



Adsum

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This is the reason that the Fatima message of prayer and sacrifice is more relevant today than it was in 1917. The next time we are tempted to complain about the heat, let us offer up this sacrifice for the conversion of poor sinners.

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"This right of religious freedom is blasphemous for it attributes to God purposes that destroy His Majesty, His Glory, His Kingship. This right implies freedom of conscience, freedom of thought, and all the Masonic freedoms.

"The Church that affirms such errors is at once schismatic and heretical. This Conciliar Church is, therefore, not Catholic. To whatever extent Pope, Bishops, priests, or faithful adhere to this new Church, they separate themselves from the Catholic Church... For our part, we persevere in the Catholic Church, by the grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ and the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary."

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Father Connell Answers Moral Questions

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Question: In recent times the operation of kidney transplantation has been successfully performed between identical twins. Up to the present (January 1958), eight such operations have taken place (seven at the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital in Boston, one at the Medical College of Virginia Hospital in Richmond). None of the donors have suffered any perceptible harm up to the present. Two of the recipients have died, the other six are apparently in good health. What is to be said of the morality of such an operation?

Answer: Theologians are not in agreement as to the morality of organic transplantation from a living person. Some believe that such operations are forbidden by the natural law, on the ground that a person is not permitted to authorize the mutilation of his own body except for the benefit of the whole body by the principle of totality. Such, for example, is the teaching of Merkelbach and Noldin-Schmitt.

Pope Pius XII, in an address to doctors on May 14, 1956, expressly stated that he did not intend to discuss this question. However, he did add that it is not permissible to argue to the lawfulness of organic transplantation on the score that the relation of an individual to society is analogous to the relation of a particular organ of the human body to the whole, so that the physical integrity of one individual may be sacrificed for the benefit of another, just as one member of the human body can be excised for the well-being of another member or of the society as a whole. This argument, as the Pope points out, is based on an erroneous concept of the relation of an individual to the social body.

However, this does not mean that the Pope has condemned transplantation, within certain limits. Hence, according to some moralists, it may be permitted, in harmony with Catholic moral principles, from one living person to another. I believe that a good argument can be given in defense of the morality of certain operations of this nature, such as the one described by the questioner. The argument is that God allows a person a certain limited dominion over his bodily integrity. For example, all theologians allow blood transfusions. On the same ground, I believe, we can argue that God allows the transfer of organs from one living person to another as long as the operation does not gravely endanger the life of the donor and does not impair his functional integrity. By this last phrase we mean that he can continue to function as a normal human being after the operation, without being noticeably or gravely impeded in the use of his limbs and members. Now, I do not believe that the kidney transplantation, performed by reliable surgeons, involves either of these two evils. As far as actual results are concerned, none of the donors have died up to the present, so there does not seem to be grave danger to life involved in donating one kidney. Furthermore, the donors are apparently functioning properly, without any noticeable impairment, like many other persons who have had one kidney removed for pathological reasons. Hence, as long as there is no decision to the contrary from the Holy See, I would assure any surgeon who is in doubt about the morality of such an operation, or any person who wishes to be the subject of the operation, that he is on sufficiently safe moral grounds to take part in the kidney transplantation.

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