

---

---

# Your Christianity is not for you.

— How to share your faith in writing —  
for print and digital media

---

---

## Let us pray.

Heavenly Father,

We praise you for your glory and your goodness. You spoke all creation into being and in the fullness of time gave us your Son, the *Logos*. Look with favor upon our work, that by our writing we may bring glory to you, O God. We ask you to bless the writers and bless the readers, that by sharing your goodness in our lives, we may grow ever closer to you and one day praise you in Heaven with all the angels and saints. We pray this in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Lord. Amen.

# Your Christianity is not for you.

## Your Christianity is for the world.

“... We become a body given for others. We become blood poured out on behalf of others. It’s a challenging idea, but I’ll offer it to all of you tonight.  
**Your Christianity is not for you. ... Your Christianity is for the world.**

Jesus said, “You’re the light of the world. If you put your light under a bushel basket, it does no good. You are the salt of the earth.” Therefore, you’re meant to enhance what’s good in the world. You’re meant to put to death what’s bad in the world. ... We’re meant to be the bearers of that light to the *gentes*, to the world.”

- [Bishop Robert Barron, speech at the National Eucharistic Congress](#)

4:59



# Agenda

- Example: St. Paul's conversion
- Writing process
  - Sharing
- Now what?

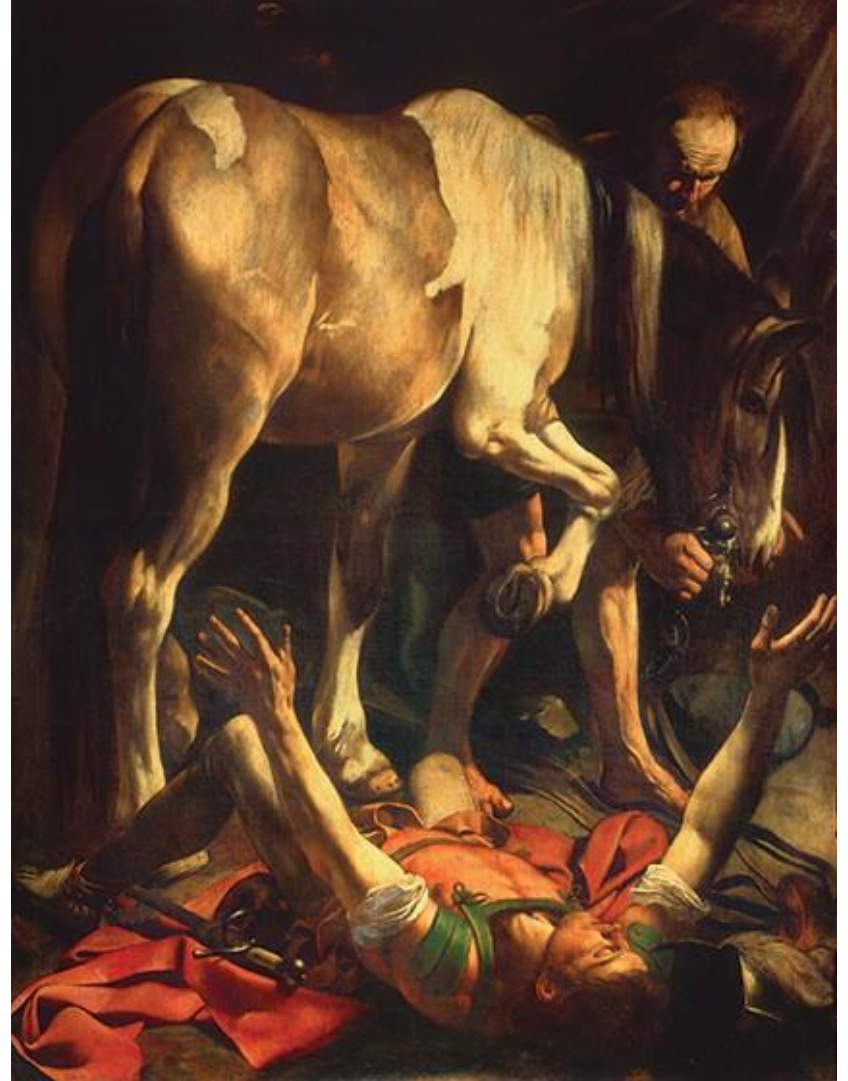
# St. Paul's Conversion

# Saul to Paul

Acts 7:58-9:30

Key moments in the story:

- Before Christ
- Encounter
- Effect (interior)
- Effect (outward)



# Reflection Time

**OK, now it's time to get started**



# Writing process

- Get it out!
- Who is it for?
- The revision process
- Avoiding common pitfalls
  - Sharing

- Note: everyone has a different writing process. This is just a suggestion. Find what works for you.
-

# Get it out!

- Don't worry about form, flow or even spelling— just get your story on the page!
- Prayerful writing vs. just writing
- Easiest to write out everything chronologically
- Choose the beginning & ending points later
- **You can edit a rough story but not a blank page.**

# Who is it for?

- Different audiences may require different versions
  - Demographics
  - Catholics (familiar with 'the story') or non-Catholic/non-Christian
- Ask yourself, 'What will most impact my audience?'
- Unnecessary details vs. essential info
  - Witness stories are about *you*
- Are you writing for this to be published somewhere with a word limit?

# The revision process: length

- Let your full written story sit for a few days
- Distill it to the most essential parts
  - Return to St. Paul's conversion story
    - Before Christ
    - Encounter(s)
    - Effects (internal and external)
  - Different beginning/ending points depending on your audience
- My preference: addition instead of subtraction

# The revision process: flow

- Consider your lede (where you begin)
  - When in doubt, go for the “punchiest” moment
  - Want something attention-grabbing
- It’s OK if it’s not chronological
- Consider the thread that ties together the different “scenes” of your story
  - See where the Holy Spirit has been moving in your life.
  - Use as transitions
- Where to end your story
  - Remember your story is still a work in progress
  - End with a “looking forward” note

# The revision process: polish

- Ask a friend or mentor to read and suggest edits
- Reread and ask yourself:
  - How would this sound if I knew zero background info?
  - Is every sentence adding value? (If not, delete or rewrite it.)
  - Is your story and the intent clear?

# Avoiding common pitfalls

- Believing your faith story seems “too ordinary” to share
- Too long
- Overly focused/detailed on your sin
- Using extremes or hyperbole
- Expecting immediate “results” from sharing your story
- Realize that most stories are “ordinary” and that God can use all things for good!
- Consider what details push your story forward
- Focus on God’s merciful love (and use discretion)
- Pray for humility as you write
- Realize that we are called to plant seeds and trust the Holy Spirit to water them

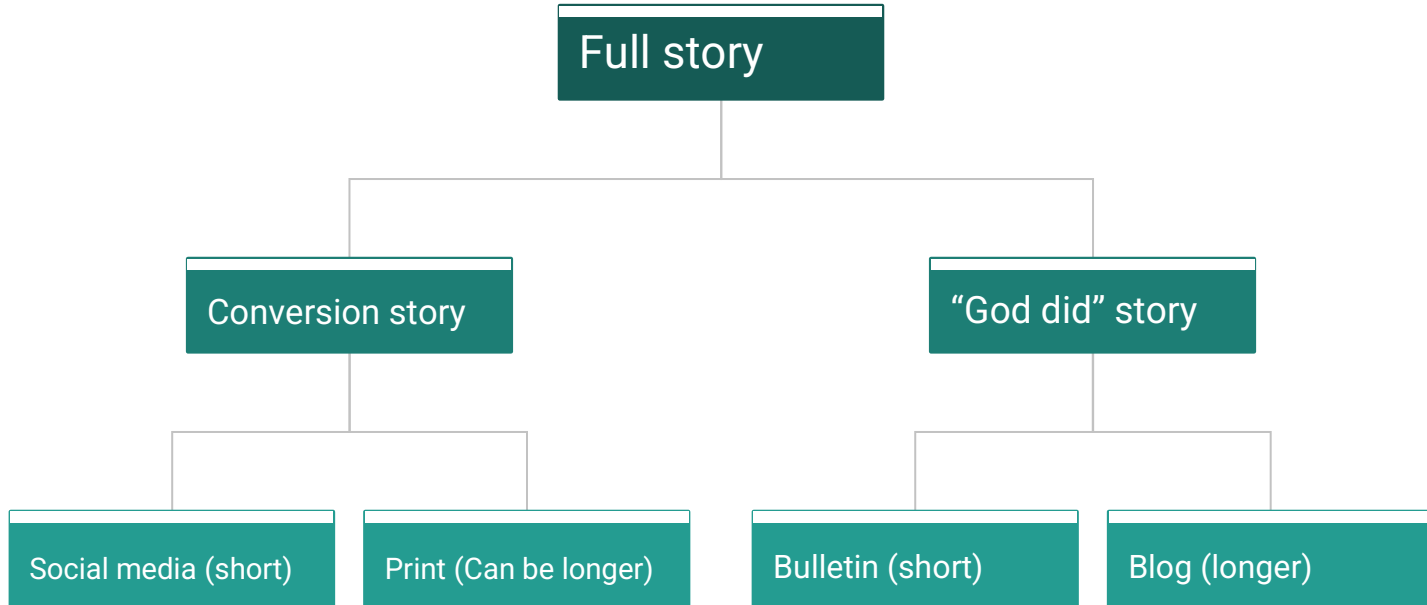
# Sharing

Where you might share:

- Blog
- Social media
- Parish/diocesan publication or bulletin (would need to be short)
- Prepared to share in conversations
- Pull pieces of your story for different audiences and formats



# Don't reinvent the wheel



# Now what?

- “Go and proclaim the Good News” — YOUR Good News!
- Even if you never publish your story... it still has value.