

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.

St. Louise de Marillac on Waiting Peacefully

Waiting. It doesn't always get easier with age or faith. I recently talked with a priest about this, and he recommended I contemplate on the Blessed Virgin, who trusted in the Lord even as she pondered in her heart what all these changes meant.



Lately, I've also been turning to St. Louise de Marillac, cofounder of the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul. The two of them are pictured here on a Croatian postage stamp.

Louise spent much of her early life in sorrow or in waiting: Her mother died when she was very young and her father, when she was four or so, sent her to board with an aunt and other

Dominican sisters. Louise wanted to be a Capuchin nun, but was not accepted due to her health. She married when she was twenty-two, then her husband died twelve years later. Shortly after he died, Louise met Vincent de Paul, and the rest is history. While their friendship was not always easy, Louise brought personal knowledge of life's injustices to the relationship, and Vincent helped her find inner peace.

Here's what Louise had to say about waiting: "I will tell you quite simply that we must wait peacefully for grace to produce true humility in us by revealing our

powerlessness to us."

Louise is one of the four women saints I'm featuring in the chapter on mourning in my book in progress, *Rejoice and Be Glad: Living the Beatitudes with the Women Saints*. I'm savoring every minute I carve out to be with her and the other ladies.

Being Christ in Our Lives: Nan Balfour

You know how sometimes, you start e-mailing with someone and you're just so eager to meet in person because you know it's going to be a mystical experience?

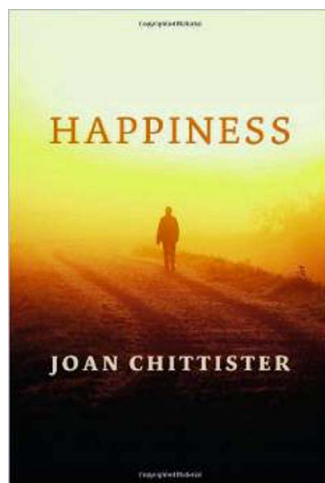
Well, that's how I feel about Nan Balfour, coordinator for the 2014 Catholic Women's Conference in San Antonio, presented by The [Pilgrim Center of Hope](#). When Nan and I spoke by phone to nail down the particulars of my participation at the conference, it was hard to stay focused on business, we were finding so many similarities in our spiritual journeys. We're about the same age. We both were away from active faith lives for years, though we never stopped believing in God. And, He blessed us both with radical conversion experiences that set our hearts and souls on fire.



Don't you want to be there in San Antonio September 19-20 to meet some other beautiful sisters in Christ? I know I can't wait! [Who reflects Christ to you](#)? The first three people to respond at my Web site will receive \$10 Amazon gift certificates.

On the Nightstand: Happiness

Last weekend, I was purging my personal library and ran across this book by Joan Chittister. I loved two of her earlier works ([In Search of Belief](#) and [Scarred by Struggle, Transformed by Hope](#)) and am not sure why I didn't get around to this one, which was a gift, earlier. Chittister calls happiness "is an organ of the soul that is meant to be nourished." Isn't that lovely? [What's on your nightstand?](#)



Where to Find Me

As I noted above, I'm looking forward to being in San Antonio in September, and there's a strong possibility I'll be in Atlanta next month as well, but more on that soon.

And, I've added a couple of new October events. On October 8, I'll be with the Women of Nativity at the [Church of the Nativity](#) not too far away in Burke, VA. During my Chicago area travels at the end of the month, I'll spend the evening of October 28 at [St. Anne's Catholic Church](#) in Barrington in addition to a presentation at [St. Peter's in the Loop](#) on October 30.

May God bless you exceedingly!
Melanie

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