

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

The Sound of Silence

My life is full of sound. It starts with the radio, then the subway station noise, then work conversations and meetings, then in the evening getting together with friends or catching up with my sister. I do my best to carve out a couple hours of quiet sometime during the week, but the past month or so, that hasn't happened as often as I need. So, I decided to give myself a special birthday present this month: four nights of silence and solitude at the [Holy Cross Abbey Retreat House](#) about sixty miles away in western Virginia. It is the antithesis of the life I love at home: no schedule, no to-do list, just time to listen to the Lord (and visit the bakery at least once).



May your June be filled with sounds of happiness and love, along with as much quiet as you need.

Sisters in Struggle and Faith: Anna Maria Taigi and Elizabeth Canori Mora

I'm taking a different tack for my weekly Wednesday's Woman entries for the next several weeks (or until I do something else). I'll be featuring women saints who knew each other personally—mothers and daughters, grandmothers and granddaughters, sisters, and friends. First up on June 7 will be Anna Maria Taigi and Elizabeth Canori Mora, a couple of 19th-century Roman housewives, mothers, and mystics. They both did ministry to those in need as lay members of the Order of the Most Holy Trinity. Both women had troubled marriages, and not a lot of money. They supported each other through those challenges and in building the strength to share their visions. That's one of the great things about saying yes to God; you never know who He's going to put in your path. I've met some of my closest friends while serving on teams to help people returning to faith or looking for a way to refresh their passion for Christ.

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



Anna
Maria
Taigi



Elizabeth
Canori Mora

Friends in Faith: Michele Huey

[Michele Huey](#) and I met in 2005 at a writers' conference in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania. Michele, an evangelical Christian, seemed to do everything right: She was (and is) a wonderful wife and mother and a terrific writer. She's an award-winning columnist, and also had a radio show for ten years.

I was excited (and a little worried) when we ended up in an online writers' group together. But I needn't have worried. Michele is a pro, that's for sure, but she gives it all to the Lord, all the time, not to her

ego. For example, she's been the lay speaker/pastor at a small congregation for three years, a ministry she loves but I know can be time consuming. She was the same way in our group, providing gentle corrections and thoughts for improvement, but also giving big atta-girls when someone shared a particularly well-written chapter.



Michele recently had a major computer problem just as she was preparing to reissue her novel *The Heart Remembers*. But after an initial cry, she was right back at it, getting up before dawn to recreate all the work she had lost. Then it was off to her grandson's baseball game.

In our writers' group, Michele was known as Sweetie, because she is a sweetie. To the Lord, I'm thinking she's known as Beloved Daughter. Her faith and trust show me how to persevere when evil attempts to do its thing.

Which of your friends inspires you?

On the Nightstand: *Shirt of Flame*



I've followed [Heather King's](#) blog for a few years now, because how can you not be intrigued by someone who describes herself as "an ex-barfly Catholic convert"? Her entries include many beautiful photographs and thoughtful, sometimes funny, sometimes wry, words of wisdom. But for some reason, I've never read *Shirt of Flame*, King's memoir about coming to terms with loss through a year of praying and meditating with St. Therese of Lisieux. We can all learn from Therese's sounds-so-easy-but-so-hard-to-do Little Way, and I'm looking forward to discovering how King put it to work in her own spiritual healing.

What's on your nightstand?

This and That

Besides that trip to the Berryville monastery, I'll be attending several meetings related to a not-for-profit conference for Catholic women over forty I'm helping to organize for this October. I'm humbled at the number of people who support this idea and are stepping forward to help us in so many ways.



Baseball, Bible study, and baby visiting are also on the calendar. All in all, it promises to be another beautiful month!

May God bless you exceedingly! --Melanie

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