Digital Storying:

A Means of Grace, Welcome, and Witness

Revs. Sarah Cooper Searight and Greg Klimovitz

EQUIPPING AT THE WELL:
REFLECTING ON CHRIST'S WORK THROUGH OUR FAITHFUL WITNESS

Why This Conversation Matters

"The church can't change her response to Gutenberg's printing press, the radio, or the television; they are forever fixed in history. But at the onset of this digital revolution, her response to New Media is wide open. The world is waiting and listening in the virtual sphere. Will the church remain silent, or will her voice be proclaimed from the roof tops (and the laptops)? Will she plunge the message of Christ into Facebook feeds, blogposts, podcasts, and text messages, or will she be digitally impotent? If the Church's promotion of evangelization, formation, community, and the common good is to continue throughout future generations, she must harness these technologies and utilize them well."
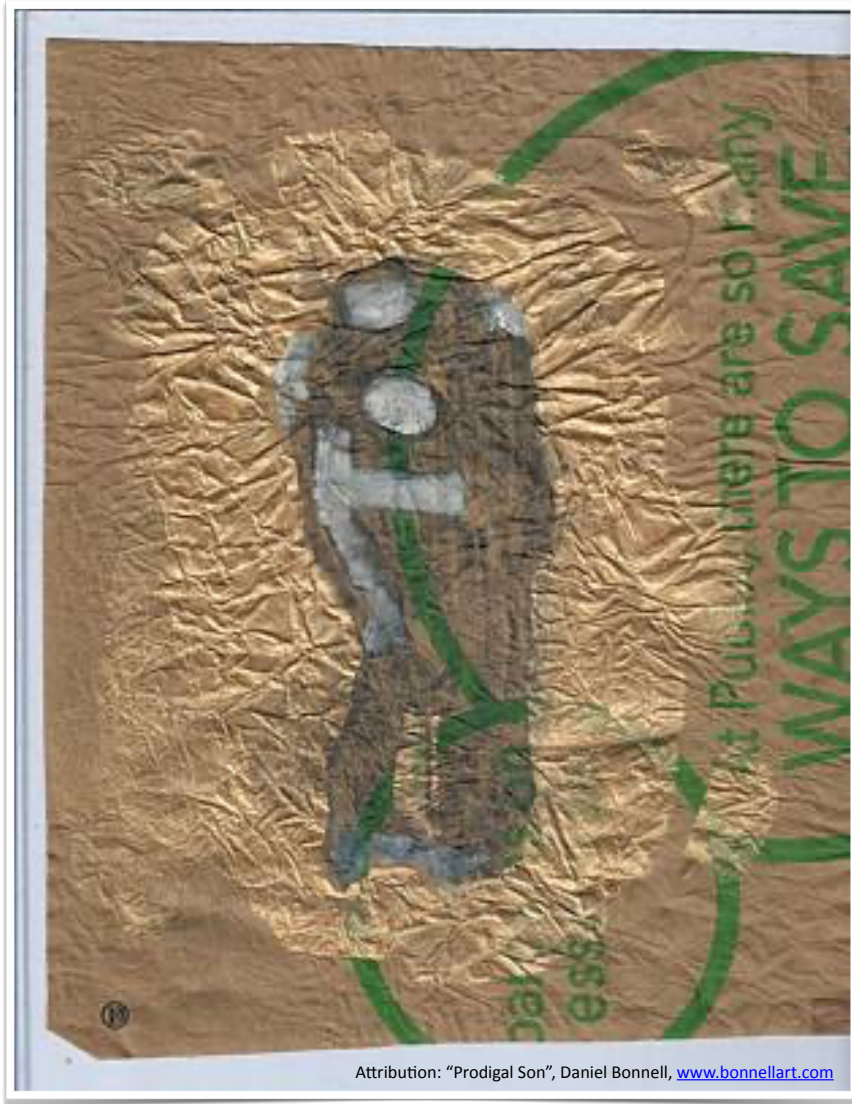
Brandon Vogt

The Church and New Media: Blogging Converts, Online Activists, and Bishops Who Tweet

"Social networks & platforms are varied space for holy and sacred becoming."

@miheekimkort
#moneymissionmedia

"Jesus knew that the best teaching concerning how to live, and live abundantly, comes not from spoon-fed data or an answer sheet. Instead, it comes from narratives that remind us of what we already know, but are resistant to recall. It comes from stories that prompt us to draw our own conclusions and at the same time force us to realize that our answers may well be contingent, or leaps of faith, or traps. It comes from stories that community members can share with one another, with each of us assessing the conclusions others draw, and so reassessing our own."

Amy-Jill Levine
Short Stories by Jesus, 275

What Questions Do You Bring?

Corporate Stories? Ecclesial Stories?

Relax, it's iPhone + WATCH.

Coca-Cola

TOGETHER TASTES BETTER™

If someone visited your on-line platforms:

- What story would be told?

- Who would be the presumed audience?

- What would make you compelling?

- Would others be inspired to share?

- What would make you suspicious?

- Would you be noticed at all?

Guiding Questions for Digital Storying

- **What is the story** you believe in and want to tell? (focus and fidelity to who you are as a community)

- **Why** do you want to share this story? (affects what you post; is it worth it? when do you share it? how often? Pace setting is important)

- **Who** do you want to hear this story? (impacts design, content, and language; is this insider speak or something someone would be willing to share and more so understood by those less familiar with your community; does it lead to a more expansive welcome?)

- **Who** do you want to join in sharing and adding to this story? Is it an open (invitational) or closed (consumed) narrative?

- **How** might this story be accessed? What platforms would be beneficial? (should be the last question we ask, otherwise the story is driven by the platform and not the other way around)

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How?

Who?

Why?

Our Story

PRESBYTERY of PHILADELPHIA
CHRIST'S WORK ♦ OUR WITNESS

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Our Story   Why?   Who?   How?

Meaning and the Megaphone

"It is not a company or organization that decides what its symbols mean, it is the group outside the megaphone, in the chaotic marketplace, who decide. If, based on the things they see and hear, the outsiders can clearly and consistently report what an organization believes, then, and only then, can a symbol start to take meaning. It is the truest test of how effective a megaphone has been produced- when clarity is able to filter all the way through the organization and come to life in everything that comes out of it."

Simon Sinek
Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action, 163.

Storying Meaning in Ministry

If you substitute the word company and/or organization for church, faith community, and/or ministry, what are some implications for digital and sacred storying? Consider both the ways this reference may parallel the call of the church and the ways this reference may depart from what it means to be the church.