



Reunion

I do not have a single photo of my maternal grandparents (Tell and Mary Smith) and their eight children all together. I guess that with raising kids born in a fifteen-year span that included the Great Depression and World War II and moving at least nine times in three states, they had more pressing things to do. So instead, I offer this image from my grandparents' wedding day.

As you read this, we descendants are having a reunion in my hometown. Since Grandma also lived there for her last thirty years, my aunts and uncles and 33 cousins came through often, and many lived there for a time. We're all connected on Facebook, but nothing replaces face to face. We'll see the old homes, drink some beer and wine... and celebrate our shared stories.

I hope August also brings you the chance to reconnect with family and friends in person, and to celebrate!

Friends in Faith: Mary Shea

Mary Shea and I have been working together on promoting this year's [Future with Hope women's conference](#) as well as gathering items for an upcoming benefit gala for [Catholic radio in DC](#). Mary and I both have backgrounds as journalists, and that established an instant bond when we first met two years ago. But collaborating on these projects also has illumined for me her deep love for her family and her devotion to the Lord through evangelization activities including the Legion of Mary. Regardless of whether people say yes to helping us, Mary is unfailingly polite, positive, and upbeat. She teaches me to focus on offering God's invitation... not on whether it's accepted.

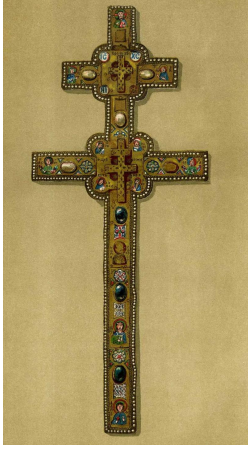


Who Inspires You?

Saint Euphrosyne of Polotsk and Embracing Change

A confession: I have a special soft spot in my heart for Eastern European saints (a set of great-grandparents were Polish)... and for saints whose lives were full of reboots. Euphrosyne of Polotsk fills both bills. She was born in what is now Belarus in 1110, and at twelve ran away to an aunt's convent when her parents were preparing to marry her off. Euphrosyne was a hermit at a time, but that was not to last; she was called to establish monasteries for both men and women, and made significant pilgrimages, including one to Jerusalem where she died when she was in her early sixties.

In addition, it turned out she had a gift for the arts. Euphrosyne is



credited with designing this beautiful enameled cross and is also known as a composer. She was a noted copyist of religious manuscripts, giving the proceeds to help the poor.

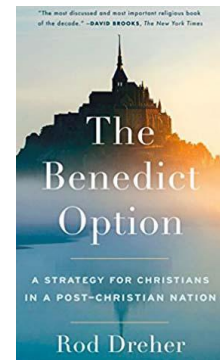
Eurphrosyne's life reminds me to embrace the twists and turns the Lord asks of me and to be confident of His instruction. I'll be blogging a bit more about her later this month in my Wednesday's Woman feature (short profiles of beatified and canonized women).

Wednesday's Women

On the Nightstand: *The Benedict Option*

A while back, I read two Rod Dreher memoirs of a sort: *The Little Way of Ruthie Leming* and *How Dante Can Save Your Life*. Loved them both, and enjoy reading his thoughtful essays, even when we're not 100 percent in agreement.

I'm excited about reading *The Benedict Option* because it promises a path to living a faith-filled life in an increasingly secular world. It seems to have a positive message based on the book jacket copy: "... learn not just to give a resolute 'no' to the false gods of this world but a joyful 'yes' to eternal truths and life-giving customs rediscovered from our Christian past."



What's on Your Nightstand?

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Other ways to keep the conversation going:

