

STATEMENT ON  
HUMAN CLONING  
BY THE  
BISHOPS OF LOUISIANA

The most basic of human rights is the right to life. This right is not granted by any secular or religious authority, but is bestowed by God. The duty to respect and defend this most basic human right is essential to good government.

In recent times our society has faced a number of moral challenges related to biomedical technologies. Human cloning and experimentation with human embryos are of special concern. The issues involved here are complex and have led to considerable national debate. Therefore, the Church must address these issues with clarity.

We, the Roman Catholic Bishops of Louisiana, call upon the governor of Louisiana, state legislators, public policy makers, and all the citizens of our beloved state to govern, legislate, formulate policies, and support all that respects human life from conception to natural death.

We urge a total ban on the cloning of human beings. Such cloning is a serious affront to human dignity and seriously weakens respect for the sanctity of married life. Human cloning denies the uniqueness of each human person and his or her gifts for the common good. Furthermore, children come to be viewed as property, manufactured through the use of various sexual reproductive technologies.

Related to the need to oppose human cloning is the urgent challenge to ban those experiments on the embryo which violate basic human dignity. At the moment of conception a new human being comes into existence. This new life must be fully respected and protected. It is a grave moral wrong, and a violation of fundamental human rights, to create life for the sole purpose of experimentation and destruction. The new field of embryonic stem cell research requires an important moral distinction. Unethical experimentation is one in which a human embryo is created for the sole purpose of experimentation and destruction. By contrast, stem cell research which obtains human stem cells from adults, such as bone marrow or the placenta, is ethically permissible. True medical progress always respects the sacredness of all human life.

We, the Roman Catholic Bishops of Louisiana, continue to raise our individual and collective voices in defense of human life and the dignity of each person. While the foundation of our message is the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we believe the truths we speak are rooted in human nature and are for the good of the entire human family.

We urge all Catholics to call, e-mail, or write their state lawmakers and the governor to urge them to ban embryonic stem cell research and all cloning of human beings.

*May 10, 2005*  
*Louisiana Catholic Conference*