Democracy, embryonic stem cell research, and the Roman Catholic church

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The Roman Catholic Church in Australia has lobbied politicians to prohibit embryonic stem cell research, on the grounds that such research violates the sanctity and inherent dignity of human life. I suggest, however, that reasoned reflection does not uniquely support such conclusions about the morality of stem cell research. A recent parliamentary standing committee report recommended that embryonic stem cell research be allowed to proceed in certain circumstances, and there appears to be widespread support in the Australian community for this position. I argue that the moral value of democracy requires parliamentarians to acknowledge the informed views of the wider community here, and to resist lobbying by church leaders on this issue.

References

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