



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.

***"O my great God, you can do all things and I can do nothing! If you wish to help me, I am ready." --St. Marie of the Incarnation***

Earlier this spring, Marie of the Incarnation (Marie Guyart) became the newest woman saint. Her story can be difficult to wrap our minds around, for it is truly a story of a woman who left behind what she loved most to say "Yes" to the Lord.

Marie was born in France in 1599. She was only twenty when her husband died, leaving her with a six-month-old son, Claude. Marie had a vision that she would become a woman religious, and when Claude was just ten, she entered an Ursuline monastery. He and his schoolmates attempted to storm the facility, with Claude shouting, "Give me back my mother!"



About ten years later, Marie felt the call to go to New France (now Quebec) to minister to the indigenous peoples. Claude was a novice with the Benedictines by then, and saw her shortly before she left. Later, he would edit her spiritual autobiography.

As I said, it's a difficult story. Yet, as a result of her efforts, Marie is regarded as one of the Church's founders in Canada. To me, her example of obedience is breathtaking.

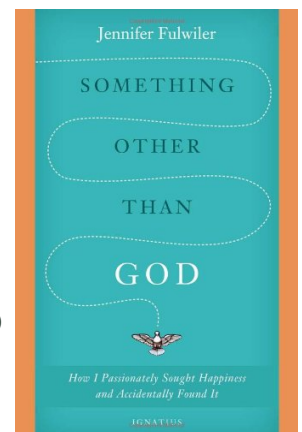
## ***Being Christ in Our Lives: Pat Gohn***

I met [Pat Gohn](#) in person last September at the [National Conference of Catholic Women](#) national convention, but I actually met her a couple months earlier when I devoured her soul-stirring book, [Blessed, Beautiful, and Bodacious: Celebrating the Gift of Catholic Womanhood](#). Pat's moving story of breast cancer and other struggles brought me close to tears. Her loving guide into St. John Paul II's writings about women and the godly gifts we all share--even those like me with "almost-daughters"--sent me into prayer. It also started me on a closer walk with the Blessed Virgin than I would have thought possible. Pat's just as beautiful, caring, and kind in person as she is in her writing. She also has a terrific podcast, [Among Women](#), on which I've been privileged to be a guest. [Who reflects Christ to you?](#)



## ***On the Nightstand: Something Other Than God***

It's been hard to miss Jennifer Fulwiler and the launch of [Something Other Than God: How I Passionately Sought Happiness and Accidentally Found It](#). But just in case you have, here's the story: Jennifer was raised in a happy, atheist family and converted to Christianity in a profound way a few years ago. Since her conversion, this mother of six has become a noted blogger for Catholic media (not to mention her own [Conversion Diary](#) blog, which has been known to make me roar with laughter). Anyway, *Something Other Than God* has been endorsed by everyone from Dean Koontz to James Martin to Cardinal Dolan, so that's what I'll be reading in June. [What's on your nightstand?](#)



## ***Where to Find Me***

Whoa! I'm home! All month! Yippee! That's a good thing, as I'm working on a new book to be published by my friends at Franciscan Media. It's tentatively called *Rejoice and Be Glad* and shows how each of the beatitudes was lived by four of the

wonderful women saints and blessed, and how we can put their example to work in our own lives.

Last week, two friends and I taped a segment on the saints and blessed for a local cable access show, [Catholic Life](#). I'll share via social media when I know more about the air/online viewing date.

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. Check out the video [here](#). 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. And, I'll be back at [St. Peter's in the Loop](#) in Chicago in October.

May God bless you exceedingly!  
Melanie

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