

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

Words and Some Musings for 2018



Blessings on your new year!

In my family, we select a word for each year. Mine this year is ready--ready for a closer walk with the Lord, ready to move closer to the woman He desires me to be, ready to put aside some actions and behaviors. I'm going to attempt to blog each month about that journey. More below, including an opportunity to receive the gift of the spiritual resource of your choice!

What's *Your* Word? New Feature: Off the Shelf

So, you know my word for 2018 is "Ready." What's yours? Send me an **email** with **WORD** as the subject line. Then in the body, tell me your word--and identify a spiritual resource valued at up to \$25 that would help you on your journey. Your resource can be a book, CD, DVD, jewelry, course or anything else. (If the resource costs more than \$25, I'll give you a credit toward the total sum.) Entries are due by **11:59 p.m. ET on January 6**, and the winner will be announced in the next newsletter. Feel free to circulate this offer among your friends; entrants must be at least thirteen years old, live in the United States, and consent to be added to the newsletter subscriber list. I can't wait to see what your words are! I'll be doing similar giveaways throughout 2018 in this new Off the Shelf section of the newsletter.



Also: Congratulations to **Juanita May of Mayfield, Kentucky!** Juanita won last month's drawing for woodblocks from **Soli Deo Gloria Sacred Art.**

On the Nightstand: *Confessions*



What better book to start out my year of readiness than Augustine's *Confessions*, he who convinced himself that he wasn't ready for God until he was in his mid-thirties? I'm not sure why I've avoided the saint's unflinching look at his life before he found the Lord--thanks in no part to his mother, Monica, and letters of St. Paul-- and the writing and preaching Augustine was called to do thereafter. This image, a Roman fresco, was created within a hundred years or so of Augustine's death in 430.

Nimble Fingers Time and a Prayer Request

Mainly, I'll be writing this month. Writing and writing and writing. I'm deep into the woman of worth book due to the publisher on March 1, and have devotions due to *Living Faith* and *Catholic Mom*, and the usual weekly devotions to *Your Daily Tripod*. Writing makes few people, including me, financially wealthy, but you can't beat the blessings of community and formation it brings.

I'm also asking for your prayers. I've become the sole owner of *Future with Hope Women*, a not-for-profit LLC originally formed with some friends to put together an annual conference for Catholic women over 40. Please pray that I am ready for this... and that I may be confident in His plan.



May 2018 bring you and yours much joy and harmony! --Melanie

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