



# National Donor Sabbath

## Christianity and Organ/Tissue Donation



The Christian faith is based upon the revelation of God in the life of Jesus Christ. Throughout his life Jesus taught people to love one another and he proved his love for the world upon the cross. It seems in keeping with this that Christians consider donation as a genuine act of love and a way of following Jesus' example. This act of love then becomes the part of Christian discipleship or faith journey that is motivated by compassion to help someone else and demonstrates a sense of social responsibility.

Sacrifice and helping others are consistent themes in Christianity, which teaches the principle of seeking for others what you hope others would do for you. Enabling life to be lived as fully as possible is consistent with the teaching of the Son of God, Jesus Christ.

The Lord demonstrated with His own life how, even in sorrow, love enables us to embrace the needs of others. We can choose to donate our organs and tissues to save the lives of many people. The decision to donate at the end of life is the beginning of healing for many others.

Healing and saving life is a great gift. Jesus sent his twelve disciples out with the imperative to heal disease and illness. Christians should be encouraged to help others in need.

### What Clergy Can Do

An informed clergy can assist parishioners with facts and options about organ and tissue donation.

### Education/ Community Outreach Programs

- Place an article in the church bulletin or newsletter about organ and tissue donation
- Conduct an organ and tissue donation presentation for parishioners
- Include education about organ and tissue donation as an objective for your health ministry
- Hold an organ donor designation day.
- Preach a sermon
- Recognize families of organ and tissue donors and transplant recipients
- Remember organ and tissue donors and donor families with candlelight vigils or other remembrances

### Sermon Ideas

Clergy have their own unique way of sermon preparation and delivery. With that understanding and appreciation, the following suggestions are given as ideas.

***John 11:25-“I am the resurrection and the life”.***

***Matthew 10:8 – “Heal the sick...freely you have received, freely give.”***

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***1 Corinthians 15:35-58 – The spiritual body.*** Texts to teach about the resurrection, emphasizing that the physical body is transformed into a spiritual body, therefore the gift of organ and tissue donation does not affect the ability of one to be resurrected.

***Luke 6:31-38- Give to others and God will give to you.*** This text could be explored as the command to give to others and the various ways that we can give, including organ and tissue donation.

***Romans 8:28-29- Seeking the good.*** This scripture could be used to show that in the midst of tragic circumstances of sudden death, God seeks to find good with us. Donation may be one sign of good in an otherwise senseless death.

***John 3:16-17- God gave His Son.*** God gave his son so that we might live in eternal life. We can donate organs and tissues when we no longer have need of them so that others may live in this temporary world.

***Luke 14:12-14- Giving without reward.*** In this scripture, we are told to give to those who are in need without thought of reward from them. The need for organ and tissue donation is great.

***Revelation 21:4-5 - “In eternity we will neither have nor need our earthly bodies; former things will pass away, all things will be made new.”***

## **Scriptural References for presenting the Charitable Gift of Organ and Tissue Donation:**

### **Old Testament**

***Genesis 2:20-30*** The first transplant: A rib taken from Adam to give life to Eve

***Leviticus 1:7*** “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.”

***Deuteronomy 30:15-20*** “Choose life so that you and your descendants may live.”

***Psalms 41*** Images of a healing Lord

***Psalms 100*** Psalm of praise and thanksgiving

***Psalms 107*** “consider the steadfast love of the Lord.”

***Psalms 111*** “I give thanks to the Lord.”

***Psalms 113*** Praises to the Lord

***Psalms 116*** “O Lord, I pray, save my life!”

***Psalms 145*** “The Lord is gracious and merciful.”

***Psalms 147*** “Sing to the Lord with thanksgiving.”

***Ecclesiastes 3:1-17*** “For everything there is a season...”

***Isaiah 35:1-6*** “Strengthen the weak hands and make firm the feeble knees.”

“...the eyes of the blind shall be opened...”

***Isaiah 40:31*** “but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength...they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.”

***Ezekiel 37*** The valley of dry bones: “These bones shall live.”

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## New Testament

**Matthew 5:7** "Blessed are the merciful."

**Matthew 7:7** "Ask...seek...knock."

**Matthew 7:12** "In everything do to others as you would have them do to you..."

**Matthew 25: 31-46** Caring for the stranger

**Luke 4:16-21** "...and recovery of sight for the blind."

**Luke 6:37-38** "Give and it will be given to you."

**Luke 14:12-14** Give to those in need without expecting reward from them

**John 3:16-17** "God so loved the world that He gave his one and only son."

**John 10:10** "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."

**John 11:25** "I am the resurrection and the life."

**John 15:12-17** "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."

**II Corinthians 9:6-8** "Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

**1 John 4:11** "Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another."

**Revelation 21:4-5** "In eternity we will not need our earthly bodies. Former things will pass away, all things will be made new."

## Suggested Hymns

The following list of hymns is a start in your efforts to locate appropriate hymns from your own religious tradition that bring the message of hope and giving that organ and tissue donation and transplantation provide.

*Amazing Grace*

*Blest Be The Tie That Binds*

*Come, Sinners, To The Gospel Feast*

*Have Thine Own Way, Lord*

*Heavenly Father, Bless Me Now*

*Hope Of The World*

*I'll Praise My Maker While I've Breath*

*Immortal Love, Forever Full*

*Jesus, Lord We Look to Thee*

*Jesus, Love of my Soul*

*Jesus, United By Thy Grace*

*Lift Up Our Hearts, O King of Kings*

*Lord, Whose Love Through Humble Service*

*O God, Whose Will Is Life*

*O Son of Man, Thou Modest Known*

*O Thou Who Art the Shepherd*

*O Young and Fearless Prophet*

*Open My Eyes, That I May See*

*Take My Life and Let It Be Consecrated*

*We Give Thee But Thine Own*

*What Wondrous Love Is This*

*The Voice of God is Calling*

You can give the gift of life through organ and tissue donation. Scripture tells us that "whatever you do for the least of my brethren, you do unto me."

*Organ and tissue donation is one of the greatest gifts you can give or receive.*

**You have the power to *Donate Life*, Be an organ and tissue donor.**

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