“All human beings by nature desire to know.”

Metaphysics
Aristotle
All human beings desire to know, and truth is the proper object of this desire. Everyday life shows how concerned each of us is to discover for ourselves, beyond mere opinions, to know how things really are.

People cannot be genuinely indifferent to the question of whether what they know is true or not. If they discover that it is false, they reject it; but if they can establish its truth, they feel themselves rewarded.

It is this that St. Augustine teaches when he writes: “I have met many who wanted to deceive, but none who wanted to be deceived.”

— John Paul II, Encyclical Fides et Ratio
“The thirst for truth is so rooted in the human heart that to be obliged to ignore it would cast our existence into jeopardy.”

— John Paul II, *Encyclical Fides et Ratio*
“Although each individual has a right to be respected in his own journey in search of the truth, there exists a prior moral obligation, and a grave one at that, to seek the truth and to adhere to it once it is known.”

— John Paul II, Encyclical Veritatis Splendor
“One may define the human being, therefore, as the one who seeks the truth.”

— John Paul II, *Encyclical Veritatis Splendor*
“The religious impulse is the highest expression of the human person, because it is the highpoint of his rational nature. It springs from the profound human aspiration for the truth and it is the basis of the human being's free and personal search for the divine.”

—John Paul II, Encyclical Fides et Ratio
“My desire for truth was itself a prayer.”

— St. Edith Stein
“Whoever seeks the truth is seeking God, whether consciously or unconsciously.”

— St. Edith Stein
“The unity of truth is a fundamental premise of human reasoning, as the principle of non-contradiction makes clear. Revelation renders this unity certain, showing that the God of creation is also the God of salvation history.”

— John Paul II, Encyclical Fides et Ratio
Principle of Non-contradiction

Between two logical and meaningful propositions “X” and “not X” there is no middle ground.
If one is true the other is false.
“Contradictory things cannot be means to salvation. The truth and the lie cannot be ways of salvation in the same sense.”

— Pope Benedict XVI as Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger
Veracity is adherence to the truth: “Veracity is the heart of morality.”

— Thomas H. Huxley
No one consents to be lied to, that is, to being told that a reality that is "is not," or to being told that a reality that is not "is."
Truth is the conformity, the agreement or the coherence of mind to reality.
The Cross is and remains the sign of “the Son of Man”: ultimately, in the battle against lies and violence, truth and love have no other weapons than the witness of suffering.

— Pope Benedict

Part II Jesus of Nazareth
Moral Truth, or Veracity

A lie therefore, is an intentional deviation from moral truth, and is defined as a *locutio contra mentem*; i.e., it is the outward expression of a thought which is intentionally diverse from the thing as conceived by the speaker.

— *The Catholic Encyclopedia*
For the time being [after the crucifixion] all seemed to be going well. Jerusalem remained calm. At a later date, though, it would become clear that peace, in the final analysis, cannot be established at the expense of truth.

— Pope Benedict

Part II Jesus of Nazareth
The judgment of conscience also has an imperative character: man must act in accordance with it. If man acts against this judgment or, in a case where he lacks certainty about the rightness and goodness of a determined act, still performs that act, he stands condemned by his own conscience, the proximate norm of personal morality.

Certainly, in order to have a ‘good conscience’ (1 Tim 1:5),

man must seek the truth and must make judgments in accordance with that same truth.

― John Paul II, Encyclical Veritatis Splendor
“The effort one is obliged to make in order to acquire certainty is to be measured by the importance of the action itself and the consequences which are anticipated.”
Chapter V, section 18, of one of only two Dogmatic Constitutions to come from Vatican II, The Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation states definitively:

“It is common knowledge that among all the Scriptures, even those of the New Testament, the Gospels have a special pre-eminence, and rightly so, for they are the principal witness of the incarnate Word, our Savior.

The Church has always and everywhere held and continues to hold that the four Gospels are of apostolic origin. For what the apostles preached in fulfillment of the commission of Christ, afterwards they them-selves and the apostolic men, under the inspiration of the divine Spirit, handed on to us in writing: the foundation of faith, namely, the four fold Gospel, according to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

The Church has firmly and with absolute constancy held and continues to hold, that the four Gospels just named, whose historical character the Church unhesitantly asserts, faithfully hand on what Jesus Christ, while living among men, really did and taught for their eternal salvation.”
The entire Law of the Gospel is contained in the ‘new commandment’ of Jesus, to love one another as He has loved us (Jn 15:12; 13:34).

— § 1970 Catechism of the Catholic Church
Our Father “desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. He “is forbearing toward you, not wishing that any should perish.” His commandment is “that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.” The commandment summarizes all the others and expresses his entire will.

— §2822 of Catechism of the Catholic Church
“The motto, ‘Thy Will be done,’ in its fullest extent must be the guideline of the Christian life. It must direct the days course from morning to evening, the course of the year and all of life.”

— St. Edith Stein
“Contradictory things cannot be means to salvation. The truth and the lie cannot be ways of salvation in the same sense.”

— Pope Benedict XVI as Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger
Principle of Non-contradiction

Between two logical and meaningful propositions “X” and “not X” there is no middle ground. If one is true the other is false.
“We have tried to produce a form of Christianity which will be tolerable to those who believe that the best way to deal with your enemies is not to love them but to beat their heads in. And we have done this. We have produced the ethic of the just war. This is not the New Testament and every theologian knows it.”

— Rev. John L. McKenzie, Catholic Biblical Scholar
“Violence does not build up the kingdom of God, the kingdom of humanity. On the contrary it is the favourite instrument of the Antichrist, however idealistic its religious motivation may be.”

— Pope Benedict

Part II Jesus of Nazareth
“No reader of the New Testament, simple or sophisticated, can retain any doubt of Jesus' position toward violence directed to a person, individual or collective, organized or free enterprise: He rejected it totally.”

— Rev. John L. McKenzie, Catholic Biblical Scholar
“No where does Jesus teach that you can morally do in a crowd what you cannot morally do alone.”

— Rev. John L. McKenzie, Catholic Biblical Scholar
“Jesus authorizes no one to substitute violence for love.”

— Rev. John L. McKenzie, Catholic Biblical Scholar
“All the Gospels agree that Jesus refused armed defense. Whether he said what Mathew quoted is really irrelevant (‘Put up your sword. He who lives by the sword perishes by the sword’ (MT 26:52). It is a nice quotation, but we do not need it to establish that Jesus was totally opposed to the use of violence for any purpose.”

“Of the two men crucified with Jesus only one joins in the mockery; the other grasp the mystery of Jesus. He knows and he sees that the nature of Jesus’ “offense” was quite different—that Jesus was nonviolent...”

— Pope Benedict

Part II Jesus of Nazareth
I believe all I think I know about God is derived from what Jesus was, said and did. I believe the little we have left of what He said and did tells us more about how we can now in our world realize the possibilities of human existence than all the wisdom of the past and present – that is, He tells us something about how to live which no one else has ever told us. I apply to Him what the late Vince Lombardi said about winning: Jesus is not an important person, He is the only person.”

— Rev. John L. McKenzie, Catholic Biblical Scholar
“The person of Jesus is His teaching, and His teaching is He Himself. Christian faith, that is faith in Jesus as the Christ, is therefore truly ‘personal faith.’

Such faith is not the acceptance of a system but the acceptance of a person who is His word; of the word as person and of the person as Word.”

— Pope Benedict XVI
“For a Christian to be a witch-burner in good conscience all he has to do is prove to himself that Jesus would have burned witches.”

— Rev. John L. McKenzie, Catholic Biblical Scholar
“The use of the term ‘Way’ exhibits the early Christian conception of their belief as more than a set of propositions that could be taught or a code of moral principles: it was the revealed will of God through Jesus Christ giving direction to human life. Christianity is more than a faith; it is a way of life.”

— Rev. John L. McKenzie, Catholic Biblical Scholar
“According to Christian faith and the Church's teaching, “only the freedom which submits to the Truth leads the human person to his true good. The good of the person is to be in the Truth and to do the Truth.”

— John Paul II, Encyclical Veritatis Splendor
“The power of Jesus does not engage in fights; He himself is the supreme example of His own precept. He is also the supreme demonstration that evil is overcome by nonviolence.

Nothing He said or did implies that the application of the power of violence against evil has any effect.

Jesus presents in His words and life not only a good way of doing things, not only an ideal to be executed whenever it is convenient, but the only way of doing what He did.”

— Rev. John L. McKenzie, Catholic Biblical Scholar
“No; violent revolution, killing others in God’s name was not his way. His “zeal” for the kingdom of God took quite a different form.”

— Pope Benedict

Part II Jesus of Nazareth
In all truthfulness, did Jesus not know about the violence of nation against nation, of the rich against the poor, of the political elites against the political disenfranchised, of religious groups against religious groups, of individuals against individuals?

In all truthfulness, did Jesus forget to teach that part of His Way that would justify violence and enmity, war, capital punishment, violent self defense, violent revolution?

In all truthfulness, did Jesus not know about the returning violence for violence as a way of responding to violence?

Or, in all truthfulness, was Jesus quite aware of all of this and rejected it as the Way of God and therefore as part of His Way?
What is the truth of the matter?

In all truthfulness, is a picture of Jesus blazing away, firing a machine gun in order to kill another person a truthful icon (image)?

Is a Christian blazing away, firing a machine gun in order to kill another person a truthful imitation of Jesus?

Is firing a machine gun in order to kill another person a truthful interpretation of His Way?
“One cannot believe in Christ without at the same time following Him.”

— St. Edith Stein
“It is good to venerate the crucifix, but it is even better that images of wood or stone be living images, souls formed in the image of Christ.”

— St. Edith Stein
“Love and truth have an intrinsic relationship. The quest for truth and its expression in love did not seem at odds to her (St. Edith Stein); on the contrary she realized they call for one another. In our time truth is often mistaken for the opinion of the majority. In addition, there is a widespread belief that one should use the truth even against love or vice versa. But truth and love need each other…St. Teresia Benedicta of the Cross says to us all: Do not accept anything as truth if it lacks love. And do not accept anything as love which lacks truth. One without the other becomes a destructive life.”

\[ d(\mathbf{f}(x), \mathbf{f}(y)) > \delta. \]
Power

The capacity to produce change.
A butterfly flapping its wings on the coast of Brazil can cause a hurricane in Mexico!!
And so, while the Jews demand miracles and the Greeks look for wisdom, here are we preaching a crucified Christ: to the Jews an obstacle that they cannot get over, to the pagans madness, but to those who have been called, whether they are Jews or Greeks, a Christ who is the power and wisdom of God. For God’s foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God’s weakness is stronger than human strength.
The entire Law of the Gospel is contained in the 'new commandment' of Jesus, to love one another as He has loved us.

(Jn 15:12; 13:34)
To the Christian, faith in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ is an expression of certainty that the saying that seems to be only a beautiful dream is in fact true:

“Love is stronger than death.”

— Pope Benedict XVI
“Mere animal pain does not save. Identification with Jesus suffering is identification with Jesus loving.”

— Rev. John L. McKenzie, Catholic Biblical Scholar
“Only where someone values love more highly than life, that is, only where someone is willing to put life second to love, for the sake of love, can love be stronger and more than death. If it is to be more than death, it must first be more than mere life.”

— Pope Benedict XVI
“Every aversion, every rage and resentment which we tolerate in our hearts, blocks the door to the Lord. As soon as we notice them, we must inexorably oppose them; otherwise we stand against God, who is love.”

— St. Edith Stein
“Immortality always proceeds from love. Love is the foundation of immortality, and immortality proceeds from love alone.”

— Pope Benedict XVI
The Christian message is basically nothing else than the transmission of the testimony that love has managed to break through death here and thus has transformed the situation of all of us.

In Jesus the power of love has really proved itself stronger than the power of death.

He who believes will see more and more clearly how rational it is to have faith in the love that has conquered death.
“God only becomes fully comprehensible when one, at the same time, looks over at the Son. For example, what ‘almightiness’ and ‘lordship’ of all means only becomes clear from the Christian point of view in the crib and on the cross.

At this point a new concept of power and a new concept of lordship and dominion are born.

The highest power is demonstrated as the calm willingness completely to renounce all power: and we are shown that it is powerful, not through force, but only through the freedom to love, which even when it is rejected, is stronger than the exultant powers of earthly violence.”

— Pope Benedict XVI
“At some thoughts one stands perplexed — especially at the sight of men's sin — and wonders whether one should use force or humble love. Always decide to use humble love. If you resolve to do that, once and for all, you can subdue the whole world. Loving humility is marvelously strong, the strongest of all things, and there is nothing else like it.”

—Fyodor Dostoevsky
“For a single drop of this pure love is more precious to God and to the soul, and more beneficial to the Church, even though it seems one is doing nothing, than all these other works put together.”

— *Spiritual Canticle, Stanza 29 Commentary, #2*
“One act done in love is more precious in God’s sight than all the visions and communication possible.”

— The Ascent of Mt. Carmel, Ch. 22, V.19
“Everything depends on love because in the end we will be judged according to love.”

— St. Edith Stein
“Do you see the eyes of the Crucified looking at you with a searching gaze? They are asking you a question: ‘Are you, in all seriousness, ready to enter once again into a covenant with the Crucified?’ What are you going to answer?”

— St. Edith Stein
When the will of the Creator for the creature is known, it must be followed by the creature who has been endowed with reason and freedom, if he or she is to act morally.
Each of us has both the desire and the duty to know the truth of our own destiny. The thirst for truth is so rooted in the human heart that to be obliged to ignore it would cast our existence into jeopardy.

— John Paul II, *Encyclical Fides et Ratio*
“If a truth is believed today, then today is the day to begin to live that truth.”

— St. Edith Stein
“The works of war are not the works of mercy.”

— Dorothy Day
NAPALM. The most effective “anti-personnel” weapon, it is euphemistically described as “unfamiliar cooking fluid” by those apologists for American military methods. They automatically attribute all napalm cases to domestic accidents caused by the people using gasoline instead of kerosene in their cooking stoves. Kerosene is far too expensive for the peasants, who normally use charcoal for cooking. The only “cooking fluid” they know is very “unfamiliar”—it is delivered through their roofs by U.S. planes.

Some of its finer selling points were explained to me by a pilot in 1966: “We sure are pleased with those backroom boys at Dow. The original product wasn’t so hot—if the gooks were quick they could scrape it off. So the boys started adding polystyrene—now it sticks like shit to a blanket. But then if the gooks jumped under water it stopped burning, so they started adding Willie Peter (WP—white phosphorous) so’s to make it burn better. It’ll even burn under water now. And just one drop is enough, it’ll keep on burning right down to the bone so they die anyway from phosphorous poisoning.”

—LIFE MAGAZINE 1966
“What difference does it make to the dead, the orphans and the homeless, whether the mad destruction is wrought under the name of totalitarianism or the holy name of liberty or democracy?”
— Mahatma Gandhi