



Sunflower Seeds

Celebrating Everyday Spirituality



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Five Miscellaneous Items

by MELANNIE SVOBODA SND on AUGUST 26, 2019

Here are five miscellaneous items I came across recently or a while ago. I hope you find them worth pondering.

Item #1: Fortune 500 Companies

A recent issue of *National Geographic* reports that almost half of Fortune 500 companies were founded by immigrants or their children. Here are the names of some of those companies and the country from which the founders came: Apple (Syria), Amazon (Cuba), Home Depot (Russia), Bank of America (Italy), Intel (Hungary), Facebook (Brazil), Kraft Foods (Canada), Proctor and Gamble (England, Ireland), Walgreens (Sweden), Panda Express Restaurant chain (Myanmar), Zumba Fitness (Columbia), Capital One (England), Ebay (France), Pfizer pharmaceuticals (Germany), Kohl's (Poland), Google (Russia), Colgate (England), Bell Telephone and AT&T (Scotland), J. P. Morgan Chase (Czechia), Tesla (South Africa), Yahoo! (Taiwan), Chobani yogurt (Turkey), Big Lots! (Russia), Honeywell (Switzerland), RadioShack (England).

Item #2: 10 Important Rules

Many years ago I came across this list entitled "Life's Golden Rules":

- 1) If you open it, close it.
- 2) If you turn it on, turn it off.
- 3) If you unlock it, lock it.
- 4) If you break it, fix it.

About Sister Melannie Svoboda, SND

Sister of Notre Dame,
teacher, student, author,
speaker, listener, friend,
poet, farm girl.



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About Sunflower Seeds

Each Monday I'll post a short reflection, a simple musing on some aspect of spirituality— the everyday kind of spirituality that



includes things like walking in the park, slicing an onion for the casserole, caring for a child, studying for an exam, reading a line from scripture, laughing at a joke, or mourning a significant loss.

Along the way I welcome your questions, comments and insights too. After all, we're all in this life—this spiritual life—together!

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- 5) If you can't fix it, call someone who can.
- 6) If you borrow it, return it.
- 7) If you use it, take care of it.
- 8) If you make a mess, clean it up.
- 9) If it belongs to someone else and you want to use it, ask them first.
- 10) If you don't know how to operate it, leave it alone.

(Would you add anything to this list?)

Item #3: News from a Distant Galaxy

I read this in the paper a few years ago. I cut it out, because astronomy always fascinates me:

Astronomers have discovered a distant galaxy that spits out new stars at an astronomical rate. The galaxy (S P T - CLJ2344-4243) is creating about 740 new stars a year—compared to about one a year for our own galaxy, the Milky Way. Astronomers have nicknamed the galaxy Phoenix because, at 6 billion years old, it was thought to be dead, but it came back to life in a way that still puzzles and amazes scientists... (Whenever I read anything about astronomy, I always say, "Wow!" and "How little we know!" and "What must God be like?")

Item #4: A Photo

Here's a photo of two sunflowers... with a brief description. (Thank you Sr. Pat Newhouse, SC, for sending me this picture).

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Item #5: Funny (or not!) Puns:

How does Moses make tea? Hebrews it.

England has no kidney bank. But it does have a Liverpool.

I tried to catch some fog, but I mist.

I stayed up all night to see where the sun went, and then it dawned on me.

I know a guy who is addicted to brake fluid, but he says he can stop any time.

I think it's time for me to stop this week's reflection...

Did any of these items cause you to ponder, be amazed, or smile? If so, which one(s) and why?

PS: I am giving a weekend retreat, September 13 to 15, at Our Lady of the Pines Retreat Center in Fremont, OH. The theme is "Wonder, Love, Courage, and Hope: Four Essentials for Today's Christian." The retreat begins at 5:00 pm Friday with supper and ends at 1:00 pm Sunday. You can stay overnight or commute. Fremont is about 35 miles southeast of Toledo, a few miles south of the turnpike. Check out their website for details: olprc@pinesretreat.org or call 419-332-6522. I'd love to see you there!

Here's another Peter Mayer song called "All the World Is One." Let me know what you think of it..



So what do you think? My other readers and I would all love to hear from you below!

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Thomas DeFreitas August 26, 2019 at 4:27 am



Sr Melannie and fellow readers, ahoy!

I was about to comment and then said to myself, "Wait, I haven't heard the song!" So glad I did go back and listen! Wonderful lyrics (Buddha! Annie Dillard! Walt Whitman! Alan Shepard!). A gentle poetic pushback against Vladimir von Tribble, and all his pomps and all his works and all his empty tweets. Although, perhaps, the song predates our current predicament.

Salutary reminder, about the scores of Fortune 500 companies founded by immigrants.

And love the atrocious puns, especially kidneybank/liverpool.

Peace and light, everyone! Happy Monday!

REPLY

Janet Green August 26, 2019 at 4:52 pm



Fortune 500 Companies: How many of these people were “illegal” immigrants?

House Rules: Add always return what you borrow cleaner than when you received it.

The Sunflowers are most beautiful and thoughtful.

All the world is ONE, this is what Christ teaches.

REPLY

Kathleen Magiera August 26, 2019 at 4:59 am



Good Morning Everyone!

I like the puns. A good way to start a Monday.

God bless.

Kathleen

REPLY

John E Hopkins August 26, 2019 at 5:30 am



Five parts of wisdom and fun, Sr. Melannie!

That sunflower poster is amazing! So often God’s creation carries God’s wisdom – all we need to do is slow down and see.

Have a great week, everyone!

REPLY

Denise August 26, 2019 at 6:09 am



Dear Sister,

I love the sunflower's and their heartwarming ways. They follow the sun (Son) they don't turn their backs on fellow flowers in dark times and they share what they have! God speaks to me through nature and His word is unmistakably clear. Your retreat in Ohio sounds wonderful, wish I was there, prayers for all.

REPLY

Nancy Ann Frederico August 26, 2019 at 6:58 am



Good morning Sr. Melannie

I found everything you wrote to be very enlightening. Thank you for sharing all these kernels of wisdom with us; especially, the Sunflowers facing each other. Such a great lesson! Sending prayers for you and the participants of your upcoming retreat

Have a wonderful week everyone!

Nancy

REPLY

Sr Susan Reineck SND August 26, 2019 at 8:06 am



Good Morning, Sister Melannie!

It's always good to start my week reading your weekly blog. As a Sister of Notre Dame myself, I have loved the sunflower and it's connection with our SND heritage While in chapel each morning praying with my Sisters, I join with them in "turning toward the sun (the Son). Living my days in community is certainly captured in the poster showing the sunflowers facing one another in grey days. Actually, it's more about giving and receiving support and caring love every day! Thank you for the new image I now have of the sunflower! So happy to hear you visited Fremont, Ohio to give a retreat at the Pines. I was born and grew up in Fremont. The Sisters of Mercy and the Sisters of Notre Dame have ministered in Fremont many years. The Pines is truly a beautiful place for a retreat. I am happy you were able to enjoy this special place.

REPLY

JoAnn Welch August 26, 2019 at 8:24 am



Great thoughts to start the week! Thanks and have a blessed week!!

REPLY

Pete August 26, 2019 at 8:29 am



I KNEW that guy that could stop anytime! I don't know why, but the song brought to mind this quote by Eleanor Roosevelt, "Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery, and today is a gift; that's why they call it the present."

REPLY

Tina August 26, 2019 at 8:37 am



I so look forward to your words of wisdom each week. My favorite today is the sunflowers facing each other. The song is wonderful. Thanks for starting my week off in such an inspiring way!

REPLY

Nancy August 26, 2019 at 9:33 am



Sr.Melanie,that song was awesome! God bless you.

REPLY

Mary Anne Joyce August 26, 2019 at 9:39 am



Loved the sun flowers, they always make me smile. The song was right on. Have a blessed week.

REPLY

June August 26, 2019 at 9:48 am



Enjoyed today's blog! I'm also taken aback by the fascination of astronomy. Just watched a great show on PBS and wow! Pluto is 3 billion miles from earth!

Jupiter has 79 moons! And Jupiter is 318 times larger than the earth and 480 million miles from the sun! How can one not believe in God. Our God is an awesome God!

REPLY

Melannie Svoboda SND August 26, 2019 at 9:58 am



The first sentence should read: almost half of the top 100 fortune 500 companies...

Sorry for the error. Melannie

REPLY

Jean Canatsey August 26, 2019 at 1:20 pm



Good morning, Sr. Melannie,

I loved the poster of the Sunflowers. If only we would care for each other in a similar way!

I'd like to add my Dad's favorite adage: "If it's worth doing, it's worth doing well". My husband added Murphy's Law: "If there is a possibility of something going wrong-it will!"

We both loved the music video. If you like Monarchs, you might be interested in looking at my video "Vitae Cyclum" which I posted this morning on YouTube. We all are truly one and are obligated to help save our world and all that resides there in.

REPLY

Tom August 26, 2019 at 1:54 pm



Thanks for once again distilling some great examples of humor, wonder and wisdom from some very unexpected places that we may well have overlooked.

REPLY

Joni Dugan August 26, 2019 at 2:30 pm



Melannie – you are awesome. I always look forward to your reflections on Monday morning. Upcoming retreat sounds great. I have you and the retreatants in

my heart.
I can send you some songs that might just fit in.

Joni

REPLY

Shirley August 26, 2019 at 4:39 pm



Great puns and loved the song! A super blog for Monday. Prayers for your next retreat.

REPLY

Leonard Viggiano August 26, 2019 at 6:10 pm



Unfortunately under our current president who seems to think that all the world is not one nor its inhabitants .
We all need to remember that in spite of the color of our skin or our county of origin we are all children of the same God.

REPLY

Patty Davidson August 26, 2019 at 7:31 pm



Melannie, Thank you again for "Gracious Goodness". I re-read Levity and knew things would be ok.
This is a book of wisdom and I thank you
Patty

REPLY

Sr. Carolyn Pozarich August 26, 2019 at 9:30 pm



Dear Sister,
I just made a visit to the Redwood forests on the north coast of Ca. I'm pretty sure you could get a very powerful article from these incredible trees. Check it out, Sr.
Carolyn

REPLY

shanti August 27, 2019 at 12:51 am



Dear Sister,
How do you do it? Every week you expand my thinking...your newsletter has a great combination of thoughts to think about, something light and funny (puns!!! i love them) and music. Peter Mayer- that's TWO great songs from him that are wonderful!
Thank you for the time and reflection it takes to put this all together. I find myself looking forward to Mondays!

REPLY

Barb August 27, 2019 at 7:37 am



11. If you take the last one, refill or replace it. That goes for tissues, paper towels, toilet paper, communal candy dishes, and the cookie jar.

12. If the dishwasher is clean, empty it. If it's empty, put your dishes in it.

Signed,
A frustrated mom 😞

REPLY

Mary M Nausadis August 27, 2019 at 8:26 am



Without even reading the words on the sunflower picture, it touched my heart.

The puns were cute...I always find them clever. I will add another that I just read yesterday that made me laugh outloud...

There was a cross-eyed teacher who couldn't control her pupils!

And lastly, yesterday during our homily, our priest told us that his dad always said," If you don't learn from your mistakes, why make them".....this brought much laughter.

Thank you Sr. Melannie for brightening the world

REPLY

Karen August 27, 2019 at 8:49 am



Sr. Melannie,

Ditto exactly what Shanti said! I live with such blinders on, focused on the immediate and repetitive needs of my job and family. Thank you SO MUCH for providing a respite every Monday and allowing me to remember that there is so much more beyond my little world.

I am so tempted to tweet the Fortune 500 fact to our president. (but alas, I don't tweet.) 😞

thanks,

Karen

REPLY

Sue August 27, 2019 at 11:10 am



Ohhh Sister, you are better than Google any day!! You just amaze me with your vast amount of information!! I was blown away with the Fortune 500 Companies. Had no idea.

Thanks so much for what you do.

God bless you,

REPLY

Barbara Erdmann August 28, 2019 at 7:58 am



Sent this to my daughter, who has just returned from an International conference in Ghana. We all appreciate your very insightful reflections. THANK YOU.

REPLY

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