



**Media Release
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Catholic Church welcomes breakthrough in ethical stem cell research

The discovery by scientists that potent stem cells can be obtained from human skin was a welcome breakthrough in the search for ethical ways to combat serious disease, the Catholic Church said today.

Australian Catholic Bishops Conference President, Archbishop Philip Wilson, said the discovery by researchers in Japan and the United States should signal an end to the destruction of embryos in research.

“Here we have scientists discovering that human skin cells can be transformed into stem cells which have huge potential for curing a range of serious diseases,” Archbishop Wilson said.

“While it is still early days for this research, it is a very promising discovery which will help scientists to fight serious diseases without resorting to the deliberate destruction of human embryos to obtain stem cells.

“Together with the excellent work being done with adult stem cells from the nose, this work clearly points to a way forward which is both ethical and scientifically promising.”

Archbishop Wilson said that he hoped legislators around Australia took note of the breakthrough and put a halt to any further laws allowing human cloning or the destruction of human life for stem cell research.

He said it was a matter of deep regret that the Australian Parliament had rushed in to allow such research when more effective and more ethical means were just around the corner.

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