What Are Your Dreams for a Better World?

by MELANNIE SVOBODA SND on JULY 8, 2013

The world needs dreamers, those individuals who see the world the way it is and envision a better one. What are your dreams for a better world? You might want to take a few minutes to reflect on that question before you read the rest of this post...Or you can read some of my dreams and then formulate some of your own.

Some of my dreams for a better world:

* that every baby would be welcomed and cared for.

* that every man, woman, and child would know how to read and write.

* that every marriage, friendship, or other committed relationship would be life-giving.

* that every community (whether family, parish, neighborhood, state, or nation) would help to support the weak and marginalized members in their midst.

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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that all farmers would be able to make a decent living raising the food for the world.

that all people would learn at least one language besides their own.

that people would consistently choose to do the better thing; and if they failed, they would learn from their experience, apologize if needed, and make a better choice the next time.

that everyone would be patient with the shortcomings of everyone else.

that racism, sexism, and ageism would be so rare that the words would eventually be marked “obsolete” in the dictionary.

that elderly individuals would be respected, cherished, and cared for.

that, in addition to making a just profit, all businesses would keep in mind the promotion of the common good.

that everyone would begin each day by asking their Deity for wisdom, strength, and compassion. If they have no Deity, then they would ask all the positive forces of the universe for these three qualities.

that all people would forgive all the wrongs committed against them and their ancestors.

that armies would be used solely for activities such as these: global disaster relief, the distribution of toys for the children of the world, and the picking up of the world’s litter.

that we humans would continue to use our ingenuity to figure out ways to use the earth’s resources responsibly without doing irreparable damage to our planet.

that people would laugh more, watch sunsets more, talk to the birds more, smell the flowers more, and get to know their neighbors better.

that we would think in terms of “us” and “ours” instead of “me” and “mine.”

that before every decision, the leaders of government, businesses, and churches would ask this question: how will what we do here today affect the seventh generation (taken from the Oneida Native Americans)
“that no one would die alone.

As I drew these up, I thought: they sound a lot like the dreams Jesus had for a better world, dreams encapsulated in his words such as these: love one another...forgive one another...turn the other cheek...take no extra sandals for the journey...share your treasure with the poor...fear not...Behold the birds of the air and the lilies of the field... follow me.

I also thought: I can’t just sit around and dream. I must do something to help make my dreams come true. I ask myself: What small step can I take today to make one of my dreams more of a reality? After all, a better world starts with a better me. Sarah Ban Breathnach, the author of Simple Abundance, said it well: “The world needs dreamers and the world needs doers. But above all, the world needs dreamers who do.”

What are some of your dreams for a better world? What steps can you take to make your dreams a reality?

PS: I will be directing a weekend retreat at Berakah Center in Pittsfield, New Hampshire July 12-14. Please say a little prayer for the retreatants—and for me. Thank you very much!

Mary Schneider  July 8, 2013 at 10:27 am
Sr Melannie:

Your dreams for a better world are all-inclusive; I certainly cannot think of additional ones. I recently attempted to learn a second language, but found that like everything else I want to retain, slips out of my mind. I have noted, thankfully, words of scripture, thoughts and inspiration from your books and the writings of many others, do stay with me...I am content with that. Thank you so much for today’s “seeds”.

REPLY

Melannie Svoboda SND  July 9, 2013 at 6:51 am

Dear Mary, I think even an attempt to learn a second language is good. This certainly makes you appreciate everyone who has learned a second language. I admire everyone who speaks English with an accent—because, chances are, that means they had to learn it after they had already mastered their own. Thank you for your response! Melannie

REPLY

Carolyn  July 8, 2013 at 5:27 pm

It is a small thing, but each day I vow to send a little note to someone who may be lonely or feeling “down” or discouraged. It seems to end up making me feel blessed!!

REPLY

Melannie Svoboda SND  July 9, 2013 at 6:48 am

Dear Carolyn, Your remark about this being a “small thing” reminded me of what Mother Teresa used to say over and over again: “Do small things with great love.” Thank you for writing! Melannie

REPLY

Kathleen Magiera  July 8, 2013 at 6:19 pm

I dream that all families will listen to each other more and appreciate the time they have together. I am on vacation with my family right now.
Blessings on you Sr. Melannie! You and the retreatants will be in my prayers.

**Melannie Svoboda SND**  July 9, 2013 at 6:47 am
Dear Kathleen, A good reminder how vital a family can be,...Thank you for your addition and for your prayers. Happy vacationing! Melannie

**linda**  July 9, 2013 at 1:32 pm
I dream that every animal would be treated with kindness and respect, even those that are used for food. I believe that how we treat animals reflects how we treat people.

**Melannie Svoboda SND**  July 9, 2013 at 3:59 pm
Dear Linda, Thank you for adding a very important point. I agree with you completely! Melannie

**Larry Cummins**  July 9, 2013 at 4:28 pm
Prompted by Fr. David Knight's "Immersed In Christ", I try to minister to each person I meet by noticing one good thing about them and telling them so. It has been a challenge on some days, but it is always rewarding to see the smile on their faces. I dream that we might all look for ways to minister to each other.

BTW: I live in Nashua, NH and have been to Berakah Center. The weather isn't great here right now but where you are going, the scenery is very nice, just like Chardon, OH. You and your retreatants are in my prayers.

Deacon Larry Cummins

**Melannie Svoboda SND**  July 9, 2013 at 5:07 pm
Dear Larry, What a beautiful practice! Thank you for sharing it. I looked up Nashua, NH on my trusty atlas and found it easily. You are almost in Massachusetts, I see. I’ve been to Berakah Center once before. It is nestled in what I think of as a typical New England setting. Beautiful! Thanks again for writing! Melannie

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**Carrie Lewis**  
July 10, 2013 at 2:37 pm

I dream of universal, high quality and affordable health care for all and cures for Alzheimer’s and other dementias and mental illnesses.

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**Melannie Svoboda SND**  
July 10, 2013 at 2:52 pm

Dear Carrie, Your response is a very good addition to the wish list. Thank you for reminding us of these vital needs in our world today. Melannie

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**Sr. Jeannette Roy**  
July 14, 2013 at 5:16 pm

Dear Melanie,  
Your writers’ prayers were answered this weekend. What a gift to have spent that time with you and the other guests. God is truly gracious and kind and it is so refreshing to share in your knowledge, energy, spirit of faith and LOVE of GOD. My thoughts and prayers are with you.  
God loves you and so do I.  
Now I know where to find many thoughts for the day.  
Sr. Jeannette  
Hope and pray you had a safe trip home. Thanks again.

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**Melannie Svoboda SND**  
July 15, 2013 at 7:08 am

Dear Jeannette, I enjoyed being with you this past weekend! Yes, I had a pleasant flight back to Cleveland. Thank you for all your shared at the retreat. Melannie
I dream of a world of global collaboration and not global competition.