

## THE VATICAN HOSTS THIRD INTERNATIONAL REGENERATIVE MEDICINE CONFERENCE

***Created by The Vatican's Pontifical Council for Culture and The Stem For Life Foundation, 3-day Event to Raise Global Awareness of the Promise of Cellular Therapies to Treat Disease and Reduce Global Suffering***

The Vatican's Pontifical Council for Culture and The Stem For Life Foundation (a subsidiary of the Cura Foundation) today announced the beginning of its historic three-day event, *The Third International Conference on the Progress of Regenerative Medicine and Its Cultural Impact*, taking place from within The Vatican, April 28-30, 2016. This event looks at the complex cultural and social framework of illnesses and the dynamic of cell therapy solutions for society.

This event, titled *Cellular Horizons: How Science, Technology, Information and Communication will Impact Society*, is a continuation of a seven-year collaboration between The Stem For Life Foundation, a not-for-profit organization devoted to advancing global awareness of regenerative medicine and cell therapy, The Vatican's Pontifical Council for Culture, and STOQ (Science, Theology and the Ontological Quest) Foundation. Featuring the personal involvement of Pope Francis, who will meet with attendees in a scheduled private audience, this year's event will have a unique focus on cancer therapy and rare diseases in marginalized populations, pediatric diseases, as well as those that occur with aging.

"Whether immunotherapies for cancer or stem cell treatments for rare diseases, there are now over 30,000 cell therapy trials in development noted on the [clinicaltrials.gov](http://clinicaltrials.gov) website," said Dr. Robin Smith, President of The Stem For Life Foundation. "This event will rally the world around a powerful idea — that the cells of our bodies hold the potential to vanquish disease, reduce global suffering and inspire hope for people around the world living with illness."

The President of the Pontifical Council for Culture, His Eminence Cardinal Ravasi, said:

*"In this Jubilee Year of Mercy, we would like to challenge all of society to search for the cures to human illness. The advancement of regenerative medicine holds great promise for the future, and together, we must bring these vital cellular therapies to the hundreds of millions of people suffering from disease around the world, especially those from under-served and developing nations. With this event, we sound a clarion call to humanity that tomorrow's cures can be found today in the human body, and that we have an obligation to bring these cellular therapies out of the clinic and into the real world."*

The goals of the 2016 *Third International Conference on the Progress of Regenerative Medicine and Its Cultural Impact* are to "unite people in the cellular revolution, without prejudice, creating an open dialogue about the interconnections among cellular

research, technology, faith and culture,” said Monsignor Tomasz Trafny, Head of the Science and Faith Department, The Pontifical Council for Culture. Additional goals of this year’s event include:

- Discussing and understanding the importance of scientific advancements, technology and data in the paradigm shift toward regenerative medicine, with a particular focus on cellular therapies.
- Fostering an international conversation amongst researchers, physicians, philanthropists, faith leaders and policy makers in order to help identify a pathway to bring cellular cures to those in medical need throughout the world to reduce human suffering.
- Creating global awareness and inspiring the next generation about the vital linkages between cellular sciences, technological innovation and personalized treatment delivery.
- Catalyzing the necessary funding to support the development of cell therapies that will cure and treat a broad range of debilitating diseases and medical conditions.
- Establishing a global movement of cellular researchers, medical practitioners, technological innovators and cultural and religious thought leaders throughout the world devoted to advancing the paradigm shift toward regenerative medicine.

The conference will be moderated by renowned journalists. Highlights will include:

- A panel discussion on cancer immunotherapy featuring leading immunotherapy doctors, including Dr. James P. Allison, Professor and Chair of Immunology at the MD Anderson Cancer Center at the University of Texas; Dr. Carl H. June, Richard W. Vague Professor in Immunotherapy and Director, Translational Research Program at the Abramson Cancer Center, Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania; Dr. Tak W. Mak, Senior Scientist at the Princess Margaret Hospital at the Ontario Cancer Institute; and Dr. Jedd D. Wolchok, Chief, Melanoma and Immunotherapeutics Service and Lloyd J. Old Chair for Clinical Investigation at the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center.
- An in-depth look at the Parker Institute with Sean Parker, President of the Parker Foundation and Founder of the Parker Institute.
- A panel of philanthropists discussing why they fund cell therapy research and how they decide what to support, featuring Dr. W.E. Bosarge, President Bosarge Family Foundation; Sean Parker, President of the Parker Foundation; and T. Denny Sanford, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the United National Corporation and Health Care Philanthropist (with Kelby K. Krabbenhoft, Sanford Health President and Chief Executive Officer).
- A panel discussion on how close we are to creating a vaccine to treat cancer with Dr. Patrick Soon-Shiong, Chairman of the Chan Soon-Shiong Family Foundation,

Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Chan Soon-Shiong Institute of Molecular Medicine, and Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of NantKwest.

- A panel discussion on gene and stem cell therapy approaches to treat rare diseases, moderated by Stephen C. Groft, Senior Advisor to the Director at the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and featuring Dr. William W. Hauswirth, RybaczkI-Bullard Professor of Ophthalmology at the College of Medicine at the University of Florida; Dr. Sven Kili, Vice President and Head of Gene Therapy Development at GSK; Dr. Joanne Kurtzberg, Chief Scientific Officer and Chief Medical Officer of the Robertson Clinical and Translational Cell Therapy Program, Director of the Carolinas Cord Blood Bank and Director of the Pediatric Blood and Marrow Transplant Program at the Duke University Medical Center; Dr. David A. Pearce, President of Sanford Research at Sanford Health, Senior Scientist at the Children's Health Research Center at Sanford Research, and Professor in the Department of Pediatrics at the Sanford School of Medicine at the University of South Dakota; Dr. Jakub Tolar, Professor and Director at the Stem Cell Institute at the University of Minnesota; and Dr. Jill M. Weimer, Director and Scientist at the Children's Health Research Center at Sanford Research, and Associate Professor in the Department of Pediatrics at the Sanford School of Medicine at the University of South Dakota
- A keynote speech on cancer moonshots by Joseph R. Biden, Jr., Vice President of the United States.
- A conversation examining the regulatory environment in multiple countries – including Japan, Europe and the United States – with respect to cell therapy development and availability to patients, moderated by The Honorable Tommy Thompson, 42<sup>nd</sup> Governor of Wisconsin and former HHS Secretary, and featuring Dr. W.E. Bosarge, American businessman, entrepreneur, scientist, mathematician and philanthropist; Dr. Andrew C. von Echenbach, Former Commissioner of the U.S. FDA and 12<sup>th</sup> Director of the National Cancer Institute at the National Institutes of Health, USA; The Honorable William H. Frist, MD, American physician, businessman, politician, former U.S. Senator from Tennessee and former U.S. Senate Majority Leader; Dr. Tatsuya Kondo, Chief Executive of Japan's Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices Agency (PMDA); and Guido Rasi, Executive Director of the European Medicines Agency (EMA).
- A panel discussion examining unique approaches to Type 1 Diabetes research and funding, moderated by Henry Anhalt, Chief Medical Officer of T1D Exchange, and featuring Dr. Jeffrey A. Bluestone, Director, Hormone Research Institute, University of California, San Francisco; Dr. Douglas W. Losordo, Senior Vice President of Clinical, Medical and Regulatory Affairs and Chief Medical Officer of Caladrius Biosciences; Dr. Douglas A. Melton, Co-Director of Stem Cell Institute and Co-Chair of the Department of Stem Cell and Regenerative Biology at Harvard University; Dr. David Pearce, President of Sanford Research at Sanford Health, Senior Scientist at the Children's Health Research Center at Sanford Research, and Professor in the Department of Pediatrics at the Sanford

School of Medicine at the University of South Dakota; and Dr. Yong Zhao, Associate Scientist at Hackensack University Medical Center.

- A conversation on ethical challenges that comes with the cellular revolution, featuring Rev. Fr. Nicanor Pier Giorgio Austriaco, Associate Professor of Biology and Theology at Providence College; and Dr. Gregory Stock, Professor in the Department of Genetics and Genomic Sciences and Co-Director of the Harris Center for Precision Wellness at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mt. Sinai, and author of “Redesigning Humans.”
- A look at how technology and big data will usher in a new paradigm in drug discovery and healthcare delivery, featuring Dr. Lynda Chin, Associate Vice Chancellor for Health Transformation and Chief Innovation Officer for Health Affairs at the University of Texas; Robert H. High Jr., IBM Fellow, Vice President and Chief Technology Officer at IBM Watson; and Dr. Krishnan “Nandu” Nandabalan, President and Chief Science Officer at BioXcel Corporation.
- New innovation in pediatric cancer using T-cell therapy for acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL), featuring a patient family and their doctor, Dr. Susan Rheingold, Outpatient Medical Director, Division of Oncology at the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, and Associate Professor at the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania.
- A look at who is paying for miracles, featuring Dana Ball, Chief Executive Officer of Unitio and Co-Founder and Executive Director of T1DX; Dr. C. Randal Mills, President of California’s Stem Cell Agency (CIRM); David Panziner, Trustee of The Helmsley Trust; and Derek Rapp, President and Chief Executive Officer of JDRF.

A panel discussion on healthy aging featuring Dr. Nir Barzilai, Director of the Institute for Aging Research at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, and Director of the Paul F. Glenn Center for the Biology of Human Aging Research and of the National Institutes of Health’s (NIH) Nathan Shock Centers of Excellence in the Basic Biology of Aging; Dr. Ronald DePinho, President of the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center; Dr. Robert Hariri, Co-Founder and President of Human Longevity Cellular Therapeutics; and Dr. Pranela Rameshwar, Professor in the Department of Medicine, Hematology – Oncology at Rutgers, New Jersey Medical School, followed by a session led by William W. Li, MD, President and Medical Director, Angiogenesis Foundation, about the effects of food and their ingredients on cellular health and illness.

Major support also comes from philanthropists who believe in the promise of cellular therapies, including the Bosarge Family Foundation, the Parker Foundation and Sanford Health. Sponsors and benefactors include Aegis Capital Corp.; AGTC; Andrew S. Bluestone; Aspire Capital; the Catholic Association Foundation; Cedi Economics; Coffee of Grace; David M. Richwhite; Fondazione Internazionale D’Amato Onlus; Foundation Medicine; Gabriella’s Kitchen; GOJO/PURELL; Guthy Jackson Charitable Foundation; Hackensack University Health Network; JDRF; John and Mary Pappajohn;

Karen and David Haug; Maxim Group; Mesoblast; the Norma and Gordon Smith Family Foundation; Organova; Pfizer Oncology; PiperJaffray; Provectus Biopharmaceuticals, Inc.; RSJ; Susan Scott Foundation; and Sternaegis Ventures.

An array of patients with inspiring stories, who have received cellular therapies or have unique stories to share, are available for media interviews, including:

- Nicholas Wilkins, who was diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (ALL) at the age of 4 and later received a T-cell therapy at The Children's Hospital Of Pennsylvania.
- Elena Simon, who was diagnosed with fibrolamellar hepatocellular carcinoma at the age of 12 and later sequenced her own tumor.
- Eugene Gasana Jr., who was diagnosed with stage two Hodgkin's Lymphoma at the age of 13 and inspired the creation of a new children's cancer treatment hospital in Rwanda.

The Pontifical Council for Culture and Stem for Life Foundation will also give the 2016 Pontifical Key Innovation Award, 2016 Pontifical Key Visionary Award, and 2016 Pontifical Key Philanthropy Award to honor one special individual, or institution, with a unique award which recognizes their extraordinary contributions to the cell therapy revolution. The recipients include: Sanford Health for the 2016 Pontifical Key Innovation Award; Dr. Patrick Soon-Shiong for the 2016 Pontifical Key Visionary Award; and Sean Parker for the 2016 Pontifical Key Philanthropy Award.

To learn more about The *Third International Conference on the Progress of Regenerative Medicine and Its Cultural Impact*, please visit <http://www.celltherapyconference2016.com>. Follow us on Twitter @StemForLife and join in the conversation with #UnitetoCure.

**The Cura Foundation** is a 501(c)(3) global charitable organization dedicated to the advancement of cellular therapies and technologies that improve human health, increase quality of life and enhance patient care. Through its programs and initiatives, The Cura Foundation seeks to catalyze the funding of the advancement of a wide array of cellular therapies, whether immunotherapies, adult stem cell treatments, gene therapies, technology or emerging cell-based therapies that enhance cellular health and longevity.

**The Stem For Life Foundation (SFLF)** is the educational and advocacy subsidiary of The Cura Foundation and is devoted to fostering global awareness of the potential for regenerative medicine to treat and cure a range of deadly diseases and debilitating medical conditions, as opposed to merely treating their symptoms. The Foundation stands at the forefront of a fundamental shift away from traditional drug treatment in

favor of amplifying the body's natural repair mechanisms to vanquish disease. For more information on The Stem For Life Foundation, please visit <http://www.stemforlife.org>

**The Science and Faith Foundation – "STOQ"** is a Foundation under Vatican law promoted by the Pontifical Council for Culture. The identity and mission of the Foundation have their main Magisterial references in the Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et spes*, in the talks of St John Paul II and Benedict XVI on the relations between science and faith, particularly in the Encyclical *Fides et ratio*. The Foundation aims to give continuity to the activities of Project STOQ, which emerged from the collaboration between the Pontifical Council for Culture and Pontifical Roman Universities following the Galileo Commission and the Jubilee of Scientists in the year 2000. Among the aims of the Foundation are research and study of the themes of dialogue between science, philosophy and theology; realisation of conferences and other activities of high cultural and scientific value, even at the popular level; publication of works of merit on the main arguments of the science-faith dialogue.

**The Pontifical Council for Culture** traces its origins to the Second Vatican Council and its opening up to that great, dynamic, worried and multiform world of contemporary culture. In its Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et spes*, the Council Fathers expressed the need for the Church to continually place itself before the needs of the cultures of the world. It was a new period of history where a new humanism was arising, and the Church, faithful to its own traditions, was aware of the universality of its mission, entering into communion with the different forms of culture, a communion that would enrich the Church as much as the cultures. The Pontifical Council for Culture is committed to the dialogue with many realities in their relation to culture and faith such Art, Music, Cultural Goods, Cultures in the World, Mysticism, Atheism, Economics, Language & Communication, International Cultural Bodies, Sport and Science.

**The Science and Faith Department** is the vehicle of the Pontifical Council for Culture's engagement with contemporary science. This commitment is based on the firm belief that between science and faith not only is there no opposition, but there should also be beneficial serene dialogue. The Christian faith when properly understood is a creator of culture and an inspiring source of science. For this reason, the Department of Science and Faith seeks further understanding of the phenomena of scientific and technological development and their possible influence on theological and philosophical thought to achieve the following objectives:

1. Elaborate a cultural analysis of the development of natural sciences, enquiring after its impact on theological and philosophical reflection, and on the cultural and social dynamics over the short and long term;
2. Promote reciprocal cooperation in the sphere of the dialogue of science and faith with the various institutions beginning with other Dicasteries and bodies of the Holy See, also international Catholic organizations, ecclesial and secular institutions, universities and research institutes throughout the world, making

common projects and sustaining initiatives of scientific research and cultural discovery;

3. Encourage a greater commitment for the ideal of dialogue between science and faith, and promote critical reflection on the frontier themes in the area of interdisciplinary research for a renewed anthropology, and for ethics, theology and philosophy of nature;
4. Offer collaboration as a service to Episcopal Conferences and their bodies on themes relating to science and faith; and
5. Promote initiatives to spread awareness through public conferences, congresses and study days, as well as publishing books and educational volumes to support the Church in its pastoral and educational tasks.

For more information on The Pontifical Council for Culture, please visit <http://www.cultura.va>