

## Can I donate my body to science education?

Whole body donations are legitimate and not contrary to Christian principals. Keeping with Christian respect for the body, assurance should be given to dispose of the body in a reverent and dignified manner upon completion of the research. The family is urged to celebrate a memorial mass in a timely fashion after the death.

Most bodies are kept from one to three years. The time is set by the institution, not the donor or donor's family members. Each university has a specific procedure in place for the return of the body to the family. For some universities, costs incurred are the responsibility of the family.

Most institutions hold an annual memorial service and record the names of the contributors in a memorial book.

Because each university has strict guidelines for the acceptance of a body, the length of time the body is kept and disposal of the body, contacting the university for more information is suggested.

### St. Mary's Roman Catholic

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## Organ and Tissue Donation

Organ and Tissue Donation: Religious Viewpoints

[http://www.nyodn.org/organ/o\\_religious.html](http://www.nyodn.org/organ/o_religious.html)

The Trillium Gift of Life Network

[www.giftoflife.on.ca](http://www.giftoflife.on.ca)

## Whole Body Donation

- intermed.

[med.uottawa.ca/anatomy/eng/FAQ.html](http://med.uottawa.ca/anatomy/eng/FAQ.html)

- <http://www.anatomy.dal.ca/>

- [heather.thornton@utoronto.ca](mailto:heather.thornton@utoronto.ca)

## Associations

*The Funeral Service Association of Canada:* [www.fsac.ca](http://www.fsac.ca)

*The Ontario Board of Funeral Services :*  
[www.funeralboard.com](http://www.funeralboard.com)

Ontario Funeral Association  
Suite 130, 320 North Queen Street  
Etobicoke, Ontario  
M9C 5K4

Tel: (416) 695-3434

Fax: (416) 695-3583

Toll Free 1-800-268-2727

[www.ofsa.org](http://www.ofsa.org)

## St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church

## Organ and Tissue Donation



This pamphlet is an initiative of the St. Mary's Parish Council to address questions Catholics may have regarding organ, tissue and whole body donation. It is designed to help the members of the parish better understand what is expected of them as Catholics and to assure them that they are free to determine what is best for their family as they mark the passing of someone they love.

June, 2007

# Organ and Tissue Donation: The Gift of Life



In August 2000, **Pope John Paul II** told attendees at the International Congress on Transplants in Rome:

"Transplants are a great step forward in science's service of man, and not a few people today owe their lives to an organ transplant. Increasingly, the technique of transplants has proven to be a valid means of attaining the primary goal of all medicine - the service of human life."

The **Catholic Church supports organ donation** as long as proper, informed consent is given by the donor, with verification by a trustworthy source. In addition, the donor's remains must be treated with respect.

## How do I make a decision about organ or tissue donation for my loved one ?

The healthcare team provides you with the information needed to make a decision about tissue and organ donation. After a loved one is pronounced clinically dead by at least two physicians, blood tests, a chest x-ray and other examinations are performed to check organ suitability. Medical history is also reviewed.

## What organs and tissue can be donated?

All organs and tissues can be donated. There is no age discrimination. Tissues (eyes, bones, skin, heart valves) can be stored, but organs (heart, liver, kidneys, pancreas, lungs, small bowel, stomach) are used immediately.

## How do I know that the organs and tissues were used to help others?

A follow-up report is issued through Trillium Gift of Life and a letter of thanks is sent to the donor's family. The report lists the recipient information, but keeps names and locations confidential. You can never meet the recipient. You cannot specify who receives the organs or tissue or express a preference to a specific region or age group; there is a waiting list to keep receiving equitable.

## When can I begin funeral arrangements?

The waiting period from the time the option is introduced to the completion of the procedure can span from 12-48 hours pending on availability of operating space, recipient matching and coordination of surgical teams.

Arrangements for a visitation and funeral can be made as usual. The donation does not disrupt making preparations. An open casket can still be requested.



## Did you know that.....

Tissue donation from a single donor can save up to 75 different patients.

Eyes are the most common donation used in transplants.

## Where can I get a donor card or more information about organ and tissue donation?

Donor cards can be obtained by contacting Trillium Gift of Life Network at 1-800-263-2833. They are also distributed with every provincial driver's license renewal and are available at many doctors' offices and at the back of St. Mary's Church.

The coordinator for Simcoe-Muskoka is Cathy Ritter. If you have any questions or require additional information, please email her at:

[CRitter@giftoflife.on.ca](mailto:CRitter@giftoflife.on.ca).

## How do I express my wishes to become an organ and tissue donor?

If it is your wish to become an organ donor, please talk to your loved ones about your decision. It is critical to share your decision with all generations of your family, as they will be asked for final consent to donate your organs and tissue after your death. Even if you have signed your donor card, it is ultimately your family who makes the decision about organ donation.

