



Welcome to the first monthly edition of *Sisters and Friends: Refresh Your Soul with Melanie Rigney*. Each month, I'll share something about a Catholic saint and woman living today who will inspire you, spiritual resources, and a brief note of where I'll be in the coming month. In between newsletters, I hope you'll check out my [Web site](#) for my blog and other updates.

Good King Wenceslaus's Grandmother: St. Ludmila

What made Good King Wenceslaus so good? Well, in part, his grandmother, St. Ludmila. Her son asked Ludmila to attend to Wenceslaus's spiritual education. The child's mother resented Ludmila's influence, and arranged for her murder when Wenceslaus was thirteen. Ludmila's feast day is September 16; Wenceslaus's is September 28. You can learn more about female saints and blessed in my book, [*Sisterhood of Saints: Daily Guidance and Inspiration*](#), available for order at your favorite online or local bookstore.

Being Christ in Our Lives: Virelle Kidder

You may know of [Virelle Kidder](#). She's a beautiful godly woman and devoted wife, mother, and grandmother who is also a marvelous writer and speaker. Virelle's six books include *Meet Me at the Well: Take a Month and Water Your Soul* and *The Best Life Ain't Easy, But It's Worth It*. Virelle was Christ to me on my forty-ninth birthday. We were roommates at a



weeklong Christian writers' conference, and my day had been horrible. "Something" prompted me to confess I was a fraud--I hadn't had an active faith life for decades--and ask her to pray over me. She did, without hesitation, and gave me the courage to ask God back into my life. My path is Catholicism, hers is evangelical Protestantism. We are sisters in Christ.

[Who has reflected Christ on your journey?](#)

On the Nightstand

I recently finished (and loved!) Pat Gohn's [Blessed, Beautiful, and Bodacious: Celebrating the Gift of Catholic Womanhood](#). Part memoir, part instruction, it's about the awesome gift of being a spiritual mother. Catholics will drink in the Marian connection, but there are plenty of gems for all Christians, including: "God's spirit is very adaptable. Just open the door a crack and invite him in." In addition, I recently started

[Ear of the Heart](#),

Mother Dolores Hart's memoir. Women of a certain age will remember her as Merritt in *Where the Boys Are* or as the girl who gave Elvis his first on-screen kiss. I saw Mother Dolores at a presentation earlier this summer and her face is so peaceful. She definitely made the right choice to, as she put it, "run to God" and become a nun at the peak of her Hollywood career.

[What's on your nightstand?](#)

Where to Find Me

Hope to see you in September! I'll be:

- Facilitating a retreat on prayer September 13-15 at the [Blessed Trinity Shrine Retreat](#) in Fort Mitchell, AL.
- Speaking at the Walking with Purpose kickoff event September 16 at [Holy Redeemer Catholic Church](#) in Kensington, MD.
- Talking about the female saints and blesseds September 28 as part of the [National Council of Catholic Women](#) national conference in Fort Lauderdale, FL.

God bless!

Melanie