

In his dialogue with Jesus, Pilate famously asked, "What is truth?", implying that there is no such thing, or if there is, it is essentially unknowable.

In our secular culture, which relishes relativism and materialism, you have your truth and I have mine. The conviction that a given reality of things which applies to all of us can be embraced as universal truth is categorically

denied.

In the face of such resistance, the Church proclaims Christ as the Truth, as the One who reveals the fullness of God's life, love, and purpose for our lives. If we accept the truth that we are made in the image and likeness of God, that Jesus is the Son of God, that the Scriptures proclaim reality, that we are here on earth to know, love, and serve God, then so many questions of meaning, morality, action, and direction fall into place for us. If we cannot accept the truth that God offers us in the Scriptures and the sacraments, in the Catechism and the experience of the saints, we are condemned to create our own subjective truth. How exhausting is that and ultimately unreliable.

Christ bids us to know the truth and the truth will set us free. When we surrender to God—his revelation, his desire for us, our identity in him, the invitation to live as his new creation in this world as an intentional disciple, we find liberation—freedom from sin, selfishness, confusion, guilt, shame, and an aimless meaningless life. Truth is a Person, Jesus Christ, who came to show us the way to the Father. This Truth sets us free from sin and death. In that we rejoice and give thanks.

## A NOTE FROM BISHOP HYING

# TRUTH

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**TRUTH IS  
BEAUTIFUL  
WITHIN ITSELF.  
- CATECHISM OF THE  
CATHOLIC CHURCH, 2500**

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## YEARLY FORMATION NEWSLETTER TOPICS

### EASTER 2020

The Paschal Mystery

### JUNE 2020

Evangelization

### JULY 2020

Discipleship

### AUGUST 2020

Baptism and Confirmation

### SEPTEMBER 2020

Reclaiming Sunday

### OCTOBER 2020

Interior Life: Prayer

### NOVEMBER 2020

Interior Life: Mortification

### DECEMBER 2020

Confession

### JANUARY 2021

Goodness

### FEBRUARY 2021

Beauty

### MARCH 2021

Truth

### APRIL 2021

New Methods

## THE WAY, THE TRUTH, THE LIFE

MEGHAN BONHAM

Recently, I helped out on a Confirmation retreat for a group of high school freshmen. In one of the small groups, we taught them Lectio Divina using the Last Supper discourse from the Gospel of John:

**Do not let your hearts be troubled. You have faith in God; have faith also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If there were not, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back again and take you to myself, so that where I am you also may be. Where I am going you know the way."** Thomas said to him, **"Master, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?"** Jesus said to him, **"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, then you will also know my Father. From now on you do know him and have seen him. (John 14:1-7)**

As we were discussing the passage, one of the girls said something that really struck me. She shared how comforting she found Jesus words to us about not needing to know everything. Just knowing him is enough. We experience the truth of this in our human experience of relationships. If I waited until I learned every detail about one of my friends before introducing them to someone else, I would miss out on a lot of

opportunities to share the people I love with each other! Jesus is the Way and the Truth and the Life; as long as we know him and are striving to know him more each day, he will guide us.

Thinking about writing a reflection on truth is intimidating and a bit anxiety inducing. How could I possibly know enough to be able to write on the topic of Truth? I am a self-proclaimed perfectionist, and if I am not certain that I am going to "win" or be absolutely correct, I probably will not participate. But when it comes to our faith, we do not have to have all of the answers!

How comforting it is to know that the Church has 2,000 years of wisdom and teaching founded in the words of Jesus Christ to guide us. The Catechism of the Catholic Church says it like this: "The Church, 'the pillar and bulwark of the truth', faithfully guards 'the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints'. She guards the memory of Christ's words; it is she who from generation to generation hands on the apostles' confession of faith" (CCC 171).

The Church holds the truth for us; I just have to continue seeking the answers and sharing the ones that I have found.

This Lent, let us strive to be a little less like Thomas the Apostle. Let's not be worried about having all of the answers, but trust that if we continue to follow Christ and his Church, we will know the way and enter more deeply into the truth.

## FURTHER STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS

- [Formed](#)
- [Word On Fire](#)
- [Catholic Answers](#)
- [Ascension Presents](#)
- [Aquinas 101](#)

### TO READ

- [Who Am I To Judge?](#), Edward Sri
- [Handbook of Christian Apologetics](#), Peter Kreeft

### TO WATCH

- [Is it true that there is no truth?](#), Catholic Answers (YouTube)
- [Aquinas 101: Thomistic Epistemology](#) (YouTube)
- [Who Am I to Judge: What Is Truth?](#) (Formed)

### TO LISTEN

- [Defending Truth with Charity](#), Every Knee Shall Bow (Podcast)

## DEFINING OUR TERMS

What is truth? It's a deep philosophical question, but it has a really simple answer in the end. The great Greek philosopher Aristotle expressed it perfectly using words of only one syllable each: "Truth is to say of what is that it is or to say of what is not that it is not." Let me give you an example. If I say to you, "It's raining outside," how do you know whether I am speaking the truth? Easy, right? You look out the window. Without really even thinking about it, you make a quick mental comparison between my words ("It's raining outside") and reality (the world outside the window). If there is agreement between them—if it is actually raining in the real world outside, then my words are true; if not, then I wasn't speaking the truth. That's what truth is: this relationship of conformity, or agreement, between our words and reality, or between our thoughts and reality.

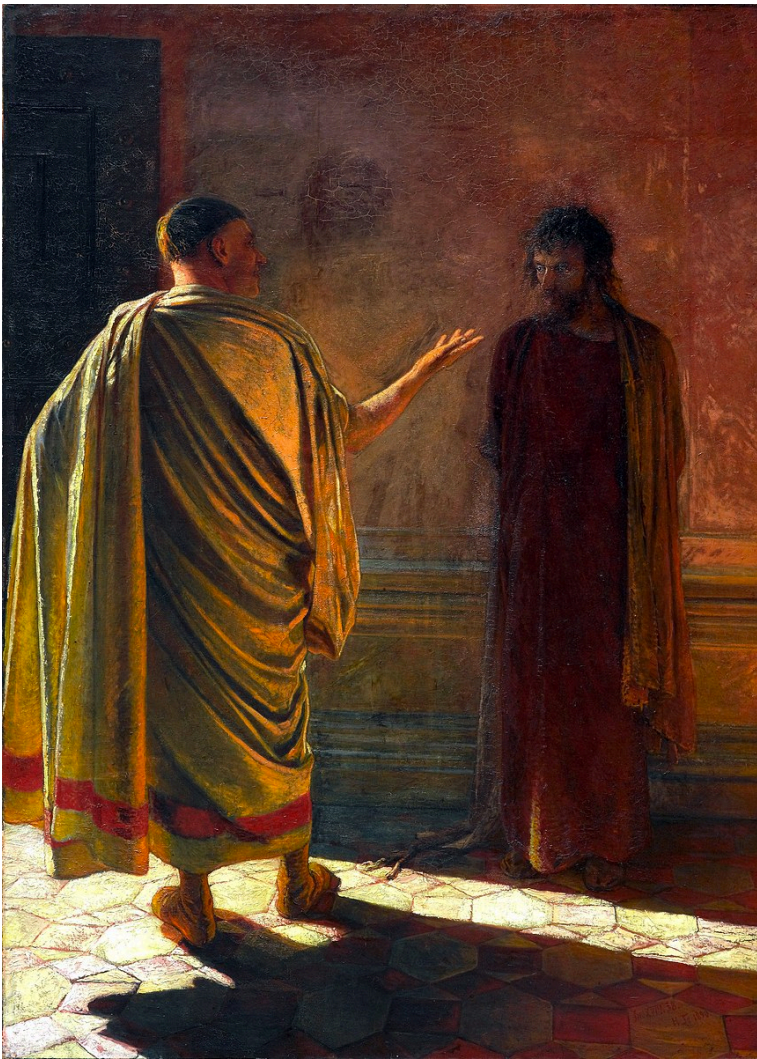
## GOING DEEPER

### QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Do you ever feel hindered in your evangelization efforts by not knowing all the answers?
- How do you react when you don't know something about what the Church teaches?
- Who is someone you rely on that you can go to when you have questions about the faith?

### REFLECTION IDEA FOR LEADERSHIP MEETINGS

- Were you familiar with the definition of truth above from Aristotle?
- What has impacted you most this past year while deepening your understanding of truth and what the Church teaches?
- How do you as a team work on deepening your knowledge of the faith so you can share it more effectively?
- What role do you think truth plays in the work of evangelization?



## WHAT IS TRUTH, 1890

NIKOLAY GE

Let's begin by taking a minute to read the following Scripture:

**So Pilate said to him, 'Then you are a King?' Jesus answered, 'You say I am a king. For this I was born and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.' Pilate said to him, 'What is truth?'**

~ John 18:37

In this image we see this dramatic encounter, an exchange between Jesus and Pilate. Pilate lived and ruled in a politically and religiously enflamed culture. Pilate's decision to not hear the truth about Jesus was guided by fear and the influence of the world in which he lived. He was afraid of the unrest and political uprising that would ensue if he did not prosecute Jesus. Jesus directly challenged Pilate to embrace him and to live in accord with that truth—no matter how hard it may be. Perhaps Pilate did believe Jesus was the long awaited King of the Jews, but he was overcome by his own human weakness.

This painting raises the same concerns in our own lives and culture today—one that is just as politically and religiously charged. Like Pilate, many people today struggle with the question: "What is truth?" Relativism prevails in our world; we are told truth is dependent on our own experiences and beliefs. For a Christian, truth is found above all in Christ and revealed to us by God throughout history. Our commitment to the truth cannot be dependent on convenience or ease of life. The truth is often unpopular or mocked in our current culture. Many are afraid to embrace the truth of Christ and allow their lives to be transformed by him. It takes great courage and faith to be one who is willing to go against the world and embrace the truth of a life in Christ.

This work was painted by a Russian artist and it was banned from exhibition for blasphemy. Author Leo Tolstoy, a friend of the artist, found the irony amusing and stated, "There can be no peace between Christ and the world. This is true to history and true to our own day."