

**This fall, a few days into the academic year, the principal of a Catholic grade school in El Paso, Texas, died from a rare form of cancer. Sister Jennifer was an extremely competent and popular administrator, a friend to her coworkers and a trusted adviser to many. She learned about her condition just a few months before she died. Her doctors thought she would live longer than she did. They sent her to a special clinic in Michigan to begin treatment they hoped would help her. It involved the use of her own stem cells. Sr. Jennifer never lived to complete this treatment, but her greatest hope was in stem cells – adult stem cells.**

**The Catholic Church is in favor of life-saving cures derived from adult stem cells. Such therapies have already proven to be effective, and the cells can be gathered without harming another human being. We are opposed to using embryonic stem cells because the extraction of those cells destroys the embryo.**

**Those who favor embryonic stem cell research say that the cells involved are not human beings because they are not formed by sperm and egg and are never implanted in a uterus. But the cells are indistinguishable from other embryos; even if they are manufactured in a laboratory dish, they are human embryos; they are human beings.**

**This November the people of Missouri will vote on an amendment that says it bans human cloning. But the full text of the amendment defines human cloning in a peculiar way. It makes it perfectly legal to clone human cells in a laboratory. It will be illegal to implant those cells in a uterus. The ballot will say the amendment forbids cloning, but it permits cloning; it forbids implantation. That is why the Missouri Catholic Conference together with many other groups in the State urge you to vote against amendment 2.**

**When laws are properly written and observed, they give joy to the heart. Today's responsorial psalm praises God for this reason. "The precepts of the Lord give joy to the heart." The entire psalm praises God for two things – for creation and for the law revealed in the bible. The two are related. God created the world and set it in order, and God revealed his law to order our lives. According to the psalm, the precepts of the Lord are as beautiful and natural as creation: they give joy to the heart; they refresh the soul; they give wisdom to the simple; they are trustworthy, true and just. As a church we believe that God created human life, and that God expects us to protect it. When we do, God's precepts give joy to our heart.**

**The Catholic Church is all for life-saving cures. We just believe that scientists are smart enough to develop them without destroying embryos in the process. In 1940 the United States Congress passed the Bald Eagle Protection Act. In order to protect our national bird, it is a crime for you to kill an eagle or its eggs. In the State of Missouri we are poised to give**

**greater protection to unborn birds than to unborn humans. On November 7, vote no on amendment 2; it will give joy to your heart.**