

what's **RIGHT**

Stem cells are a potential source of vital cures for many terrible diseases. Despite claims to the contrary, the Catholic Church supports and even encourages research on stem cells to turn this potential into a reality.

The Church approves of research into three of

the four forms of stem cells, including those from adults, which continue to show great promise. In fact, adult stem cells are already being used to treat various conditions such as broken hips and to heal scar tissue following a heart attack.

Stem cells for such research can come from many sources, not just from a process which kills human embryos. These sources include the placenta (afterbirth), amniotic fluid and parts of the living body such as fat and bone marrow. Stem cells can even be donated after death.

What the Church strongly opposes is the use of and research on human embryos because this causes their destruction.

Making sense of stem cells What does the Church say?

Despite the availability and promise of stem cells from other sources, some researchers are focused on using human embryonic cells and promoting human cloning. Almost as bad, legislators in several states, including Illinois, want to use public funds – taxpayer money – to finance their efforts.

When governments seek to use public funds to experiment with and destroy human life, it's not only immoral but also poor public policy.

Measures now being considered by the Illinois General Assembly would establish and fund the Illinois Regenerative Medical Institute and research that would allow for human cloning. Worse, it specifies that human embryos created by such cloning would be destroyed to harvest their stem cells.

Some would call this "Frankenstein Science." When done for stem-cell research, it creates human em-

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bryos solely in order to kill them for their cells. It clearly denies the human dignity the Church insists is a gift from God.

The Church cares about those who suffer from diseases that stem-cell research might cure. It endorses moral research for such cures. As Pope John Paul II said: "There is no suffering, no matter how grave, that can justify killing a life. There are no reasons, no matter how noble, that make plausible the creation of human beings, destined to be used and destroyed."

How you can learn more and what you can do to help

For more information about the Church's perspective on stem cell research and to learn about how Illinois legislators are planning to use your tax dollars to fund immoral research and human cloning,

visit www.catholicconferenceofillinois.org. You can also call the Conference at (312) 368-1066 or (217) 528-9200 and get the names and contact information for your local state representative and state senator.