

Accompaniment in Truth and Charity: the Path to Authentic Freedom

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This paper explores the essential link between truth and love by examining reasons there has been an apparent divorce between the two and proposing a renewed vision. This exploration is conducted principally through the lens of the theological reflection of Father Servais Pinckaers, O.P. In the Biblical and Thomistic views, humans were made to flourish in freedom. This freedom is possible only when the truth of the meaning of life and the goal of living are known and embraced, thus moving beyond freedom of indifference toward freedom of excellence.

Further consideration is given to the threats to speaking the truth in love. While the objective good of speaking truth remains intact, one's intention or the circumstances may compromise the goodness of the act. This awareness points to the need for the virtue of prudence and the gift of counsel in order to preserve the integrity of charitable handing on of truth.

For pastoral accompaniment to lead to true freedom, the Church must rediscover that the "Splendor of Truth" and the "Joy of Love" are not two opposing programs of competing papacies, but rather two rich gifts entrusted to the Church as both mother and teacher. If we seek to care for others after the model of Christ, the Good Shepherd, we must look to gospel precedents for our service. Compassionate receptivity of persons and gestational patience are maternal gifts that enable the Church to embrace her children in the strength of a truth that sets us free.