

Clergy

A common question about making the decision to donate life is, “Does my religion approve of organ, eye and tissue donation and transplantation?”

Specific beliefs differ from denomination to denomination, but the vast majority of religions support donation as one of the highest expressions of compassion and generosity.

If you are a religious leader, you have consoled families facing death—some possibly turning to you for guidance on the decision to donate life. Perhaps you have presided at the funeral of a child or young adult who died too young because a needed organ was not available.

In every case, you are in a position to make a significant difference in the lives of donor families and grateful recipients through supporting the faith-based decision to donate life.

Encouraging the Decision

- Encourage discussion about donation in your community as well as in your hospital, if you serve as a pastoral care chaplain. It is much easier for families to understand your faith’s support of donation before they face a crisis and the loss of a loved one.
- New life arising from death is a common faith-based theme. When appropriate, talk about donation in your sermons and messages during worship services.
- Lead prayer to remember those families who suffered loss through death yet whose loved one gave new life to others. Remember also the thousands of men, women and children who continue to wait for desperately needed organs and tissue to save or improve their lives.
- Work with community groups, other religious organizations and families to promote public understanding of ecumenical support for the gift of donation and transplantation.
- Lead by example: Let your congregation know that you have registered as a life-giving donor and encourage others to make this decision.
- Share reminders about the gift of donation in your community, and in your bulletins and newsletters. We are happy to provide you with information to share.
- Through your congregation or through Life Alliance, invite a donor family member or transplant recipient to speak during a worship service or ministry workshop or discussion.
- Celebrate National Donor Sabbath, with thousands of congregations throughout the country, every November two weekends before Thanksgiving weekend.