

WORDS FROM OUR POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

Nirj Deva DL MEP
*President, International
Committee on Human Dignity*



"Whether we like it or not, Christianity forms the bedrock for our ideals of the human person and individual freedom, because this anthropological interpretation leads to a very interesting conclusion - the State may give us our human rights, but only God can give us infinite human dignity."



Professor The Lord Alton
*Convenor, All-Party Parliamentary
Group on Human Dignity in the Palace
of Westminster*

"The Dignitatis Humanae Institute is the most important organisation promoting human dignity in the world today. I agreed to chair the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Human Dignity because I think it is very necessary to the work we do here: it bases itself on the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Dignity."

Professor Rocco Buttiglione,
*Founding Patron,
Dignitatis Humanae Institute*

This Institute for Human Dignity should help us understand what man is, and his dignity, and it can do this through Catholic social teaching, a kind of critical thinking of society that puts together knowledge coming from different sciences: sociology, psychology, philosophy, theology, and creates a synthesis directed to the concrete human being. "Concrete" means there are universal truths, but [they] must find a way of making them accessible, easy to perceive, easy to understand in the distinctive situation of men of today."



HI&RH Otto von Habsburg

As the Universal Declaration of Human Dignity states: 'the proper relationship between the individual and the State is the latter exists to serve the former and not vice-versa. This Declaration is based on a thoroughly profound understanding of the dynamic that to be politically free one must also be economically free; and to be economically free, one must be recognised as morally free.'



THE INSTITUTE

How to get involved

You can make an important difference by signing the Universal Declaration which can be viewed online. You can also donate to us and/or our outreach partners, or you can volunteer to help them. We also run an internship programme at our office in Rome. For more details on all these possibilities, and any other matters connected with the Institute, please contact us at:

H.E. Cardinal Renato Raffaele Martino
Honorary President of the Dignitatis Humanae Institute
c/o Daniel Howard, Director of External Affairs
Dignitatis Humanae Institute
Via delle Fornaci 44
00165 Roma
Italy

Tel. +39 06 622 79252
Fax. +39 06 622 79212

Nirj Deva DL MEP
President of the International Committee on Human Dignity
c/o Ingrid Grosu, International Committee Secretary General
European Parliament
Room 04M099
60 Rue Wiertz / Wiertzstraat 60
B-1047 Bruxelles
Belgium

Tel. : +32 (0)2 28 37245
Fax : +32 (0)2 28 49245

DIGNITATIS HUMANAЕ INSTITUTE

Promoting Human Dignity based on the recognition that Man is made in the Image and Likeness of God



*“Recognition of ‘fundamental human rights’ in their fullest capacity demands the recognition of their source...the pre-eminent ‘human right’ is to have one’s humanity recognized as being made in the image and likeness of God.” – Closing words of the *Universal Declaration of Human Dignity**

The Universal Declaration of Human Dignity

Introduction

We are an organisation that aims to uphold human dignity based on the anthropological truth that man is made in the image and likeness of God, and therefore has an innate human dignity of infinite worth to be upheld. We promote this understanding by supporting Christians in public life; assisting them to present effective and coherent responses to the increasing efforts to silence the Christian voice in the public square.

The Universal Declaration on Human Dignity is the basis of all the Institute's work.

Why are we needed?

We exist because of a growing secularist intolerance to Christians of all confessions that has led to a myriad of attacks on human dignity whether it be abortion, euthanasia, attacks on traditional marriage, the practice of gendercide, embryonic stem cell research, economic repression, or threats to religious freedom.

The Institute believes that in this present age, the Church is fighting (and losing) many of these conflicts which in some way have at their heart the denial of the reality that man is made in the image and likeness of God.

In response to this, we are asking for a greater spirit of respect and tolerance from those with radically different views from ours. We are also very aware that what is really needed is a wider evangelisation of culture, because only then will society be able to limit its own extremisms.

Strength in numbers: our network of parliamentary working groups

The Institute supports Christian politicians by coordinating its affiliated parliamentary working groups on human dignity throughout the world. Each working group is based on the Institute's founding document: the Universal Declaration of Human Dignity. This enables such politicians to speak out more effectively in defence of the human person in all of life's stages.

The Institute also contributes towards the debate on human dignity issues through its own research, press releases, articles and conferences. Furthermore, it is currently establishing various outreach partners – humanitarian organisations offering practical help to the poorest and most vulnerable in society.

By necessity, much of our work is discreet and behind the scenes in nature.

The Declaration is endorsed by parliamentary working groups on human dignity in various legislatures, codifying what is meant by human dignity. The Declaration does this by emphasizing three main principles:

- that man is made in the image and likeness of God;
- that this image and likeness proceeds in every single human being without exception from conception until natural death;
- that the most effective means of safeguarding this recognition is through the active participation of engaged Christians in the public square.

The Declaration gives a solid basis and framework upon which human dignity, based on the truth that man is born in the image and likeness of God, can be safeguarded and promoted in the public square.

Many Christian lay people as well as politicians have signed it. In fact we invite and strongly encourage all people of whatever confession to do so as their signature will give the document extra weight and influence when cited by lawmakers.

H.E Cardinal Renato Raffaele Martino
Honorary President



“We believe it is the responsibility of every person to promote human dignity, as human dignity is a gift from God, who gave it to us by creating us in His image and likeness. We must thank God for this gift, and we pray that everyone in the world respects the human person, his dignity...”

H.E Cardinal Raymond Leo Burke
President, Advisory Board



“I energetically endorse what the British Parliamentarian Lord Alton of Liverpool said about the Institute: It is indeed the most important organisation promoting human dignity in the world today.”

Luca volontà
Chairman



“I think the failure to recognise the imago Dei within man is a contributory factor towards the apparent lack of concern for the breakdown of the family and community we have seen over the last half century.”