

CRAFTING YOUR FAITH STORY



Taking time to reflect on your relationship with Christ, when it began and how it's grown and changed, is an important first step to sharing our faith in a compelling way. Sometimes it can be difficult to recall the significant moments of our faith journey. Try the below exercise to help find those important stories where the Holy Spirit was at work in your life.

SIGNS OF THE SPIRIT

Often, when God is working, our lives can feel like they're being turned upside down. Usually, we come out the other end stronger or having learned something that we can attribute to God's grace.

We can also recognize a handful of big moments in our life, both positive and challenging, that helped shape us to be the person we are today. If you're having trouble try thinking of the times you were sickest/ the most healthy, saddest/ happiest, poorest/ richest, when you lost the most/ seemed to gain everything. When did you feel closest to God or most distant?

Looking back on your life. Identify five moments or experiences (positive or difficult) that were meaningful in your journey of faith.



CRAFTING YOUR FAITH STORY CONTINUED

'THEY WENT BACK ANOTHER WAY'

The Bible tells the story of the three wise men who visit the infant Jesus to give him homage. Warned by angel not to return home how they came, scripture says, "they went back another way."

Now that you have this list of significant moments or anecdotes, which ones stand out as being moments when your relationship with Jesus changed, became deeper, or felt closer? Pick one or two and explain.

EX. _____ happened and as a result
my relationship with Jesus changed because _____



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CONTINUED

One reason the Christian faith is compelling is that it's the greatest story ever told! Within the story of salvation history are the stories in Scripture, the lives of the saints, and your story!

Good stories usually follow a similar structure. Consider the arc - Intro, Inciting Incident, Rising Action, Climax, Resolution - how might this help a moment in your journey with Christ become a faith story that bears fruit?

Read through this short story of a young person meeting the Pope and see how each moment build on the next and keeps the reader engaged.

INTRO

As a small group leader modeling appropriate vulnerability is important. Take time here to paint a picture of who you were at this time.

"As a teenager I could be kind of self absorbed but I had joined a youth group and was learning more about my faith."

INCITING INCIDENT

This is not the climax but it sets in motion the events that will lead to the climax.

"One day my youth minister told me she had nominated me to take the gifts up at a papal Mass. I was going to meet the pope!"

RISING ACTION

This series of 'beats' engages the listener by building tension and getting closer the climax. (Think of rungs on a ladder getting you closer to where you're going.)

"Though I was nervous, when the day came I felt a part of something big!"

CLIMAX

If the central question of a faith story is "How were you transformed by Christ?" then the climax is the answer to that question.

"As I handed the gifts to the Holy Father, I felt inspired to give everything I have to God."

RESOLUTION

The resolution describes the world as it is now or after the events of your story. It can be the place to present the 'moral' of the story.

"Even though I am still selfish or prideful sometimes, I find the most joy when I'm faithful to that promise to give all to God."



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CONTINUED

ZACCHAEUS Consider how the story of this Biblical figure follows a similar pattern. (LK. 19:1-10)

INTRO

Now a man there named Zacchaeus, who was a chief tax collector and also a wealthy man was seeking to see who Jesus was; but he could not see him because of the crowd, for he was short in stature.

INCITING INCIDENT

So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree in order to see Jesus. When he reached the place, Jesus looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down quickly, for today I must stay at your house."

RISING ACTION

He came down quickly and received him with joy. When they all saw this, they began to grumble, saying, "He has gone to stay at the house of a sinner."

CLIMAX

But Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, "Behold, half of my possessions, Lord, I shall give to the poor, and if I have extorted anything from anyone I shall repay it four times over." And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house ...For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save what was lost."

RESOLUTION

There is not really a 'resolution' in this story but we can imagine that Zacchaeus followed through on his promise to repent, pay restitution and became a follower of Jesus. Zacchaeus' story continued after meeting Jesus and so does yours! Don't be afraid to tell people how meeting the Lord 'changed everything.'

YOUR TURN! Use one of your stories from pages one and two and, while keeping it short, write it out below, including - Intro, Inciting Incident, Rising Action, Climax, and Resolution.

* In the climax, remember to answer the question, "how did your relationship with Jesus change."

