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“Pet Peeves” and “Dear Delights”

by MELANNIE SVOBODA SND on JUNE 3, 2019

Today I thought we would have a little fun with *pet peeves*. As you know, a pet peeve is something you find particularly annoying. It is usually something small. Some say the word “pet” is a shortened form of “petty.” But others say “pet” means particular to you. Who knows? The phrase originated in a comic strip called “The Little Pet Peeve” that ran in the *Chicago Tribune* from 1916-1920. The cartoonist, Frank King of *Gasoline Alley* fame, asked readers to submit their pet peeves and he illustrated them.

Pet peeves are not the same for everyone. What annoys the heck out of me may not bother you in the least—and visa-versa. Often pet peeves involve people close to us—a spouse, other family member, a roommate, or a colleague at work. I checked a number of websites and came up with this list of popular pet peeves. Do you see any of yours here?

People who: sneeze or cough without covering their mouth... interrupt constantly... leave common places (bathrooms, kitchens, etc.) messy... copy your idea and get credit for it... invade your personal space... let children scream and scream in public.

People who: complain a lot... whine a lot... drive too slow in the fast lane...do not use turn signals... park their car across two parking spaces... text while driving... who cut in front of you in line... who, when you let their car go in front of you in traffic, don't say “thank you” with a wave.



Who taught you basic social skills?

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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People who: chew their food with their mouth open... who talk with food in their mouth... walk too slow... are just plain rude... show a lack of respect for others' opinions... talk loudly and long on their cellphones in public places... are on their cellphones during meals... leave shopping carts in parking spaces... do not pick up after their dogs...

Other annoyances: slow internet... so many ads shown on TV and popping up everywhere on line... chronic tardiness... misusing words like your/you're or they're/their/there... overusing the word "like"... leaving only a little bit of something in a container and putting it back into the refrigerator.

As I looked at this list, I thought:

+ Parents, you have a BIG job, for you are primarily responsible for teaching your children basic social skills.

+ It definitely demands a certain level of patience and thoughtfulness to get along with other people.

+ Did Jesus have any pet peeves? He certainly was annoyed by hypocrites... and he got impatient with his apostles on a few occasions... and he became very angry at the money changers in the temple that day...

+ How can we deal with our pet peeves? I came up with three ways: 1) Share your annoyance (if appropriate) with the person who is annoying you. As someone has said, "The breakdown in all human relations is *unstated expectations*." 2) Put this small annoyance in perspective with more important issues of life. 3) Reflect on why this particular action annoys you so much. Is there a deeper issue involved here? Maybe this action makes you feel unappreciated. Or maybe you're (not your!) judging the motive of this person's annoying behavior.

I also wondered, do we ever reflect on the opposite of our pet peeves—on things people do that we find particularly nice? I'll call them "dear delights." Here are a few of mine:

People who: are consistently pleasant... smile regularly... ask how you are and mean it... clean up after themselves... are genuinely interested in what you have to say... are fun to be with... hold the door open for you... help you carry something... give you a break in traffic... drive sanely... plant flowers in their yards for all of us to enjoy... know how to do a variety of handy things... can identify birds, trees, flowers... use their

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"Pet peeves" often involve driving—but so do "dear delights."

cellphones softly and only for short conversations while in public.

Did Jesus have dear delights? He certainly liked children. He appreciated love whenever he saw it: the Roman soldier who begged him to heal his servant... the elderly widow who put two small coins in the temple treasure... the woman who anointed him shortly before his death. Jesus took delight in

nature: in lilies and birds... the beauty of trees... the changing seasons... the miracle of growth in mustard seeds and grains of wheat. He also appreciated good friends, good food, good wine, and good parties (a man after my own heart!)

Now it's your turn (not *you're* turn!):

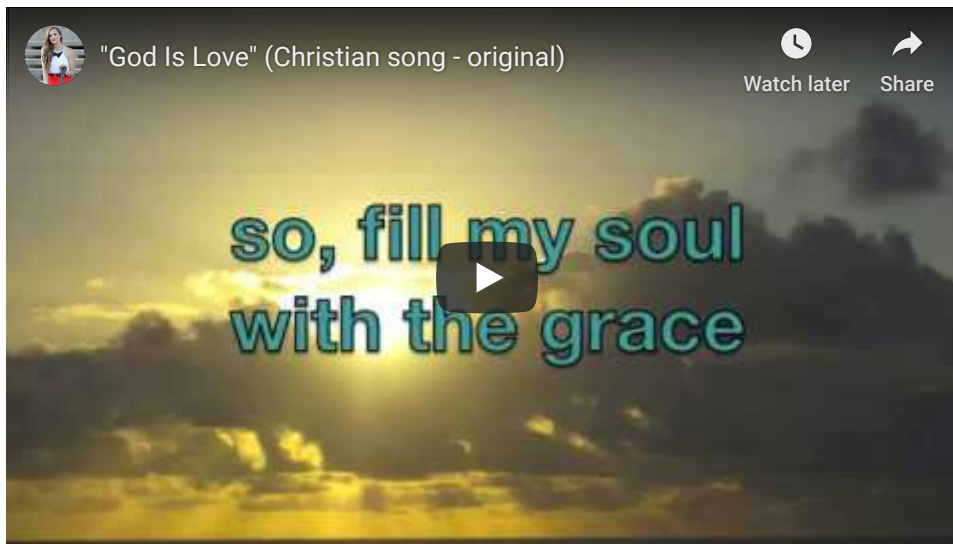
What are some of your pet peeves? Do they say anything important about you?

How do you deal with your pet peeves?

What are some of your dear delights? Do they say anything important about you?

PS: I will be giving a weekend retreat at Christ the King Retreat Center in Syracuse, NY July 17-21, 2019. The theme is "Hanging onto Hope." The center looks beautiful! Check their website for details: ctkretreat.com. I'd love to see you there!

The song today is "God Is Love" by Ali Auburn. The bottom line of this song and today's reflection is really love, not so?



I welcome your responses below. I know my other readers would also appreciate your thoughts!

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John E Hopkins June 3, 2019 at 6:05 am



Okay, so of the "peeves" listed above, I'd say the one that's really bugging me lately is "texting while driving" – Ughh! If I'm stopped to take a left turn (blinker on of course), I'm actually worried that the person behind me may be texting.

When I take my walks, I see drivers, head down, staring at their phones! It's scary!

I have no doubt that I am the source of another's pet peeve. My wife for example gets annoyed when I "slurp" my coffee. "I'm sipping it!" "No, you're slurping it!"

Just a work in progress!

REPLY

Barb June 3, 2019 at 6:57 am



Good Morning Sister Melanie!

You always give us such good food for thought. How many things are pet peeves or me just being impatient with my fellow man? Thank you and have a wonderful day. I love starting my Monday with you.

REPLY

Pete June 3, 2019 at 7:45 am



Yes, some of the above mentioned "peeves" are familiar, but others that get me are, "why do people leave church after receiving communion?" and, "why can't people stay until the last verse of the final song finishes at Mass?" I'm glad the "dear delights" outweigh the "peeves". Thanks!

REPLY

Susan Balint June 3, 2019 at 10:57 am



I agree. It is only a short period of time we should all have to stay and sing the last verse. The time after Holy Communion is such a sacred moment to be with Jesus and should be observed.

REPLY

Mary M Nausadis June 3, 2019 at 8:13 am



My absolute number one pet peeve is when a construction zone gives warning of a lane closure and almost everyone pulls over except a few who go flying by everyone else only to force their way in at the front.....that is the only thing I think, that makes me sputter!

A delight that is at the top of my list is when a young man....late teens to early 20's takes the time to hold the door open for me when I am going in and they are

coming out or grabs it for me before going in. In years gone by, that would not have been so unusual, but in today's world, it is.

There is always reason to hope.

Happy June everyone,

REPLY

ken June 9, 2019 at 4:45 pm



Mary

You're right there is a lack of courtesy in today's world mainly men toward women. I regret being cynical but I believe the "feminist" and "me too" movement share a great deal of the "credit" for it. Many men shy away from anything wherein they could be accused of bad behavior(e.g.complimenting a lady regarding just about anything). Once accused a man is as good as guilty in the eyes of many.Many old and courtesy values seem to be missing in today's society.Bring back the fifties!

REPLY

Marty June 3, 2019 at 9:11 am



Great song which speaks to a pet peeve:When someone is blessed by an Loving act they question the motive when sharing about it. (I have been such mea culpa) another is when a homily becomes 2 or 3 an overload that hampers reflection. I like when in the presence of humble person esp the faith of a child with cancer(TRULY THE PRESENCE OF GOD IS LOVE!!!).

REPLY

Mary A Schneider June 3, 2019 at 10:18 am



My mother taught us to hold doors for people, especially older ones, now that I am 80 I still do. I think this is the dearest peeve. 😊

REPLY

Vicki June 3, 2019 at 11:07 am



Thank you. This gives me lots to think about. I had been praying about petty things and you have gently poured out before me great revelations. God is Love.

REPLY

marietta June 3, 2019 at 12:17 pm



Dear Melannie,
Thank you for another very interesting article and research.

My pet peeve is people who constantly ask questions—especially when they really don't need to know what they are asking.
Thanks, Marietta

REPLY

Joy A MartinMy pet peeve June 3, 2019 at 1:19 pm



My pet peeve is people who won't take responsibility for themselves and/or their decisions...these are adults I deal with in my job...yuck!!!

REPLY

The Cool C June 3, 2019 at 1:58 pm



Most of the pet peeves you mentioned get my goat in different degrees. However, one that absolutely irritates me the most, every day, is the mis-pronunciation of the word "to" especially by announcers, newscasters, public speakers; "to" should be spoken like the number two, NOT "ta." It is a trigger that makes me yell "You're Fired!" among other things. It also lowers my opinion of the speaker.

REPLY

Lucille Blais June 3, 2019 at 4:32 pm



Sr. Melanie,
I loved this week's sharing. I could identify with many pet peeves you listed...Didn't realize that I had so many!
Thanks for the hints you suggest.
Shared this with friends
God bless you!
Lucille

REPLY

Patti June 3, 2019 at 5:27 pm



Wow! I'm NOT alone in this! Somethings are SO annoying it changes my mood for the day! I can relate to almost all of them! And it has given me 'food for thought' that I might ALSO be guilty of such actions? Me? REALLY??? Yeah, Patti, YOU! The song was beautiful and really touched my heart. Thank you for sharing!

REPLY

Karen June 3, 2019 at 6:03 pm



My #1 pet peeve is someone who asks for information but doesn't write it down and comes back to ask again. Ditto for an employee who has a task explained to them but doesn't write it down. There's no penalty for making a note people!

REPLY

Annie June 3, 2019 at 10:15 pm



Here are a few of my pet peeves: Using OMG or saying the words they stand for in a casual way, accenting the wrong word when proclaiming scripture as in "...he gave it TO them..." (not talking about foreign or ESL speakers!), and probably my # 1: litterers!!!

Dear delights: any small kindness—especially after being hurt, or when grieving, or having a busy or stressful day.

REPLY

Thomas DeFreitas June 4, 2019 at 5:05 pm



Pet peeve today (and it's popping up all over the social media): anti-Catholicism.

Bullying. Another pet peeve.

Loud music. Really drives me batty (some would say that's a short drive!).

Dear delights? My friends, most especially. W H Auden's lighter verse ("Some lose their rest for gay Mae West./ But you're my cup of tea"). Days of moderate springlike warmth. Days of exhilarating autumn cool. Eighties pop music (70s, 60s, as well). The kind nurses and doctors from a recent hospital stay. Cold water on a hot day. Anyone with a sense of humor! And beauty, be it esthetic (art, poem, music), natural (bird, flower, sunset), or human (pleasant faces, but more so, pleasant souls).

And sometimes, quite often in fact, the Rosary is a delight. There are some Catholics who deem the devotion a bit "retro," and I was one of them for many a year. But I find solace in it these days. It calms me down, puts me in a better place, is a kind of corrective lens that helps me approach the universe with wiser, kinder eyes.

REPLY

Karen Suggitt and June 4, 2019 at 5:28 pm



My pet peave is when customers are rude to employees at grocery stores etc. Or when checking into a hotel and they are making ridiculous demands because they feel they have it coming. The workers are trying their best to do their job. Sometimes I think I should of stepped in and said something.
My dear delights is when my adult children are home and they clean up after themselves. Enjoying someone's garden with all the fresh vegetables and beautiful flowers. And taking the time to notice a wonderful sunrise or sunset!

REPLY

Tom June 5, 2019 at 9:18 pm



Dear Melannie,

I have discovered that my most irritating pet peeves are mirror images of the faults and foibles that I have been struggling to eliminate in myself.

My dearest delights are totally unexpected thank-you notes for something I did or said that was no big deal to me but obviously meant a lot to the recipient.

REPLY

Carol June 8, 2019 at 8:41 am



Great topic! Such an appropriate song as well!

Dear Delights:

People who: -Offer change to another counting to see if they have enough to make a purchase.

- Do random acts of kindness without expecting anything in return

-Accept & not judge people for who they are regardless of their appearance, their station in life, or their circumstances.

Pet Peeves:

People who: -Win over the trust of others & then exploit them emotionally, financially, or personally

-Mistreat animals or others who are vulnerable & at a distinct disadvantage

I better stop because I could go on & on....I often remark..."This is why I like animals more than I like most people!"

REPLY

ken June 9, 2019 at 4:56 pm



My pet peeve are people who demand special treatment due to a "minority" status (disabilities not included) of some sort be it size,weight,short,tall,ethnicity,color,gender etc.

REPLY

Paula July 16, 2019 at 8:41 pm



I loved this and found some suggestions that I think might be very helpful.

REPLY

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