Press Release:

Taking Strength from Dignitas Infinita:
Declaration of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith

For Immediate Release
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"The newly-released Vatican Declaration on Human Dignity is an important reaffirmation that each person's God given dignity and right to life are the foundation of all human and civil rights. As an African-American, this truth is profound for me. Legal and societal recognition of God-given human dignity and the right to life were the central premises of the abolitionist movement that destroyed slavery. Equal human dignity and the right to life have always been the true bedrock principles of the American civil rights movement," said Louis Brown, Jr., Esq, Executive Director of the Christ Medicus Foundation.

"Furthermore, the Declaration's clarity about the beauty of sexual difference between male and female and of the biological reality of human sexuality is timely and needed. I hope and pray that the Declaration will be a helpful teaching document for Catholic and non-Catholic healthcare leaders, healthcare professionals, policy makers, hospital systems, universities, Catholic schools, and private and public institutions across the country.

"The Declaration's release this week is providential. Without the legal and societal protection of the right to life from conception to natural death, human and civil rights and human dignity itself will collapse in America. Prudential judgment should be utilized to discern particular policy approaches to protect the unborn and pregnant mothers. However, people of faith and goodwill must never waver in courageously proclaiming the truth, freedom and beauty of the culture of life. We as the pro-life movement must persevere always in providing maximum legal, policy, health care, economic and cultural support for the unborn and pregnant mothers.

"In this spirit, I encourage you all to read the statement below on Dignitas Infinita from CMF's Michael Vacca, our head of bioethics and a noted legal scholar, published author, and human rights expert," concluded Louis Brown.

Statement by Michael Vacca
Director of Ministry, Bioethics, and Membership Experience for Christ Medicus Foundation



The Christ Medicus Foundation is grateful for the Holy See's clear affirmation that human dignity is objective, inherent, and ontological, that is, concerned with the very being of man, who is created in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1:26).

There can be no separation between the rights of man and the rights of the human person! This foundational truth is at the center of Catholic social teaching and is foundational to the ethical practice of health care. The Church makes clear that this truth is accessible to reason and, therefore, applies to the secular world as well as people of faith, but is made more clear through the incarnation of Jesus Christ who condescended in His humility to become man and offer His life for our salvation, thus revealing the true dignity of the human person. When healthcare professionals treat patients, they are, as Mother Teresa of Calcutta so beautifully stated, treating Christ in disguise. Of particular note, the Declaration stresses the "relational character of the human person," which speaks very much to our mission at Christ Medicus of accompanying people in their health care so they can bear witness to Christ and receive the healing love of Christ.

The Declaration further condemns euthanasia and assisted suicide, the marketing of human organs and tissues, as well as abortion, surrogacy, and gender ideology and related transgender procedures, all of which harm the dignity of the human person. Sadly, one of the most common forms of euthanasia is passive euthanasia through the withholding of food and water, thus killing people through the deprivation of the human right to water and food. We are, thus reminded, that the role of health care is to restore and promote the health of the person, and never to cause death through act or omission.

The Declaration rightfully acknowledges the role of nation-states in protecting the dignity of the human person, but it is less clear about the vital role of civil society in protecting the dignity of the human person. Our most cherished relationships as human persons are not with the state, but within the family, within our communities and friendships, and most importantly, within the Church as the Bride of Christ. Religious freedom is eroded when we conflate the state with civil society. The closer a relationship is to the fundamental vocation of the human person to give and receive love, the more protection it must receive. The family (marital and parental rights) and the Church are worthy of the highest level of protection, and while the efforts of nations to advance the common good are commendable, states must never infringe on the duties and rights of the human person as expressed in the family and the Church.

The Christ Medicus Foundation shares Jesus Christ's healing love in health and wellness. We advance religious freedom for medical professionals and patients. We promote Christ-centered pro-life medical care. We offer our CURO Catholic health and wellness program for the medical needs and whole-person wellness of individuals and families. Founded in 1997, the Christ Medicus Foundation works to accomplish its mission through promoting public policy and education, supporting Christ-centered pro-life medical centers, and providing our CURO Catholic Health and Wellness Program.

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