



9. May 2020

“I am the Truth”

Jn 14,1-6 (Repetition of the text of 8. May 2020)

Do not let your hearts be troubled. You trust in God, trust also in me. In my Father's house there are many places to live in; otherwise I would have told you. I am going now to prepare a place for you, and after I have gone and prepared you a place, I shall return to take you to myself, so that you may be with me where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going. Thomas said, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going, so how can we know the way?' Jesus said: I am the Way; I am Truth and Life. No one can come to the Father except through me.

Just as Jesus is the only way to the heavenly Father, as we looked at it yesterday, he can also say of himself that he is the truth.

So we are not referred by the Lord to a philosophical system, but to him as a person.

It is right that philosophy should take up this question, because the question of truth as an objective reality and is of crucial importance! If the question of truth is not connected with the search of an objective reality then we humans would slip into subjectivism and everyone would live his "own truth".

This is unfortunately a tendency that is very widespread today and contributes greatly to the confusion of people. If the question of truth is no longer asked at all, then ideologies become legion and a certain "spiritual anarchy" enters people's lives. The forces of darkness will have a very easy game with people and so people become increasingly blind to the truth.

One of the conclusive explanations, if you think about truth philosophically, is: that truth must be in unity with objective reality.

This statement underlines the Word of the Lord, because only Jesus, as the Son of God, can say this word "I am the truth". It is in a way the proof that he himself is God, which is shown to us in the supernatural light of faith. For this knowledge we need the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, who leads us into the complete truth. (*cf. Jn 16,13*).

In the light of faith it now becomes clear what it means to live in the truth: namely, in accordance with the One who is the truth himself, God.

In this way, the words which Jesus said to the Jews, who argued with him or rejected his claim to proclaim the truth, open up: „*Whoever comes from God listens to the words of God; the reason why you do not listen is that you are not from God.*“ (Jn 8,47)

At the same time, Jesus clearly says what power resists the truth: “*You are from your father, the devil, and you prefer to do what your father wants. He was a murderer from the start; he was never grounded in the truth; there is no truth in him at all. When he lies he is speaking true to his nature, because he is a liar, and the father of lies.*” (Jn 8,44)

The Church has been entrusted with a great good, namely, to be nothing less than the teacher of truth in proclaiming the Lord.

Truth is therefore not something that is discovered together with other religions, for example in a process of dialogue, but it has a name that is revealed to people. The effort of the believer consists in following Jesus more and more in agreement with the truth, i.e. to follow the words of the Lord more and more closely, to let his spirit permeate everything in us, even into all areas of our being.

If Jesus says to Thomas in the above passage: “*You know the way to the place where I am going*” then he would also say to us that we know the way to the truth; because we know him!

It is therefore a false humility if we Catholics no longer confess that the truth has been entrusted to us and that the peoples should no longer know it properly. False humility leads to disloyalty to the Lord's command and is often caused by fear of man! The people in the other religions, too, who stretch out in their search for God, have the right to get to know the whole faith with its inherent claim to truth. They have the right to the truth! May we withhold this truth from them or relativize it so much that it is no longer recognizable: Can we let people live in the illusion that it does not matter what we believe and to which religion we belong?

The truth is not a possession that can be disposed of. It does not tolerate the fact that people take it for granted and want to increase their own value in order to elevate themselves above others. Certainly not that!

We can humbly confess that we often do not live the truth as it should be. But we can never say that we do not know the truth. That would be a denial of the Lord.

We know very well how to live according to the words of Jesus and in the presence of the Holy Spirit we have our teacher and master who never tires of leading us.

We also know that the message of the Lord, who is the truth, is for all people.

Pope Benedict XVI had as his motto: "Co-workers of truth". We can subscribe to this and understand the proclamation of the Lord as a service to the truth. We should live in this awareness as Christians and also be prepared to accept disadvantages for the sake of truth.

Let us end with a few words from St. Catherine of Siena, who even had the courage to reprimand representatives of the highest hierarchy when they strayed in their ways. This too is part of the truth of following Christ: to take responsibility when we see that people are failing their way!

"The truth does not remain silent when it is time to speak; it knows no fear of the people of the world. Nor is it afraid to give its life. The truth also has the courage to rebuke, because holy justice stands by its side, especially in the prelates of the Church. The truth is silent when it is necessary to be silent, and yet it cries out very loudly by tolerating it - for the truth is not ignorant; rather, it can discern and recognize very precisely where God's greater glory and the salvation of souls is in question." + (From Letter 284)