Student reflections on Global Dignity Day  
Sydney, 14 October 2013

‘The stories told by the students were my favourite part of the day because I related and connected tremendously with a lot of the stories revealed. Some of the stories that students undertook in their life I never have personally experienced but it was exceptional that they could open up about their experiences and trust in others to show dignity towards them. After today I had a strong knowledge of what dignity really meant and how important it is to show respect, understanding, love, compassion, tolerance, to everyone.’

Tamara Bailey, Gilroy Catholic College

‘The Global Dignity Day event has empowered [me] to ensure that members of our society uphold respect towards each other, so that each individual is able to lead a dignified life … Some students decided they would celebrate Global Dignity Day at their schools through sports carnivals, or by having group discussions on how we can all live dignified lives.’

Judy Chen, Fort Street High School

‘I found this to be a fantastic day. I’d never been to anything like this before and I … had never seriously considered what the concept of dignity actually was. To me, dignity now means the right for everyone who is alive to be respected and appreciated.’

Cornelia Deller, Cheltenham Girls High School

‘My dignity and [the dignity of] all others deserve[s] to be recognised and portrayed on the special day, Global Dignity Day … Along with a quarter of a million students around the world, students from the Sydney region [now] begin on their mission to venture out and broadcast the true meaning of dignity along with … equality and human rights in their everyday lives.’

Jennifer Katipunan, Cabramatta High School

‘Gatherings like Dignity Day, have truly shown us what dignity means on a larger scale … Not only is a sense of dignity a human right, but an integral piece of the human puzzle. The maturity of a developed society is the number of differences it embraces. The society of the future is going to be a patchwork of differences but it can only fully flourish when human dignity is treasured.’

Rhea Kohli, Hornsby Girls High School

‘Global Dignity Day wanted us students to define dignity for ourselves. In my view, dignity is the affirmation that we are all humans who have the right to be respected and live our life to our fullest. Only by upholding the dignity of others can we uphold our own dignity … The richest man on Earth is as deserving of dignity as a beggar on the streets or a murderer serving a life sentence. Dignity is the great equaliser, where
no matter who a person is, what they have done, where they live, their age or race, they are deserving of respect simply because of their humanity. If you care about dignity, you have to care about dignity for all.’

_Amanda Liem, Brigidine College_

‘I found it to be a truly inspirational and eye-opening experience, and I truly mean that … For people to gain dignity, they always need to be looking at the bigger picture and be concerned for all kinds of people, because that’s what dignity really is; the acceptance and respect of all types of people to assist in self-worth.’

_Thomas McCorquodale, Cronulla High School_

‘In the midst of the nation’s fixation over the on-going HSC exams, Global Dignity Day reminded me to not lose sight of the broader picture … It became evident that our society’s survival relies on our capability to respect the dignity of others … If we acknowledge that our society’s future hangs on our ability to lead our lives in a dignified manner, respecting each human being and fulfilling our moral obligation to ensure the dignity of each individual remains intact, we are left with real perspective.’

_Meera Vasanthanathan, Hornsby Girls High School_

‘As a result of the experience of Global Dignity Day at NSW Parliament House, the four boys from St Pius X College at Chatswood were inspired to make some positive changes in their school environment. We sat down over a few lunch times and discussed what they wanted to do and how they could achieve and influence change. The boys identified language and labels used widely and almost acceptably that take away the dignity of members of our society. They identified words and labels such as “gay”, “fag”, “homo”, “retard”, “spaz” as well as a few others as words used to describe people and situations that take away the dignity of others. The boys made a bold stand and admitted they had in the past used these words but were no longer going to, and encouraged others in their year group to sign a charter and make a unified stand. I was extremely proud of their courage and willingness to speak out and thought you would appreciate hearing how four boys who experienced Global Dignity Day are trying to influence change and make a positive stand.’

_Simon Tagg, Teacher, St Pius X College, Chatswood_