



The Joy of June

Hi everyone! June is my favorite month (and not just because I was born in it). The days are long, warm but generally not too hot, and the world seems to be happy. I'm particularly happy because later this month, I'll be on a self-directed silent retreat at [Holy Cross Abbey](#) in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley. (I took this photo there last year.) Please let me know [how I can pray for you](#) while I'm in silence.

Thanks for the responses last month when I asked what newsletter improvements I should make. You'll note that Friends in Faith is back... and, there's a giveaway! Enjoy!

Friends in Faith: Trudy Harlow Dervan



I've known Trudy Harlow Dervan for more than ten years now. We've been in the same Bible study group, we're involved in some of the same ministries, and I can tell you that she and her husband, Ed, know how to throw a great Christmas Eve party.

These days, Trudy is inspiring me by doing with grace something that's very hard for me: recognizing a difficult situation and rather than gossiping and complaining, finding opportunities to infuse God. Trudy reminds me we won't be judged by how well things are organized, but by how much we love.

Who Inspires You?

"Always be at peace...

and ...not disturbed or agitated too much, to be united with God, who is the end that matters most."

This lovely quote comes from a letter written to a sister by Mother Carmen Rendiles Martinez, who will be beatified later this month. Carmen was missing a left arm when she was born in Venezuela in 1903. Her disability didn't stand in the way of a life of service; she moved to France shortly after joining the Servants of the Eucharist community in her early twenties, then sometime later, returned to her home country.

In her sixties, when some are thinking about slowing down, Carmen began a new community, the Servants of Jesus, with a mission of active assistance to the poor. I'll be blogging a bit more about her later



this month in my Wednesday's Women feature (short profiles of beatified and canonized women).

Wednesday's Women

On the Nightstand: *The Great Magdalens*

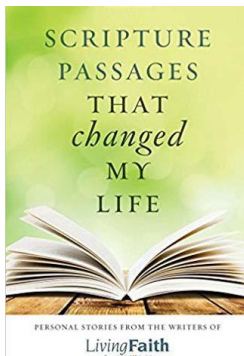
Talk about being led into temptation! A couple of publishers had big sales in the past couple of weeks and, well, what's a girl to do? Yes, these eight books are *all* now on my nightstand.

I'll be starting with *The Great Magdalens: Famous Women Who Returned to God after Lives of Sin*. The table of contents shows some predictable women (St. Margaret of Cortona, whose family refused to take her and her child in after her longtime lover died), and some surprises (Madame de Pompadour, the chief mistress of France's King Louis XV). As a woman whose life had some serious sin before rediscovering the Lord, I'm looking forward to these true stories of reversion!



What's on Your Nightstand?

You Asked for It, You Got It: A Giveaway!



I'm thrilled to be among the *Living Faith* authors who contributed to *Scripture Passages that Changed My Life*, a collection of essays to be published this month. Sometimes, I still pinch myself to think that my words appear in *Living Faith* alongside those from Amy Welborn, Sister Melannie Svoboda, Steve Givens, and others.

My verse is Isaiah 64:7 (look it up), and the essay, well, let's just say it's appropriate I'm going to be reading *The Great Magdalens* this month.

So, I'm giving away two copies of the collection (I'll sign my essay). Entry options include visiting my Facebook fan page, commenting on one of my blog posts, following me on Twitter, and tweeting about the giveaway. Check out the [entry page](#) (it's also on my [Facebook fan page](#) and [website](#)). Just hurry--entries must be received by noon ET on Saturday, June 9.

Thanks and blessings on your month! --Melanie

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