

Why I Am Catholic

We believe in Heaven.

The heart of the issue of cloning and one of the issues of stem cell research is people acting as if there is no Heaven and trying to find ways to live forever. A large number of scientists and researchers are seeking immortality and earthly fame and rewards. It is the modern version of the search for the Fountain of Youth.

Part of the argument for having a clone is, when my body parts wear out, I have spare body parts available. If my heart gives out, I have another heart. It wouldn't matter that that clone would be seen as a human being with natural rights. The clone would do all the things I don't want to do, make money for me to spend, etc. And be my life support system. Because this life is everything and I want to live in this world forever.

Stem cell research has the potential to help us with finding cures for diseases and improving quality of life. But some involved in that field are using it as research towards cloning and pursuing any way possible to avoid dealing with death. They believe stem cells from frozen embryos will help them unlock the secrets of creating life and help them perfect cloning and the duplication of body parts. Some who die ask to be frozen (cryogenics) so that when a solution is found they can be unfrozen and brought back to life by science.

Jesus asks us: "I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" (Jn 11:25-26) He further tells us: "In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If there were not, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back again and take you to myself, so that where I am you also may be." (Jn 14:2-3)

Every Sunday we begin the Nicene Creed with: "We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. . ." We say about Christ: "He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end." We conclude the Nicene Creed: "We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come."

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* summarizes Church teaching: "By his death and Resurrection, Jesus Christ has "opened" heaven to us. The life of the blessed consists in the full and perfect possession of the fruits of the redemption accomplished by Christ. He makes partners in his heavenly glorification those who have believed in him and remained faithful to his will." (1026) It also reminds us: "*Nothing exists that does not owe its existence to God the Creator.* The world began when God's word drew it out of nothingness; all existent beings, all of nature, and all human history are rooted in this. . ." (338)

Because we believe in a better life to come and that Christ wants us to be there with Him, we can join St. Paul in saying: "I consider that the sufferings of this present time are as nothing compared with the glory to be revealed for us." (Rom 8:18) And, "'Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?' The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (I Cor 15:55-57)