

## **Guidelines for Publishing with Pauline Books and Media**

### **Have a brilliant idea for a Catholic book?**

We can't wait to hear about it! But before you send us anything, please read the following guidelines carefully.

Trust us, it will be worth it.

*Please note that our submission guidelines have changed effective May 2020.*

[Who We Are](#)

[What We Publish \(Adults\)](#)

[What We Publish \(Kids\)](#)

[How to Submit for Publication](#)

[Quick List of Dos and Don'ts \(Essential for First-time Authors\)](#)

[The Advantages of Traditional Publishing](#)

[Common Reasons Manuscripts are Declined](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions](#)

### **Who We Are**

[Pauline Books and Media](#) is the publishing house of the [Daughters of St. Paul](#) and an important part of their media ministry of evangelization. We are a Catholic publishing house, faithful to the magisterium of the Church.

### **What We Publish (Adults)**

**For adults**, we are looking for books that help people to know and love God, and live their relationship with God in their everyday lives.

Some of the main categories we publish are spirituality, adult faith formation, evangelization, prayer and prayer books, lives and writings of the saints, Marian themes, media literacy formation, theology of the body, family life, personal growth, and teacher and pastoral resources.

In general, we do not accept academic texts, accounts of private revelations, fiction for adults, or poetry.

We are looking for well-written manuscripts:

- with a specific audience

- that respond to the needs and desires of that audience
- with a Catholic sacramental worldview
- that engage the reader through stories, humor, imagination, and authenticity
- that are formational for the whole human person
- that foster a personal encounter with Christ

We are looking for authors who:

- live their faith and are rooted in the Word of God
- have something unique to say, and have already shared their material with others and developed it into something that responds to people's needs
- are qualified to speak and write about the subject matter
- have a platform or are developing one

We're looking for a book that only you can write and that you are passionate about!

### **What We Publish (Kids)**

We publish fiction and nonfiction for toddlers through teens in the following categories: board books, picture books, chapter books, middle grade, teen, and young adult. Our subject matter includes saints, biographies, and legends; prayer, spirituality, sacraments, and devotionals; values and virtues; Bible stories; supplementary catechetical and faith formation resources.

In general, we do not accept catechetical textbooks or collections of poetry.

We are looking for high-quality manuscripts for children—toddlers through teens—that:

- convey an authentically Catholic sacramental worldview and
- have a strong, distinct voice that engages readers' imaginations.

In our Catholic fiction for kids and teens we especially look for:

- compelling stories with complex, well-developed characters, and
- organic incorporation of a Catholic worldview into the narrative.

Our nonfiction seeks to teach the Catholic faith in a way that:

- evokes wonder, curiosity, and creativity.

In all our books for children and teens, we value projects that:

- are sensitive and relevant to the needs of our readers and their families,
- are formational on all levels of the human person,

- bring children, their families, and their communities to an encounter with the God who loves them.

### **How to Submit for Publication**

Please send a proposal that includes:

- your vision for the work
- a description of the intended audience and why they need and would want the book
- your qualifications for writing the book
- a comparison to similar books that shows why your book is unique
- a table of contents that includes a brief description of each chapter
- proposed length and projected completion date
- one or two sample chapters (For picture books or short chapter books for children, please submit the entire manuscript.)

Email your cover letter, proposal, and sample chapters as attached Microsoft Word files to [editorial@paulinemedial.com](mailto:editorial@paulinemedial.com). Please submit the manuscript as one document, not separate documents for each chapter.

(Email is the preferred method of submission, but if you need to mail yours and you would like it returned, you must provide an appropriately sized, self-addressed, stamped envelope with sufficient postage. If you do not want your material returned, kindly provide an e-mail address so that we may contact you.)

We make every effort to respond to unsolicited manuscripts within six to eight weeks. Due to time constraints, we are not able to offer feedback on manuscripts that we decline.

### **Quick List of Dos and Don'ts (Essential for First-time Authors)**

#### **Do:**

- Carefully read these submission guidelines in their entirety and follow them.
- Send your submission by email if it is at all possible.
- Submit your manuscript and your proposal as attachments to the email. The manuscript should be one whole document, not separate documents for each chapter.
- Send it as a Microsoft Word document, not as a PDF.
- Include a basic letter in the body of your email but repeat any important information in the attached proposal.

- Send an email asking for an update only after you have not received a response within the amount of time indicated.
- Become familiar with us and our publications by browsing our website and catalog, noting the kinds of titles we publish and see if your project would be a good fit.

**Please avoid the following:**

- Do not call and ask to speak with an editor about your book.
- Do not format the text in your manuscript to make it look like the inside of a book.
- Do not add pictures, clip art, or images of any kind to your manuscript.
- Do not recruit an illustrator to add illustrations. Should your book be accepted for publication, we will engage an illustrator after the editing process. If you are a professional illustrator intending to write and illustrate your book, provide samples.
- Do not put the entire content of your proposal in the body of your email. The body of your email can be a basic letter, but make sure any important information in the body of your email is also included in your attachments.
- Do not obtain an imprimatur or ecclesiastical approval. Any editing makes the imprimatur void. If an imprimatur is needed, we will obtain it.
- Do not submit an updated or revised manuscript before receiving a response to your submission.
- Do not ask basic questions about publishing that you could easily research online.

**The Advantages of Traditional Publishing**

Traditional publishing offers many advantages, one of the most important being that the publisher pays the author for the right to publish his or her book. Other forms of publishing require the author to pay the publisher. Pauline Books and Media is a traditional publisher. We will not charge you any fees to publish your book. (However, if you use copyrighted material in your book, you may have to pay the owners of the copyright for permission to use their material.)

Advantages of traditional publishing over self-publishing or subsidized publishing include:

- In-depth editing from an objective viewpoint, by experienced editors who are invested in helping to make your book the best it can be. (Self-published authors must rely on self-editing, volunteer readers, or a paid editor who has no investment in their book.)
- Our experienced team at PBM works closely with its authors to develop a finished book that the author—as well as the book’s audience—absolutely loves.

- Inside and out professional design by experienced designers.
- Substantial assistance to promote and market your book by those committed to the book's success. (Self-published authors must do it all themselves or hire assistance.)
- Multiple distribution channels expertly set up which are available upon publication of your book: traditional retail, distributors, and digital distribution, including the possibility for multiple e-book formats and channels. (Self-published authors don't have access to some traditional channels and must learn and set them up themselves)
- Receiving payment to have your book published. Usually, the publisher pays the author for the right to publish, distribute, and license the book (e.g. international licenses). (Self-published authors pay for each step that goes into publishing a book, and they may not have the access needed to sell international rights.)
- Publishing a successful book with an established publishing house means that you have an interested party to look at future manuscripts.
- At every step, your book will be supported by the weight of the publishing house's expertise, which comes from decades of publishing experience. (Self-published authors must learn on their projects. It can be overwhelming and may take multiple attempts to gain the needed expertise.)

### **Common Reasons Manuscripts are Declined**

We are not able to give specific feedback on manuscripts that are declined. If your book is declined, these are some reasons that may have contributed to it:

- Your book is not a good fit for us. Even if a book is very well written and fills an important need, our distribution/marketing may not reach that particular audience well enough for us to publish it. (It is not to anyone's advantage for a publisher to take on a book if they can't market and distribute it effectively.)
- Your book does not prominently feature an element of Catholic faith and life.
- In our judgment, your book will not reach the audience you have in mind. This could be because of length, style, lack of a "hook," or other reasons.
- Your proposal shows that you have not read our submissions guidelines or done sufficient research on how to prepare a proposal for a publisher.
- Lack of a well-developed concept, or lack of an original concept.
- Writing that is not of publishable quality; submission of what seems a first draft that still needs a lot of work.
- Your book is too similar to a project we have already published or that is in progress.

## FAQs

- **I self-published a book but now see the benefits of traditional publishing. Can I submit it for publication?**

If you have self-published a book and now would like to see if we would accept it for publication, you are welcome to submit it to us. We occasionally publish a book that has been previously self-published. However, please realize that we will consider your book not as a ready-to-go work, but as a manuscript that will go through the same editing process as our other books.

You may submit it as a PDF, but know that, should we go ahead with the project, we will need the manuscript as a Word document with all formatting and images removed.

- **Do you allow simultaneous submissions?**

We do accept a proposal or manuscript submitted to us at the same time as to another publisher. If you do so, it is courtesy to mention that it is a simultaneous submission.

- **You ask that similar books be listed in my proposal, but my book is completely unique.**

Similar books can be on the same topic, but from an entirely different angle, or on a related topic, or to a similar audience with a similar purpose. If you don't know of any titles to put in your proposal, you may need to do more research.

- **What are some resources you recommend?**

There are many very helpful books and websites available for beginning and published authors, and we encourage you to research the basics of writing and submitting to a traditional publisher before submitting a proposal to us.

One resource that has proven immensely helpful and which can prevent first-time authors from making mistakes is:

[The Art of Spiritual Writing by Vinita Hampton Wright](#)

We recommend this book for anyone writing on a spiritual topic, especially if referencing your personal experience.