

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.

"Martha, Martha, You Are Worried and Distracted by Many Things" (Luke 10:41 NRSVCE)

The feast days of many great women come in July: Maria Goretti, Anne (mother of the Blessed Virgin Mary), the martyrs of Compiègne and China, and Kateri Tekakwitha, just to name a few. But I'll be focusing my contemplation time on Martha of Bethany, she who complained about her sister Mary sitting at Jesus's feet when he came to dinner instead of helping Martha. While we remember Martha for that incident, we also must keep in mind that it was she who amid the grieving for her dead brother told Jesus she knew he was the Messiah... and that Lazarus would be raised on the last day. Imagine her joy when Lazarus was then raised from the tomb. As someone who overcommits and then complains about it in Martha style, I



try to learn from both the admonishment Jesus provided... and Martha's strong faith even during deep sorrow.

Being Christ in Our Lives: Laura Williams Fritz

High school was a tough time for me. A lot was going on at home. I had no faith life, and didn't seem to be able to find my place anywhere. Laura Williams (now Fritz) was one of those people who seemed to do it all effortlessly, choir, drill team, synchronized swimming. Girls like her and girls like me didn't interact much in our



very large (600-plus) graduating class and so a few years ago, I was shocked when she asked me to be her Facebook friend. I said yes less than graciously, commenting I was surprised she remembered me.

Laura generously ignored that snark. And so, we've finally gotten to know each other a bit, virtually, and she inspires me greatly. The nature photos she takes are publication-worthy. But more importantly, her posts and photos show humility and gratitude for her beautiful family and friends. She's not one to brag about her service, but every once in a while, we all see glimpses of the joy she takes in her involvement at her church and the food pantry in Mapleton, Minnesota, and the folks she's served as a dental assistant and in the local school system. Laura reminds me that popularity doesn't preclude gentleness and kindness--indeed, perhaps those gifts birth popularity--and has made me rethink my tendency to make snap judgments.

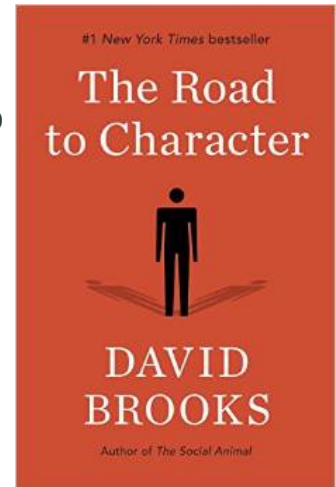
[*Who reflects Christ to you?*](#)

On the Nightstand: The Road to Character

Dorothy Day. Frances Perkins, our country's longest serving labor secretary. St. Monica--and her son, St. Augustine of Hippo, along with George C. Marshall, Samuel Johnson, and others. *New York Times* columnist and pundit David Brooks' new book looks at what he calls our "eulogy" virtues: kindness, bravery, honesty, or faithfulness, with looks at people throughout history who lived them. As you can tell by the other short takes here, I've been giving this sort of thing much thought this summer. Brooks says he wrote the book to save his own soul and, to some degree, maybe he's right. Part of any faith journey, of any time of spiritual growth, involves

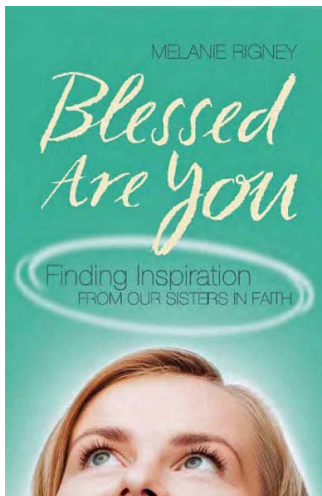
learning from those who went before us, famous or unknown. I'm particularly intrigued and uplifted by something on the book's back flap: "Joy is a byproduct experienced by people who are aiming for something else. But it comes." You might say the same about faith.

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



Blessed Are You: *It's Here!*

Well, July is shaping up to be a firecracker of a month (sorry, I couldn't resist). My publisher, Franciscan Media, advises that my new book, [Blessed Are You: Finding Inspiration from Our Sisters in Faith](#), is going to be available shortly, several weeks ahead of schedule! That's great news, since my friend Colleen Duffy Kiko and I will be attending and exhibiting at the [Edel Gathering](#) July 10-11 in Charleston, South Carolina. Stop by and see us if you're attending!



More next month on other book launch events, including plans for a signing at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception bookstore!

May God bless you exceedingly! Melanie

Copyright © 2015. All Rights Reserved.

[Forward this email](#)



This email was sent to melanie@melanierigney.com by melanie@melanierigney.com | [Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Rapid removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).



Melanie Rigney | 4201 Wilson Blvd. #110328 | Arlington | VA | 22203