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## Pope: No Human Life Is Dispensable

### Encourages Research on Adult Stem Cells

VATICAN CITY, NOV. 14, 2011 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- Benedict XVI is acknowledging the temptations facing scientists who seek cures for degenerative illnesses, but he says that not even one human life can be destroyed for the benefit of another.

The Pope said this Saturday in an address to some 250 participants in an international conference on "Adult Stem Cells: Science and the Future of Man and Culture." The symposium was promoted by the Pontifical Council for Culture in collaboration with the U.S. Stem for Life Foundation.

The three-day meeting examined the use of adult stem cells in medicine, both from the perspective of science, and from that of its cultural, ethical and anthropological implications.

The Holy Father recalled that, because of human beings' immortal souls, "there are dimensions of human existence that lie beyond the limits of what the natural sciences are competent to determine."

And, while recognizing the desire to find cures for illnesses, acknowledging that "it is tempting for scientists and policy-makers to brush aside ethical objections and to press ahead with whatever research seems to offer the prospect of a breakthrough," still, he affirmed, "those who advocate research on embryonic stem cells in the hope of achieving such a result make the grave mistake of denying the inalienable right to life of all human beings from the moment of conception to natural death."

"The destruction of even one human life can never be justified in terms of the benefit that it might conceivably bring to another," he stated.

The Pontiff moreover recognized the possibilities for adult stem cell research, assuring that the Church "naturally offers her encouragement to those who are engaged in conducting and supporting research of this kind, always with the proviso that it be carried out with due regard for the integral good of the human person and the common good of society."

"Dialogue between science and ethics is of the greatest importance in order to ensure that medical advances are never made at unacceptable human cost," he said.

Benedict XVI clarified that the Church's efforts to draw attention to the defenseless is not only an endeavor to protect the unborn, but also those who do not have easy access to expensive medical treatments.

"Illness is no respecter of persons," he said, "and justice demands that every effort be made to place the fruits of scientific research at the disposal of all who stand to benefit from them, irrespective of their means."

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