

Doctrinal Session

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the OCIA
Eighth Commandment: You Shall Not Bear False Witness Against Your Neighbor

Catechist Preparation

Clarifying the Essentials

Lying, which directly offends against the truth, means that one speaks or acts falsely in order to lead someone into error.

- False witness, a lie told in court, and perjury, a lie under oath, are forbidden by this Commandment (see *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 2476).
- Respect for others prohibits attitudes and words likely to cause them harm, such as rash judgment, detraction, and calumny (see CCC 2477).

Truth, beautiful in itself, can also be expressed beyond words and speech in art, especially sacred art.

- Artistic works, to the extent they are inspired by the truth, bear a similarity to God's creative activity (see CCC 2501).
- Sacred art can evoke and glorify the transcendent mystery of God, moving us to adore, pray to, and love our Creator and Savior (see CCC 2502).

Why Is This Important?

To live in the complete absence of truth would be utterly horrifying. What or whom could we trust? All knowledge would be suspect. Relationships would be self-serving and manipulative, and fidelity impossible.

At his trial, Christ proclaims to Pilate that his mission in the world is to bear witness to the truth. We strive to follow in the footsteps of Jesus—that is, along the way of truth. The opposite path goes in another direction, following Satan, the father of lies, the deceiver.

*[A]nyone who would be blessed and happy
must from the beginning
be a partaker of the truth
so [they] can live an authentic life . . .*

SAINT CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA

Doctrinal Session Guide

(Approximately 60 minutes)

Have the space set with chairs in a circle. Arrange a prayer space with a candle and open Bible. Provide name tags and refreshments.

Welcome

Greet people as they arrive. Take time for introductions and conversation. Pray an Act of Contrition.

Engage

Invite the group to reflect on the story presented in **Insight**. Then have participants share their response to the story. Explore the **For Reflection** questions together.

Teach

Summarize or invite the group to read **Church Teaching**. Then discuss the following:

- Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life.
- Truth is a very important value. We expect others to be truthful, and others expect truthfulness from us.
- Lying, twisting the truth, or speaking half-truths damages relationships and causes mistrust.
- We call Satan the “father of lies” because deception breeds further deception.
- Lies can enslave us, but Jesus brings the truth that sets us free.
- Many sins against truth exist, such as slander, gossip, rash judgment, and perjury. In today's world, with its many forms of communication, truth and good judgment are critical.

Apply

Ask the participants to reflect on the insights they gained about the Eighth Commandment. After some quiet, invite them to share their responses with one or two other participants.

Pray

Allow for a few minutes of silent prayer to Jesus in their hearts, asking for the courage to be truthful in word and deed.