



# **My Badass Book of Saints: Courageous Women Who Showed Me How to Live**

*Maria Morera Johnson*

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**My Badass Book of Saints: Courageous Women Who Showed Me How to Live** Maria Morera Johnson  
In this edgy, honest, and often audacious book of Catholic spirituality, Patheos 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 Segal, 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.

## My Badass Book of Saints: Courageous Women Who Showed Me How to Live Details

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## From Reader Review My Badass Book of Saints: Courageous Women Who Showed Me How to Live for online ebook

### Rowan MacBean says

I received MY BADASS BOOK OF SAINTS as an ARC through netgalley.com.

I didn't finish reading this book. Just short of the halfway point, I had to give in and admit that I was simply not the intended audience. I swear, I've been to church services and felt less preached at, and I got tired of that and left church more than fifteen years ago.

I DID really like the way each chapter was set up to tell the story of a more modern woman who reminded the author of a saint from the past before going into detail about that saint. This is why I kept reading; I enjoyed the comparisons, and even though I'm not religious myself I always like learning about saints. So despite my low rating, I would definitely recommend this book to anyone who's interested in saints and doesn't mind learning about them through someone's personal anecdotes instead of like you're reading a history book.

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### Morgan says

*I received this book from Netgalley in exchange for an honest review. This does not affect my opinion of the book or the content of my review.*

First off, I am in love with the cover that is currently shown on Netgalley:

I hope this is the final, because it was what drew me to the book in the first place. Never underestimate the power of a good cover to sell books.

The real question: How did what was inside hold up to the cover?

Being that this was received via Netgalley, keep in mind that things might be changed ahead of the publication date.

It was pretty much what it says on the tin, but mixed in with the stories of the saints were tales from the author's own life or the lives of her family. Sometimes it felt a little unorganized, but maybe having structure within each section where it's older saint/newer saint/personal connections to both either before or after each...or after or before both. Something more than a paragraph break that is in the same order from section to section.

I found the stories of the saints lives interesting, especially those who are lesser known to this Protestant. ;) They were also good examples to look towards, because they mostly weren't the sort to shove their beliefs or religion in others faces and attempt to force them to conform. They simply lived their lives and did their best to right the wrongs that surrounded them and live the moral lessons laid out by their faith. I think there are people who could benefit from that sort of inspiration regardless of any sort of personal faith.

### **Lindsey says**

I really enjoyed this book and liked the format with the author beginning with a story of her own life leading into snippets about the saints. My only complaint would be that I wish it was longer and more in depth! I will be researching more about the amazing women mentioned in this book.

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### **Jennifer says**

Accesible short stories of female saints and other heroines.

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### **Kathy says**

The author is a Cuban American catholic with a deep love for saintly women, both official saints and unofficial ones. Each chapter includes a bit of the author's life and sections on two women who exemplify a characteristic the author has experienced in her life.

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### **Maura says**

#### **Could not even finish this one!**

I thought this was going to be an exciting, in-depth look at the lives of female saints that would be empowering and inspirational. It's mostly a (pretty boringly presented) collection of anecdotes from the author's own life with very little information about these badass women she is supposed to be educating us about. I good about 70% through and had to give up. The writing style and reading level would be better suited for a middle school audience--except that there's a curse word in the title. I tried to push through this one but I wish I'd given up sooner so I could have moved on to something better!

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### **Tanya says**

Amazing read! Great book! I read it in less than two days. Engaging and witty. Love the pairings of saints familiar and unfamiliar with easily recognizable women. Good place to begin if you're wanting a fun introduction to many inspiring saints and women.

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### **Audrey Ahern says**

This author is, apparently, primarily a blogger and podcaster - and you can completely tell by her writing. I appreciated the attempt, and I did get some very brief insights into some cool saints. But brief was the primary word. A look at her bibliography reveals that many of her sources were wikipedia or well-known

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Catholic websites. I'm not really sure why I paid for the book when I could have browsed the internet for free. I did appreciate the attempt, and her heart is in the right place, but even for a book with this title, I expected a little more research.

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### **Talea says**

I enjoyed learning about a few saints I'd never heard of and of women the author admires. The stories about her personal life in relation to the saints she was talking about helped as did the study guide in the back.

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### **Mo Campbell says**

Rated it a 2.5. Quick read, but didn't really do it for me.....had to push myself to finish it.

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### **Jaime K says**

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

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### **K says**

I'm not Catholic but this book really resonated with me. I appreciate that the Catholic Church holds up strong women as examples of Christ-like love, strength, and passion. At a time when I'm fearful for making

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noise and standing up for the right thing, I felt God speaking through this book and inspiring me.

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## **Carol Kean says**

A book I love so much, I buy copies for my friends - this is rare, and truly a tribute to the author (and the subject). Not just canonized saints we might glimpse on holy cards or church pamphlets (i.e. dry, dull), these are "real-life women who faced down outlaws in the Old West, genocide in Rwanda, convicts in a Tijuana prison, and oppressive regimes in Europe and Cuba."

Nuns toting guns - The Huffington Post shows them "lined up in their habits, wielding rifles like pros." It may sound comical, but read about Sr. Bladina Segale of the Sisters of Charity. "Fastest Nun in the West," she was born in Italy, and thought "Trinidad" (West Indies) was her destination. Oops, no, that's Trinidad, Colorado, "a violent town filled with hardship and lawlessness. The residents often took justice into their own hands, forming lynch mobs," but Sr. Blandina has another idea, and she actually did thwart a lynch mob. How many women can do that? She also met Billy the Kid and told him not to kill the town doctor - and he listened. Now that's power.

I'd say more, but this is a book that needs to be read, complete, and treasured, and shared with friends whether or not they're Catholic. Despite the history of the patriarchal Church leaving a bad impression on women and feminists, there is a quiet, little-known back story, peopled with sinners and heroes, strong, enduring, self-sacrificing and courageous. Day after day, they do the little things, the mundane tasks, like riding a mule into the deserts of Spain or the Old West, sleeping on straw, building hospitals, orphanages and convents. With what money? Like Mother Teresa (a woman of our own times), these ladies set out with no funds or facilities, but with entrepreneurial vision and powers of persuasion, they got things done. They got buildings built.

This is a must-read for so many, an inspiration. The only fictional counterpart I can think of is an anthology edited by Karina Fabian. (I reviewed it at Perhelion Science Fiction under the header "Nuns in Space").

I received an ARC from NetGalley. For several months it hadn't made it into my Kindle and I forgot about it, but this week, I found the link on my shelf (dashboard) and got it downloaded. This one is a keeper! Via my daughter's account, I ordered a copy for a friend, then decided not to use 2-day shipping via Prime after all. Back into my own account. Off to buy more copies now for more friends. I really love this book!

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## **Elizabeth says**

Johnson offers a really beautiful way to parallel saints to modern day holy activists; I only wish she offered more content about the saints. The small chapters are thoughtfully organized by theme, even offering contemplative questions at the end. For any Catholic who remembers The Picture Book of Saints, this feels like the female adult version of that beloved classic.

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## **Katie says**

True to its title, this book delivered on giving me a 10,000-foot look at a bunch of new saints whose stories I didn't know. I love reading about awesome religious women (see my review of The Red Tent). Where The

Untethered Soul came across too preachy for my taste, I enjoyed how Johnson included some personal reflection questions at the end of each chapter.

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