

***Good Friday 2013***  
***Father Frank Matera***  
***What is Truth?***

In the curious conversation that occurs between Jesus and Pilate, Jesus says, “For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth.” But Jesus and Pilate are at cross purposes, they are like two ships passing each other in the night, each sailing in a different direction. Jesus testifies to the truth, and Pilate skeptically asks, “What is truth?”

Pilate prefers the exercise of political power to a discussion of truth, and his question implies there is no truth apart the power of the sword. Pilate belongs to this world and cannot understand the truth to which Jesus testifies.

Jesus is speaking of the truth he has seen and heard in the presence of God. The truth to which Jesus bears witness is the truth about God. The Son of God has come into the world to bear witness to what he has seen and heard in the Father’s presence so that the world may know and believe the truth that is God.

Having testified to the truth, Jesus cries out from the cross “it is finished.” What is finished is the work the Father sent Jesus to do; for Jesus has testified to the truth that is God.

But the world will not accept the truth to which Jesus testifies. The world prefers to live in the darkness of Sin. The world prefers to live with the lie rather than the truth. And so the world rejects the light and the truth that the Son of God brings from the Father. Like Pilate, the world prefers to deal with its problems through power and violence. Like Pilate, the world scornfully asks, what is truth?

*The truth is* that God so loved the world that God sent his only Son into the world, not to condemn the world but to save it. *The truth is* that Jesus is the Suffering Servant who gave his life as an offering for sin. *The truth is* that Jesus learned obedience from what he suffered, and having been perfected through what he suffered, he has become the source of salvation for all who obey him. *The truth is* that God is light, and in God there is no darkness. *The truth is* that God has shown his power and wisdom in the weakness and folly of the cross. *The truth is* we can no longer say that God does not understand our suffering; for the Son of God has endured our pain.

*In face of this truth,* the world prefers the lie of violence to the truth of the cross. *In face of this truth,* the world prefers the lie of power to the truth of the

cross. *In face of this truth*, the world prefers the lie that is sin to the salvation God offers in Christ. But we know that it is the truth of the cross that has set us free and proves God's love for us.

*This is why* Jesus came into the world: to testify to the truth. *This is why* Jesus died on the cross: to testify to the truth. *This is why* we gather today: to confess and acknowledge the truth of the cross.

*Because Pilate* did not know the truth he preferred to be the friend Caesar rather than the friend of God. *Because Pilate* did not know the truth, he allowed Jesus to be crucified.

*But we know the truth*, and the truth has set us free. *We know the truth* and so we confess that Jesus has come from God and returned to God. *We know truth* and so we seek to live in the light that is God rather than in the darkness that is sin.

As we remember the Lord's passion and death, and as we prepare to celebrate his resurrection, we ask for the grace to live the truth to which Jesus bears witness: the truth that God is light, and in God there is no darkness.