as an advocate for the weak. The justice of individuals, and also of entire nations, is measured by how they treat the weak. Especially in times of a pandemic crisis, the Christian faith can provide support and orientation, and also be an impetus to rethink how to deal with the weak.

## Covid-19 vaccinations

With the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, it looked as if world leaders were intensifying their cooperation to immunise as many people as possible against the virus as quickly as possible. One year later, not much remains of the global cooperation. The fight against the virus is increasingly dividing states and societies. While maintaining safety standards, it was possible to develop several vaccines against the Sars-CoV-2 virus in a short time. Some developers, such as BioNTech and Moderna, relied on a new technology (mRNA) that introduces a blueprint of the virus antigen. Using this information, body cells produce the antigen themselves. Competitors such as Oxford University and AstraZeneca relied on a tried and tested method. Harmless cold viruses transport a virus protein (antigen) into body cells to trigger an immune response (vector vaccines). The AstraZeneca vaccine does



not need to be heavily refrigerated. In addition, the company has pledged not to make profit from the vaccine. For poorer countries, AstraZeneca has granted a manufacturing licence to a vaccine manufacturer in India.

However, vector vaccines often use cell lines derived from foetuses aborted in the 1960s. The foetal cell line is used to multiply the required viruses. Christians who are aware of this often face a dilemma of conscience. A Vatican statement allows the use of vaccines made using cells from aborted human foetuses, such as those by AstraZeneca or Johnson & Johnson. These vaccines do not contain cells from human foetuses. Conscientious objection to the vaccine must be weighed against the potential harm to one's own and other people's lives. But the Vatican

encourages future worldwide efforts to promote ethically safe manufacturing methods.

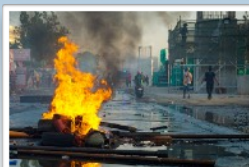
At the beginning of the pandemic, European leaders had stressed that the vaccine should be a unique global commodity. This is why the Covid-19 Vaccines Global Access (COVAX) initiative was born, with rich countries contributing money so that every country in the world could vaccinate at least 20% of the population. But COVAX received less support as the vaccination launch drew closer. Rich countries have currently secured about half of the world's planned vaccine doses. The global good has become a coveted commodity that is bitterly fought over. Wealthy countries like Canada, UK, USA, and the European Union, have purchased vaccines greatly in excess of their needs. World Health Organisation officials have voiced concerns at "vaccine nationalism", which could increase the risk of coronavirus mutating further especially in vulnerable populations. These variants potentially limit the effectiveness of current and future vaccines. Efforts within countries to use their vaccine programmes to generate local herd immunity will be unlikely to succeed. No region or nation can truly be free of the pandemic until all nations are free of it.

### Prayers:

- We pray that governments commit to overcoming the ugly face of "vaccine nationalism" and replace it with "vaccine internationalism."
- We pray that politicians of all nations commit to a global strategy for the control of the SARS-Cov-2 virus, the root cause of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- We pray in particular that worldwide health care workers on the frontlines of the Covid-19 pandemic, who are often under-protected and overexposed, receive vaccines now.

## Northern Ireland

**Violent rioting has taken place in the cities of N. Ireland over the last seven nights with youths throwing rocks, fireworks and petrol bombs, encouraged by some paramilitary groups. Police have been attacked and more than 50 injured in the worst riots seen for years. The power-sharing executive have held an emergency meeting and called for calm in both**



**loyalist and nationalist communities. The causes are discontent over Brexit arrangements, recent policing policies and a perception that the nationalists are being favoured as well as criminal gangs being involved.**

## Additional Prayer points:-

1. Pray that Iran will be stopped from producing atomic materials for an A-bomb on Israel.
2. There are movements of troops across the border and renewed attacks from Dombas on Ukrainian troops. Let us pray for a real will for peace for all concerned.

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