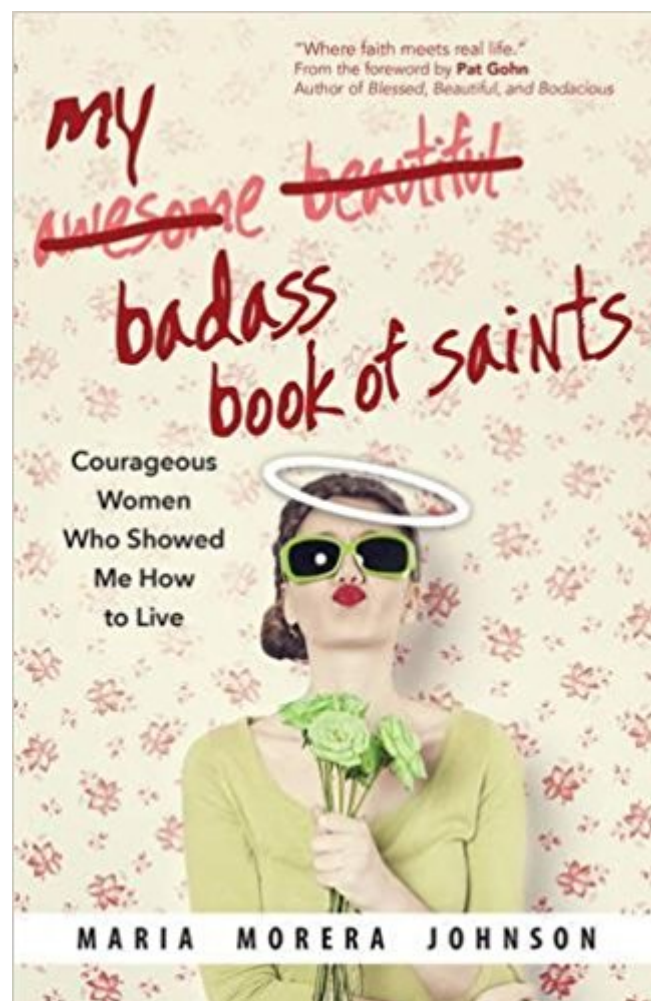




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# My Badass Book Of Saints: Courageous Women Who Showed Me How To Live



## Synopsis

Winner of a 2016 Association of Catholic Publishers Excellence in Publishing Award: Inspirational Books (First Place). In this edgy, honest, and often audacious book of Catholic spirituality, blogger and popular podcaster Maria Morera Johnson explores the qualities of twenty-four holy women who lived lives of virtue in unexpected and often difficult circumstances. In *My Badass Book of Saints*, Johnson shares her experience as a first-generation Cuban-American, educator of at-risk college students, and caregiver for a husband with Lou Gehrig's disease. Through humorous, empowering, and touching portraits of twenty-four spiritual mentors who inspired her, Johnson shows how their bravery, integrity, selflessness, perseverance, and hope helped her and can help others have courage to reach for a closer connection to God. She presents remarkable holy women and saints--including the gun-toting Servant of God Sr. Blandina Segale who tried to turn the heart of Billy the Kid, and Nazi resister Irena Sendler who helped smuggle children out of the Warsaw Ghetto during World War II--in a way that brings their vivid personalities to life and helps readers live out the challenges of their lives with virtue and conviction. The book includes a group discussion guide.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Johnson, host of the popular podcast *Catholic Weekend* and blogger at CatholicMom.com, offers readers an exploration of inspiring women past and present who challenged the status quo, served Christ wholeheartedly, and continue to inspire women today. She blends her own story with those of courageous women who became saints, who will likely become saints, and who arguably ought to

be saints. She explores such virtues as courage through the lives of WWII spy Nancy Wake and St. Joan of Arc; perseverance through author Flannery O'Connor and St. Margaret of Antioch; peace via Immaculee Ilibagiza and St. Rita of Cascia; and virtue through the most virtuous of all, the Blessed Virgin Mary. Every story challenges, informs, and encourages as Johnson interweaves discussions about how we can live and thrive similarly to these women today. Chapters end with questions and an action step; the book ends with a six-week guide for further study. Catholics--and women everywhere--will find something to love." (Dec.)--Publishers Weekly 10/12/2015"

Maria Morera Johnson's *My Badass Book of Saints* delivers a heavyweight message of holiness with the lightest of touches and somehow manages a knockout punch. Her entertaining list of modern women of faith and their saintly counterparts exhorts women toward sainthood and says, 'Yes, this can be you, too, if you want it.' It's the wanting, after all--the pursuit of sainthood despite obstacles malicious or well-meant--that brings out the badass fearless trust that hones a saint." --Elizabeth Scalia, Catholic blogger and author of *Strange Gods*"Each of us has an opportunity to be a beacon of hope to those around us. Thank you, Maria, for writing and sharing this remarkable collection of courage and inspiration." --Immaculee Ilibagiza, Rwandan holocaust survivor and author of *Left to Tell*"In pages riddled with humor and gripping stories, I was shocked to realize that I shared qualities with great women I always thought were out of my league. In the lives of these ordinary, sometimes feisty, women I found my story, and as many of them are now saints, I found an incredible conviction to live my ordinary life loving God and allowing him to do extraordinary things through me . . . with a little help from my new friends!" --Kelly Wahlquist, Founder of Women In the New Evangelization and author of *Created to Relate*"This is a book that's not afraid to talk of the beautiful mess, where faith meets real life, where saints and mortals coexist, one cheering the other on to glory." --Pat Gohn, Author of *Blessed, Beautiful, and Bodacious*"Maria Johnson is a badass. As she shares herself in these pages, her stories--and those of these courageous women--inspire us to believe that our own sometimes seemingly ordinary lives and what we do with them can be enough. For ourselves and for God." -- --Shelly Henley Kelly & Lisa Henley Jones, Catholic bloggers and contributors to CatholicMom.com

Maria Morera Johnson is a CatholicMom.com blogger and cohost of the popular podcast, *Catholic Weekend*. Johnson is a composition and literature professor at George Piedmont Technical College and has received a number of awards for teaching.

The foreword says that women of holy influence come in many different ways, which help them

come to their faiths in God. At the end of each chapter is a trio of questions to ponder. Then, at the back of the book, is a set of questions designed for a six-week study. I really like that! While I see such things in similar books, I didn't expect it in this one. I guess it's because of the title ;) Johnson pairs one female non-Saint with one female Saint (except for chapter 9, where a Blessed takes the place of a Saint). Not all the women are Catholic, but each shows tenacity, perseverance, and different forms of strength. I didn't realize until about 42% of the way in that this is what a true Catholic feminist book is. Johnson takes her life and relates it to each of the women. And, as a teacher, I can relate to her desire to be the best and help everyone. - Sister Blandina Segale, a gun-toting sister from the Old West, sounds fascinating. "I have a soft spot in my heart for nuns toting guns." - Page 1. She faced Billy the Kid thrice in her life! - Nancy Wake sounds like she was a wonderful woman - I didn't realize St. Catherine of Sienna's mother had 25 children. Holy cow! - Phyllis Bowman, the founder of the United Kingdom's Right to Life, is someone I have NEVER HEARD OF BEFORE. She essentially sparked the worldwide pro-life movement, which is fantastic. - Audrey Hepburn's history was definitely not something I knew. It's no wonder she faded away. What a wonderful woman. The book concludes with a wonderful focus on Mary

In her delightfully captivating, transparent, and inspirational style, Maria Johnson reminds us that we can all be holy, be saints; that it is in the ordinariness of our lives that God draws us closer to Him; and that each of us can be a courageous person of faith. Through "My Badass Book of Saints," she brings these 23 holy women off their pedestals and into our down-to-earth daily lives -- and we soon realize their stories are our stories, too. And throughout, she shares glimpses of her own life, personal and poignant, and yes, some downright funny. Besides an individual read, this book is ideal for small or large groups. Using her book, this summer for six weeks 30 of us gathered for a simple salad lunch, shared (using her insightful "Questions to Ponder"), and blessed each other with our presence and our prayer. We discovered that our struggles are more similar than different and that our joy in all moments comes from our generous and gracious God, who has gifted us with these holy women to learn about, to connect with, and to imitate. Among other things, Maria Johnson's message of courage has given us hope . . . and we are grateful. THANK YOU, MARIA!

This makes for an easy read for a women's religious study group. The author introduces and connects themes with anecdotes from her own life. She then draws parallels from the lives of lay women (albeit famous) to those of female Saints and provides relevant discussion question and points to ponder at the end of each chapter. As a woman living in these times, it's challenging to say

the least, to fully know how to live a Christ-centered life while fulfilling personal needs for accomplishment and meaning in our modern lives. When our nation and society continues to tell us our worth is only a fraction that of a man, this book helps to keep us centered for true fulfillment through our faith and not through arbitrarily assigned societal standards.

What a great book. I have recommended it to many of my friends. Spiritually, it was very uplifting. Many of the saints and women she writes about are quite obscure. The book was an easy read. So many times I've read or tried to read the lives of various saints. Maria puts you in today's world. In one of the chapters I could relate. The only difference was she was in another country and I was here in USA. Hopefully, she will continue to write more inspiring books.

I bought this book because I know the author (Maria Johnson) personally as a real woman.....working mom, wife, homemaker, English Composition professor, community volunteer active in church and school functions, blogger, writer for catholic podcast... I've always known her to be smart, funny, genuine, down-to-earth, religious and talented. So, I knew this would be a good read....And, she did not disappoint! This book is brilliantly written. It is a pure pleasure to read. Maria gives you glimpses of her life story and the lives of the people and saints that have inspired her, especially during hard times. She adds in some history, humor, spunk, and real women stuff. For me, it calls me to be a little more badass (saint) myself.

This book is an excellent read! I have been struggling with my Catholicism for awhile now after being diagnosed with lupus, which happens to be talked about within the book. It was really reassuring that I do not struggle alone and have amazingly strong woman to look up to.

While this provided a good overview of a variety of traditional and modern saints, the majority of the book read as an autobiography. I would have liked it to go into more detail on the women featured than the author.

This is a phenomenal feature of incredible women, known, and not-so-well known. It is very accessible in its approach, cutting right to the chase and providing questions for reflection. Though it comes from a Catholic perspective and hit close to home for me as a Catholic, anyone of any background can find something valuable in this book. Kudos to Mrs. Johnson

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