

Of saints, friends, books, and what's going on in my crazy life.

September, I'll Remember...



to breathe—at least I hope I will. I asked a good friend to pray for me last week as I was feeling overwhelmed by my to-do list and totally inadequate. She sent the link to ["Breathe."](#) a wonderful song by Jonny Diaz. I listened several times, and prayed. I know it doesn't happen this way every time, but the next day the Lord opened up four hours of time that had been committed. So I breathed—deeply—and rested at His feet. Praying that you all remember to breathe this month too.

Saints in Our Midst

When you talk with people who spent time with Teresa of Calcutta, you notice how their faces change when they speak of her. A few years ago, I worked on a little booklet on the life of a friend and Benedictine sister who was retiring as my parish's school principal. Sister B in March 2003 became only the second woman religious ever to open the U.S. House in prayer. Mother Teresa was the first. The two of them had met briefly during one of Mother Teresa's U.S. visits, so I asked Sister B about the experience. Sister B, never at a loss for words, paused for a minute. Then she said slowly, "I wanted to kiss the hem of her garment. I wanted to wash it for her. I knew I was in the presence of a saint." And so, on Sunday, Teresa will be formally canonized. That's not to say her life on earth was perfect; we've all heard the criticisms of her. I doubt she cared much about them. She just kept putting one foot in front of the other, ministering to the next dying person or member of her congregation who needed her. She didn't let the magnitude or the hopelessness of the situation overwhelm her... she just kept going, as we are all called to do. Daunting... but with the Lord's help, so doable.

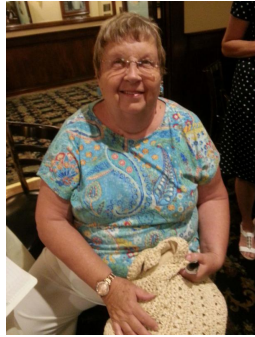


Room of Mother Teresa

To learn more about Mother Teresa, check out the wealth of resources at [American Catholic](#), including an excerpt from my book [Blessed Are You: Finding Inspiration: Finding Inspiration From Our Sisters in Faith](#).

To learn more about other women saints and blessed, see the [Wednesday's Woman](#) entries in my blog.

Friends in Faith: Thelma Garry



When I think of Thelma Garry, I think of two words: service and community. She'd probably tell you they're the same thing. Service is multidimensional in her life; her husband, Pete, is a retired Air Force colonel, and she and their children, some with special needs, accompanied him around the world. Everywhere Thelma went, among the first places she looked to connect was the base parish. I couldn't begin to list all the ministries in which this retired high school finance teacher has been involved--National Council of Catholic Women, parish council, and Cursillo, just for a few--but Thelma's also a great supporter of her friends' ministries, nudging us into places where the Lord wants us to go but that might overwhelm us a bit. Thelma reminds me that diving in and helping out in His name pleases Him greatly.

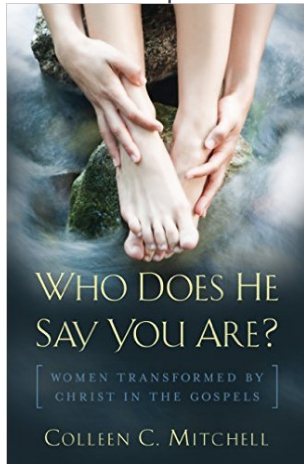
[Which of your friends inspires you?](#)

On the Nightstand: *Blessed Are the Feet*

Ever since I returned to faith in 2005, I've been a sucker for Matthew 16:15:

He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"

The challenge comes after Jesus asks who people say he is, and the disciples hem and haw around. In response to the second question, it is only Peter--flawed, seemingly dense to this point, all too human Peter--who responds that Jesus is the messiah, the son of the living God.



So given that, I would have jumped all over the just-released [Who Does He Say You Are? Women Transformed by Christ in the Gospels](#) if for no reason other than the promise of the title. I'm even more eager to read it now knowing a little bit about author Colleen C. Mitchell, who was kind enough to write one of the [reflections](#) when one of my titles was the summer book club pick for Women in the New Evangelization.

Colleen lives her life and her faith (to her, they're one and the same) boldly and confidently. She and her husband are raising five children in Costa Rica, where they've lived for nearly five years since they began a non-profit ministry named for their son Bryce, who died seven years ago. They provide medical care and other support to mothers in the area. And through her writing and speaking, Colleen feeds many, many more.

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

What's Going On?

On September 20, I'll be at [St. Raphael Catholic Church](#) in Rockville, MD, speaking about the women saints and mercy, one of my favorite topics.

After that, it's a month of moving (a whole block, but still a bit of upheaval)... and attending friends' events!

Meeting new friends is one of the best things about working with my friends Duffy, Paula, and Monica on the [Future with Hope Women's Conference](#) for Catholic women forty and over, set for October 21-22 in Fairfax, VA. There are some awesome ministries in this area, and probably yours as well. For example, there's [Praying College Moms](#), a ministry that is expanding outside the DC area. I'll be stopping by their September 17 event in Vienna, VA, to drop off some flyers for our conference. I'm also hoping to attend the September 29 open house in Fairfax City for [St. Anthony's Bridal](#), a nonprofit ministry that helps brides have beautiful weddings on very small budgets and that will be providing gift bag materials for Future with Hope.



And on September 12, I'll be at the [Capital Christian Writers](#) meeting in Fairfax to hear my longtime pal and Intrigue Publishing Editorial Director Austin S. Camacho talk about the business of writing.

May God bless you exceedingly! --Melanie

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