

*19 April 2024 -- Friday of the 3rd week of Easter*

[Acts 9:1-20; John 6:52-59](#)

### **Homily**

When we speak of conversion, we spontaneously think of the passage from a life of sin to a life of virtue. But this is not always the case. Conversion is something deeper. Every process of growth involves conversion. In Paul's case, the conversion was a redirection of his energy.

Paul was not a criminal. He was not a sinner. On the contrary, he was a very religious man. He was a devotee of Yahweh, a strict observer of the Law, a member of the strictest school of Judaism. And because he was so radically committed to his religious cause, he was prepared to persecute, even put to death, in the name of God, all those he considered enemies of Yahweh. His problem was that he thought he owned the truth, that he owned God. There was no flaw in his certainty, no hesitation in his commitment, no shadow of doubt in his decisions. He was certain he could see what others could not.

The grace of his life came one day when he met the Light itself. And the Light blinded him to everything he was used to seeing as truth. He fell off his high horse! He didn't see Jesus. He saw no one and nothing but the light that blinded him. He was arrogant, but deep down he was also a humble man. He recognized immediately that he had been overcome by a higher power. Submissive, he asked: "Who are you, Master?" And the Light said to him: "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting".

From that moment on, Paul never doubted that Jesus was the Lord, God. But the great revelation, the one that radically changed Paul's life, was that God identified with the little ones, the persecuted. - I am Jesus, whom you persecute".

From that moment on, Paul was a changed man, converted -- another man. He no longer had any social status in Judaism, and everyone in the Church was afraid of him and distrusted him. He remained a rootless pilgrim all his life, rooted only in his love for Christ. He founded several local Churches, but unlike the other Apostles, he was never bishop of any local Church.

For us too, conversion comes when God enters our lives unexpectedly; at a time, in a place and in a way we would never have suspected. He makes us blind - blind to our certainties and our images of ourselves, our images of God and our images of others. If we are

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then humble enough to say, "Who are you, Master?", He reveals himself to us in a new way and we become a new person, and we begin to see Christ in people in whom we did not see Him before. Everything and everyone takes on a new beauty.

Conversion begins with the eyes. When we see in a new way, we also understand and love in a new way.

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