

September, of course, is my favorite month (my birthday is Sept. 23). But, close second for me is October. October is filled with many significant dates for me. For one, my littlest sister was born in October. I still remember being awakened early that morning when my mother had to go to the hospital. Then, my Dad actually came to my school to tell me I had another little sister. The birth of Debbie would be enough to make October my favorite month, but October has even more to offer.

Some of my most favorite saints are celebrated during the month of October. For instance, October 1 is the feast day of St. Therese of Lisieux, the Little Flower. She lived a short life (1873-1897) as a cloistered nun, yet is one of the most popular saints ever. She is even a “Doctor” of the Church. St. Therese is known for your “Little Way to God”—“the little way of spiritual childhood.” Her way to sanctity was to completely trust in her heavenly Father just as a little child would trust her natural father.

October 2 is the Feast of the Guardian Angels. In our Catholic Catechism we read, “*From infancy to death human life is surrounded by their watchful care and intercession. Beside each believer stands an angel as protector and shepherd leading him to life. Already here on earth the Christian life shares by faith in the blessed company of angels and men united in God.*” [CC # 336] Angels are all around. We have angels protecting us. As a kid, I was accused of making my guardian angel work overtime!

October 4 is the feast of one of the most popular saints of all time—St. Francis of Assisi. The first “Dr. Doolittle”, Francis, was so gentle and so in touch with nature that legend says he preached to the animals when no humans were there to listen. Born into a rich family, Francis embraced a life of poverty and lived the Gospel radically. He is also known for his love of the Eucharist, his sorrow during the Stations of the Cross, and for the creation of the Christmas creche or Nativity Scene.

October 5 is the Feast Day of St. Faustina Kawalska. Throughout her life, Faustina reported having visions of Jesus and conversations with him, which she wrote about in her diary, later published as the book *The Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska: Divine Mercy in My Soul*. St. Faustina, more than any other, is responsible for the spreading of the popular Divine Mercy devotion.

St. Margaret Mary Alacoque is celebrated on October 17. She is responsible for spreading the devotion of the Sacred Heart in its modern form.

On October 18 we celebrate my favorite evangelist, St. Luke. Luke “paints” the portrait of Jesus as the COMPASSIONATE SAVIOR. He stresses over and over again the universalism of the gospel—that Jesus came to save ALL—that Jesus is the “friend of sinners, outcasts, poor, little insignificant ones.”

There are many other great saints celebrated during October—like St. Theresa of Avila (Oct. 15), St. Gerard Majella (Oct.16), St. Jude (Oct.28), and more. October is also the Month of the Rosary—my favorite devotional prayer. Let’s not forget October 7, the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary, and October 13, the Feast of Our Lady of Fatima.

There’s a lot to celebrate in October, and a lot of spiritual help coming our way.