

Vox Populi

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Dignitas Infinita – human dignity

This week the Vatican's Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith released the Declaration *Dignitas Infinita* or Infinite Dignity.

It is a document on human dignity and was five years in the making.

The Declaration states that “every human person possesses an infinite dignity, inalienably grounded in his or her very being – “which prevails in and beyond every circumstance, state, or situation the person may ever encounter”.

The Declaration is divided into four sections. The first three recall fundamental principles and theoretical premises, with the goal of offering important clarifications that can help avoid frequent confusion that surrounds the use of the term “dignity.”

The fourth section presents some current and problematic situations in which the immense and inalienable dignity due to every human being is not sufficiently recognised.

It identifies 13 “grave violations” of human dignity: poverty; war; the mistreatment of migrants; human trafficking; sexual abuse; violence against women; abortion; surrogacy; euthanasia and assisted suicide; the marginalisation of people with disabilities; gender theory; sex change, and digital violence.

There are passages and quotes not only from Pope Francis, but also his predecessors Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI.

Quoting from Pope Benedict XVI, *Dignitas Infinita* warns that without religion, human dignity risks falling prey “to distortions” or being “manipulated by ideology, or applied in a partial way that fails to take full account of the dignity of the human person”.

There is a great deal to unpack in the document which aims to offer points of reflection that can help us maintain an awareness of human dignity in our complex world.

Our Church leaders recommend the Declaration for study and reflection – not just dipping into headlines and short reports but going to the primary source which can be found on the [Vatican website](#).