

Last month a woman in Arkansas kept getting phone calls from the media asking her about the experience of serving on the Whitewater jury. In fact, she had not served on the jury, but she had the same name as a woman who did. The calls didn't stop when she explained she was the wrong person. A friend told her, "Just make up something about the trial; they'll stop calling then." So she did. She told the press she pretty much had her mind made up before the trial began. The media printed her remarks and lawyers threatened to argue for a mistrial. Finally, they discovered they had the wrong woman, and in an article about this big, the paper admitted they made a mistake and printed the truth: She lied.

Sometimes lies are bigger stories than truths. I don't blame the media. We read what's interesting. Rumors, gossip, and falsehoods are often more interesting than the truth is. We've learned this ourselves. We stretch the truth; we add details; we hide what really happened. It makes a better story.

Sometimes the truth is so embarrassing, we cover it up. Things happen to us we really don't want anyone to know about. We keep secrets. We suppress the truth because we fear it. We figure we can handle the lie easier than we can handle the truth. Other times people lie about us; they spread falsehoods about our behaviors and opinions. Even as a church we suffer from misunderstanding and anti-Catholic sentiment.

Jesus told the apostles, "Nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known." So he tells them, "Don't keep secrets. What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops." Sometimes we don't tell the truth; not just through lies, but through silence. We're quiet about alcoholism, about cancer, about hurt. Or we're quiet about good stuff--about what we prefer, about the goodness of our family, or the joy of our faith. We fear speaking up that someone will put us down. Jesus says, "Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. . . . Everyone who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven." God knows every hair of our head; even the ones which used to be there. God knows the truth about us when others spread lies. God knows our secrets, and he loves us when we tell the truth.

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