

MISSION INTENTIONS

MARCH 2021 - 2022

We pray that Christians will continue to respond with prayer and action to new medical research, developments and technologies that compromise the dignity of human life.

Country Focus: Scotland

What comes to mind when you think of Scotland? Perhaps it's bagpipes or even the Loch Ness Monster. But did you realize the first mammal cloned from an adult cell, Dolly the Sheep, was also from Scotland?

After years of studies at the Roslin Institute in Scotland, Dolly was born on July 5, 1996. She spent her entire life living as a regular sheep with her flock, and even gave birth to six lambs: her first lamb, Bonnie, twins Sally and Rosie, and triplets Lucy, Darcy and Cotton. Sadly, Dolly died from cancer in February, 2003. She was six years old.



Dolly changed what many scientists thought was possible in biology and medicine, and proved that cloning an adult cell was achievable. But Dolly's life also raised many ethical questions. We will explore these questions further on the second page of this newsletter.

Leading to Knowledge of the Faith

Medical discoveries and research can be very beneficial. They can help us live longer, healthier lives. But medical discoveries and research can also have negative consequences. The Catholic Church teaches that in order to avoid these consequences, medical research and discoveries must meet certain criteria before they are used or conducted:

“... they must be at the service of the human person, of [their] inalienable rights and [their] true and integral good according to the design and will of God” (Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Donum vitae, no. 2).

Saint Spotlight

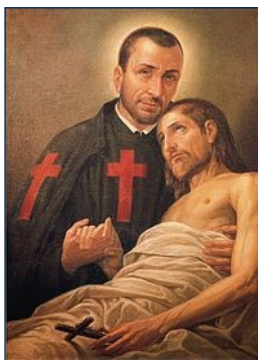
Saint Camillus de Lellis

Some saints dedicate their lives to God at a very early age. Camillus de Lellis was not one of those saints.

Born about 1550 in Italy, Camillus de Lellis spent much of his teen and early adult years gambling and getting into fights. By the time he was 24, Camillus had gambled away all of his money.

Out of necessity, Camillus took a job as a laborer at a Capuchin friary. It was there that he was moved to conversion. Although he tried to enter the Capuchin novitiate, he was denied because of a leg wound that would not heal.

Camillus eventually moved to Rome where he started working at San Giacomo hospital, ultimately becoming



the hospital superintendent. It was this role that led Camillus to find his ultimate calling. Following the advice of his friend, Saint Philip Neri, Camillus became a priest when he was 34. He devoted the rest of his life to caring for the sick, and even founded his own order, the Servants of the Sick, later known as the Order of the Ministers of the Infirm. Camillus and the other members of his order wore red crosses on their clothing and ministered to those in prison, to troops, to those dying in private homes, and even went onto ships to help passengers who were sick with plague. They also founded many hospitals throughout Italy.

Camillus died in 1614. We remember Saint Camillus de Lellis each year on his feast day, July 18.

Formation for Life in Christ

Medical discoveries continue to make what was once impossible, possible. But with every new development and method of research comes questions about their moral and ethical consequences, particularly those developments which directly affect human life and the family. For example, if we can clone a sheep, will we one day be able to clone a human being? Should we?

The Catholic Church teaches that when considering whether new medical research, discoveries and technologies should be used, we must first study



how they affect God's gift of life and the human dignity of a person from conception to natural death. We know that all humans are made in the image and likeness of God, and therefore are deserving of dignity. We also know that Christ came to offer redemption to all, and that we should see His face in every person. Any medical discoveries and research, therefore, should first and foremost honor these truths. As the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith wrote in *Donum vitae*, "Science and technology are valuable resources for [humans]

when placed at [their] service and when [promoting their] integral development for the benefit of all..." (no. 2). The Church welcomes and encourages medical discoveries when they help the life and dignity of every human being.

However, medical advancements and new research methods should never be used when "they involve the destruction of human beings or when they employ means which contradict the dignity of the

person or when they are used for purposes contrary to the integral good of [people]" ((Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Dignitas Personae*, no. 4). The Church does not support any medical research, discoveries or technologies that harm or compromise a person's life or dignity.

In this month's video, we will learn more about St. Camillus de Lellis. As you watch the video, think about how Saint Camillus saw the face of Christ in all he encountered. How can we apply this to today's medical field?

Celebrating the Mystery

One of the ways the Church supports the life and dignity of those who are ill or suffering is through the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. When a person receives this sacrament, they receive spiritual healing and are given the gifts of peace and courage through the Holy Spirit.

The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick is a reminder that a person's dignity is not lessened just because their body is suffering: "...human dignity is intrinsic and does not increase or decrease based on a person's physical state or abilities" (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Sacraments and Social Mission*, 2013). This is why the Church teaches it is necessary to protect human life and dignity from conception to natural death.

Teaching Prayer: Spiritual Works of Mercy

The Spiritual Works of Mercy are ways we can help others meet their spiritual needs. One of the seven Spiritual Works of Mercy is praying for the living and the dead. The United States Catholic Conference of Bishops gives us some suggestions on how to pray for the living and the dead, like requesting a Mass intention for someone who is ill or keeping a book of prayer intentions. Can you think of any others?

Introduction to Community Life

Saint Camillus de Lellis: [Click Here>>](#)



- ✚ How did Saint Camillus de Lellis challenge the medical field of his time and protect the life and dignity of those he served?

- ✚ What can Saint Camillus de Lellis teach you about how to serve your own community?
- ✚ What are some ways you can help protect the life and dignity of all people?



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Society for the Propagation of the Faith / St. Paul and Minneapolis