



PARISH 'LIFE' NEWS

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Gene Editing Holds Promise and Peril for Humanity

Gene editing is aimed at two different kinds of cells in the body: somatic cells (an individual's cells) and germ cells (sperm or egg). Janet Lambert, CEO of the Alliance for Regenerative Medicine, which represents more than 300 companies and nonprofits worldwide developing new genetic therapies, told the *Register* that the vast majority of gene-editing research involves somatic cells. "The promise of the technology is extraordinary," Lambert said. Scientists may eventually develop ways to introduce somatic cell therapies into the womb that could save unborn children from fatal diseases, but Lambert said those breakthroughs are a long way off. On the other hand, editing the human germline poses far greater risks because it introduces a permanent genetic change that can be passed down. Therapeutic human germline editing is not currently permitted in the U.S. Other than rogue scientists like He Jiankui, who recently claimed to have used gene editing to design two HIV-resistant Chinese baby girls as embryos, scientific research into editing the human germline for therapeutic purposes is not taking place. While both somatic and germline editing could be abused for nontherapeutic purposes, somatic cell editing "limits the consequences of what you're doing" to a single person, not the entire human family, Lambert said. "There's a need to have a much clearer understanding of the safety and efficacy profile of gene editing in human beings before it starts affecting multiple generations." The application of genetic modification technologies on human embryos poses different moral questions than somatic cell gene-editing therapies applied to unborn children in the womb, or adults. Father Tadeusz Pacholczyk, a Catholic priest, neuroscientist and director of education at the National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia, explained that the Catholic Church's viewpoint is grounded in the dignity of the human person, ruling-out creating human embryos in laboratories. The IVF process (involved in embryonic germline editing) violates the embryo's human dignity with the domination of technology rather than a loving relationship with mutually self-giving spouses. The priest noted that encouraging research into genetically modified embryos would "open up the floodgates" for embryos to be created and destroyed in laboratory experiments. Father Pacholczyk added that making edits to embryonic children might involve risks that are only understood when they grow older. For example, the changes He Jiankui made to confer immunity to HIV infection may increase the twins' susceptibility to West Nile virus and other diseases.

NCR, 12/27/18

Research on Fetal Tissue and 'Humanized Mice' Continues, for Now

National Institutes of Health Director Francis Collins [asserted](#), "There is strong evidence that scientific benefits can come from fetal-tissue research, which can be done with an ethical framework." Fetal tissue is used to create a special breed of humanized mice called Hu-BLT, which refers to the bone marrow, liver and thymus tissue harvested from aborted babies, usually between 18- and 22-weeks' gestation. The thymus manufactures cells of the immune system. Sally Temple, the former president of the International Society for Stem Cell Research, said that fetal tissue is "absolutely essential" to create mouse models that mimic the human immune system. In [response](#), Greg Schleppebach, associate director of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, denounced Collins' comments as "deeply disturbing." He added, "The use of fetal remains procured from abortions can be interpreted as legitimizing abortion by saying it is an important source for research....Millions of pro-life Americans find such research morally offensive and do not want their tax dollars to be used to pay for it.... Researchers have demonstrated the ability to both pursue excellence in research and to avoid violating the rights and dignity of nascent human beings. Dr. Collins can and should lead the NIH in a way that honors both ends, incentivizing research that all Americans can support."

NCR, 12/21/18

2019 March for Life

Abby Johnson, who early in her career assisted in carrying out abortions, will be among the speakers during the 2019 March for Life rally on January 18th on the National Mall in Washington. Johnson, a one-time Planned Parenthood clinic director, is the founder of *And Then There Were None*, a ministry that assists abortion clinic workers who have left their position. The theme for the 2019 March is: *Unique from Day One: Pro-Life Is Pro-Science*. This year's events will focus on the scientific discoveries that have led to new understanding about life in the womb. For example, a baby's heartbeat can now be seen and heard at six weeks, and blood tests can indicate a baby's gender at seven weeks.

The Pilot, 12/6/18

NY Adoption Agency Harassed

New Hope Family Services, a Christian nonprofit adoption agency, operates a temporary foster-placement agency alongside its pregnancy resource center. The New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) gave it a positive review in October, but then it reviewed the agency's policy and procedures manual and found it prioritized placements into homes with a married mother and father. It sent a letter to New Hope demanding that it either revise its policy or submit a closeout plan for its adoption program. In the last few years, faith-based adoption agencies in states including Illinois, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania have closed when governments ordered them to place children with families who do not share the agency's religious convictions. The closures mean that ultimately fewer children will find homes. New Hope sued and has a hearing scheduled for Jan. 16. Alliance Defending Freedom, which represents the agency, said in a complaint delivered earlier this month that OCFS is overstepping the requirements of the law. ADF attorney Jeana Hallock noted that New Hope has never used government money for its program. "Not only can you not participate in a government contract or receive funding," Hallock said, "Now they are saying you can't even do that work at all. 'We don't want your help.'" New York has 130 child-placing agencies, including one state-run agency in every county, Hallock said, noting that any qualified person who wants to adopt has many resources to do so, and New Hope refers to other agencies any individual with whom it cannot work.

World News Group, 12/18/18

American Heritage Girls

While Boy Scouts of America face potential bankruptcy issues, American Heritage Girls (AHG) provides positive proof of the benefits of a Christ-centered, girl-centric, outdoor program by introducing its first edition of *Stars & Stripes Salute* on October 16, 2018. This publication honors Girl Members who have earned the prestigious Stars & Stripes Award. The Stars & Stripes Award is the highest recognition in the American Heritage Girls Program and celebrates girls who epitomize the AHG Oath and Creed. To honor those who have earned the prestigious award, *Stars & Stripes Salute* features recipients from the 2017-2018 program year and their *Spiritual Walk Essay*, in which recipients reflect and celebrate what God is doing in their life, the passions He is laying on their hearts and the calling He has laid on their future. AHG is dedicated to the mission of building women of integrity through service to God, family, community, and country. Founded in 1995 in Cincinnati, Ohio, AHG has grown from ten Troops and 100 members to over 49,000 members across 15 countries and 50 states. Girl Members participate in Badge Programs, service projects, leadership opportunities and outdoor experiences, all with an emphasis on Christian values and family involvement.

Christian News Wire, 12/17/18



PROJECT MUSTARD SEED

The letter recipient for this month is:

J.P. MORGAN CHASE.

Operations: **financial** (Chase Bank, banking, credit cards, investing/planning, loans), **insurance**.

Please write to:

Mr. James Dimon, Chairman & CEO
JP Morgan Chase & Co.
270 Park Ave. 35th Floor
New York, NY 10017

Tell him to stop
funding Planned
Parenthood

<https://www.jpmorganchase.com/>

J.P. Morgan Chase has been on *The Boycott List* as far back as 1992 and we have written to them multiple times: in 1992, 2000, and more recently in 2012. We are thankful to you all for your continued participation in this project.

Witness to Life Everywhere You Drive

Membership in PA Choose Life costs \$52 the first year, which includes the *PA Choose Life License Plate*. After covering Department of Transportation plate manufacturing cost, the remainder of the \$52 goes directly to charities supporting pro-life causes and women in crisis pregnancies in Pennsylvania. Annual membership in PA Choose Life beyond the first year costs \$20.00, which also funds pro-life charities. PA Choose Life sends membership renewal reminders separately from Penn Dot vehicle registration forms. Apply online for a *PA Choose Life License Plate* at <http://www.paprolife.org> by clicking on the license plate in the lower right column. To obtain a paper application, send your name and mailing address to

PA Pro-Life Federation
4800 Jonestown Rd, Ste 102
Harrisburg, PA 17109

Alternatively, call 717-541-0034 to receive all you need to apply for the license plate.

