



Welcome to *Sisters and Friends: Refresh Your Soul with Melanie Rigney*. Each month, I'll share something about a woman living today and a Catholic saint 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.

"For You, Jesus." -- Chiara Badano

October is a month full of "big-name" female saints--Therese of Lisieux, Teresa of Avila, Marguerite Marie Alacoque, and Mary Faustina Kowalska, to name a few. They all have inspiring stories, but I'd like to introduce you to Blessed Chiara Badano, who died of a rare form of bone cancer in 1990, just before her 19th birthday. Chiara was beautiful inside and out, and had been very involved in Focolare, an international ecumenical movement. Chiara showed people how to die, comforting other patients as well as her friends and family, and praying for others. "For you, Jesus," Chiara said. "If you want it, I want it too." Her feast day is October 29, her birthday. 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: Bonnie Rose Hudson

My friend [Bonnie Rose Hudson](#) inspires me because she trusts God so completely. When she was still in her 20s, she went to her first writers' conference--alone, without knowing anyone in attendance. She knew she

was being called to write, specifically for young adults. In just the past two years, Bonnie Rose has gone from never having conducted an interview to joining the staff of *The Old Schoolhouse*®, the premiere homeschooling magazine; blogging; and presenting at conferences. She stepped away from a civil servant's career to answer this call. She's a beautiful writer, and I can't wait to see what God has in store for her. Please include Bonnie Rose in your prayers this month as she submits a wonderful book series proposal to a literary agent. [Who has reflected Christ on your journey?](#) First two people to respond get a free copy of *Sisterhood of Saints*.



On the Nightstand

Preparing for the prayer retreat I facilitated last month meant I got to read a lot of great books, including Jon M. Sweeney's [Praying with Our Hands: 21 Practices of Embodied Prayers from the World's Spiritual Traditions](#). The images of prayer--with our hands, in dance, at altars--are stunning. The text is thought provoking. Here's an example: "We pray with our bodies when we put them in front of tanks. We pray with our hands when we link arms together to fight injustice. We are co-creators with the Divine when we resist evil. The world is more sacred at those moments." And, it's taken me a while to work through it, but I'm enjoying Bob Rice's [Between the Savior and the Sea](#), a fictionalized behind-the-scenes look at Christ's ministry, primarily from Peter's viewpoint. [What's on your nightstand?](#)

Where to Find Me

I'm sticking close to home in October, but will be out and about quite a bit. You'll find me:

- Presenting on the female saints and signing books October 6 at [One More Page Books](#) in Arlington, VA.
- Attending a private open house for *Sisterhood of Saints* October 13 in Arlington.

- Talking about Blessed Maria and Luigi Quattrocchi October 28 at [Theology on Tap](#) in Arlington.

God bless!

Melanie

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