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**NATION CROSSES RELIGIOUS BOUNDARIES FOR LIFESAVING CAUSE;
CONGREGATIONS WORK TO INCREASE ORGAN AND TISSUE DONATION**

Baton Rouge, LA, November 12, 2008—Regardless of religious affiliations, clergy and healthcare professionals across the nation will unite to recognize National Donor Sabbath, an interfaith celebration of the gifts of hope provided through organ and tissue donation, on November 14-16.

“Nearly all major religions in the United States support organ and tissue donation as one of the highest expressions of compassion and generosity,” said Jeanette Slakey, executive director of the Legacy Donor Foundation. “Yet, a common misconception amongst families is that donation is against their religion.”

According to a recent Gallup poll, fewer than 10 percent of people in the United States know their religions have doctrines regarding organ and tissue donation. Though these beliefs may differ between denominations, the underlying theme – organ and tissue donation is one of the highest forms of giving – remains the same.

Today, more than 100,000 people in the United States are waiting for an organ transplant, and the number continues to grow at a rate of 133 people per day. At the same time, hundreds of thousands more are in need of cornea and tissue transplants.

“This is an enormous opportunity for faith communities to help the thousands who are waiting for transplants by encouraging their members to join the 70 million people already registered as donors in the United States and becoming organ, eye and tissue donors,” said Kirsten Heintz, Director of Development for the Louisiana Organ Procurement Agency.

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For more information about National Donor Sabbath, or to learn more about organ and tissue donation please visit www.donatelifela.org. If you would like to arrange an interview with a transplant recipient or donor family member, please contact Anna Corin Koehl at 504-524-3342 or akoehl@ontargetwithbmf.com.

About Donate Life Louisiana

Donate Life Louisiana, collaboration between LOPA –Louisiana Organ Procurement Agency and the Legacy Donor Foundation, provides education and awareness programs to the citizens of Louisiana about organ and tissue donation.

About LOPA

LOPA is the only federally designated organ procurement organization for the state of Louisiana. The agency plays a vital role in educating the medical community and the general public about organ and tissue donation matters, working with families through the donation process, recovering donated organs and tissues and placing the organs and tissues for transplant.

About Legacy Foundation

Founded in 1999, the Legacy Donor Foundation (a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization) provides education and public awareness activities about organ donation. The Foundation seeks to increase donor registrations and foster informed family acceptance of the process.

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