



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.

"Do not be frightened at seeing the greatness of the aim proposed ... those who love do not feel the burden." --St. Magdalene of Canossa

Discerning God's desire for us can be difficult sometimes, especially when we wonder perhaps if He's asking more than we can deliver. As I try to listen carefully for some direction on a few subjects, I'm thinking of the life of St. Magdalene of Canossa, whose feast day is May 8 and who died in Italy in 1835.

Before she was twenty, Magdalene joined two different monasteries. Both times, she ended up back at home. A few years later, she used her wealth to open a shelter, and ultimately established the Congregation of the Daughters of Charity, Servants of the Poor, which continues its work today.



Being Christ in Our Lives: Ann Farrell Pulliam

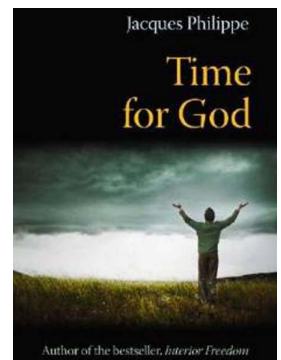
Ann Farrell Pulliam teaches me a lot. Always has, in the nine years we've known each other. She's a devoted wife, mother, and daughter, and is

studying to become a hospice chaplain. One of the greatest lessons I learned from her came when she was battling colon cancer (she's cancer-free now, praise God) and graciously accepted whatever those of us in Ann's Army brought for meals, even if it was lasagna three nights in a row and her family might have been dying to order in pizza. I also learn from her to be open to the beautiful surprises God has for us, whether they come on the Via Dolorosa or in a crowded restaurant or a peaceful chapel. [Who reflects Christ to you?](#)



On the Nightstand: Time for God

I've been blessed to meet lots of amazing people through my saints ministry, and often, they provide wonderful spiritual resources. This month, I'll be reading Jacques Philippe's *Time for God* based on the recommendation of a new friend. It's just 108 pages long, so there will be no excuse for not finishing it in a 31-day month! The back cover copy intrigues me: "... Time is not the real problem but recognizing what matters most in life." I'm hoping the book will help me remember to put the Lord first, always. [What's on your nightstand?](#)



Where to Find Me

Writing magazine articles on returning Catholics and on the female saints and blessed have taken up some of my marketing time recently. It's been fun to get back into that sort of writing again, and I'll let you know when they're published.

On May 6, I'll be talking about the female saints and blessed at a [Dominican Retreat House](#) fundraiser in McLean, VA, just up the road from where I live.

I'm already getting excited about being among the speakers at the Pilgrim

Center of Hope [Catholic Women's Conference](#) in San Antonio, Texas, September 19-20. This is an amazing conference, and I hope to see a lot of familiar faces there as well as make some new friends. I'll be working with the team on some promotion over the summer.

May God bless you exceedingly!
Melanie

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