



For immediate release

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**Faith Communities Urged to Raise Donation Awareness
During National Donor Sabbath 2011**

ITASCA, Ill., (Nov. 4, 2011) – Donate Life Illinois urges faith leaders throughout Illinois to raise their collective voices, praise the benefits of organ and tissue donation and urge their members to give the gift of life by being organ and tissue donors during National Donor Sabbath, which will be observed November 11-13.

Donation and transplantation professionals set aside this special weekend each year—two weekends before the Thanksgiving season—to bring donation to the attention of faith leaders and their communities. During this time, Donate Life Illinois and its coalition members seek to educate faith communities about the ongoing need for organ, tissue and eye donors and encourage people to register as donors.

Religious views on donation vary among denominations, but the vast majority—including all major world religions such as Catholicism, Judaism, Islam and Hinduism—view organ and tissue donation as one of the highest forms of giving and a supreme gesture of human compassion. That’s because faith and hope—fundamental principles of nearly all religions—also are integral components of the donation and transplant process. From those who wait for organ and tissue transplants, to donors who one day may make a lifesaving difference, to donor families whose pain of losing a loved one is lessened by knowing he or she gave life to others, all have faith in a greater good beyond themselves.



Give thanks. Give life.

Donate Life Illinois encourages all Illinoisans to be a part of this special time of hope and thanksgiving by planning and participating in National Donor Sabbath activities and registering to be organ, tissue and eye donors in the Illinois Organ/Tissue Donor Registry. This selfless act can give hope to nearly 5,000 Illinoisans on the organ transplant waiting list and thousands of others waiting for tissue and cornea transplants.

For more information on organ, tissue, eye and blood donation or to register your decision to be a donor by joining the Illinois Organ/Tissue Donor Registry, visit DonateLifellinois.org. For information on how to plan a National Donor Sabbath program for members of your faith community, e-mail Donate Life Illinois at info@giftofhope.org or call 888/307-DON8 (3668).

Donate Life Illinois is a coalition of agencies responsible for organ, tissue, eye, blood and marrow donation, as well as donor education and registration, in Illinois. It is one of 45 regional coalitions and 50 national businesses or associations making up [Donate Life America](http://DonateLifeAmerica.org), a not-for-profit alliance that serves as a national voice and inspires all people to save and enhance lives through organ, eye and tissue donation.

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