

Peyton Manning, stem cells and where Catholics really stand



Peyton Manning (image from FoxSports.com)

Earlier today, FoxSports.com reporter Jay Glazer broke the news that Indianapolis Colts quarterback Peyton Manning went to Europe for a non-embryonic stem-cell therapy. Glazer reported a desperate Manning underwent the procedure, not allowed in the U.S., to heal his ailing neck. The Super Bowl winning quarterback has since had surgery on the neck and could miss the 2011 NFL season. Glazer said the procedure “took fat cells, probably out of his belly, and they put it in a culture. They try to turn back the almost hands of time with these cells and they inject them in the neck hoping these cells regenerate the area, regenerate the nerves.” Manning, Glazer said, is just trying to get back to the field. The story of how this happened, and what exactly happened, has yet to be fully revealed. As far I know, the Catholic Church and the U.S. Bishops have not made a comment on this particular story yet. Of course, those with agendas on the Internet have taken to comments sections below blogs and stories talking about Manning and stem cells and are saying people of faith oppose stem-cell research. They’re blaming people of faith for Manning’s decision to go to Europe. It’s ironic. Here’s the thing: the Catholic Church has opposed embryonic stem cell research, but has supported work regarding adult stem cells. Baltimore’s own Bishop Denis J. Madden said in April of 2010, “We are very supporting of adult stem-cell research and we feel that this is an area that has great promise.” Baltimore’s Mercy Medical Center, a Catholic facility, recently started an umbilical chord blood banking program. Archbishop Edwin F. O’Brien, now the apostolic administrator of Baltimore, clarified the church’s stance on stem cells when Mercy launched the program in October 2010. “There’s a common misconception that the Catholic Church is opposed to stem cell research,” he said. “That is wrong. The church has long supported adult stem-cell research, but is opposed to embryonic stem-cell research, which destroys human embryos and which has yet to cure a single disease.” Who knows where this Manning saga is going, but

just know that the church has “long supported adult stem-cell research,” while opposing embryonic research.