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The
Grace of
Beauty
ITS MYSTERY, POWER,
AND DELIGHT IN DAILY LIFE



The Grace of Beauty: Its Mystery, Power, and Delight in Daily Life

by Melannie Svoboda, SND

Week 1 -Introduction and Chapters 1-3

Check in Question: Sister Melannie begins her book by quoting Saint John of the Cross “I did not have to ask my heart what it wanted because of all desires I have known, just one did I cling to, for it was the essence of all desire: to know beauty.” In your life what do you believe is beautiful?

Opening Prayer

Beautiful God, be with us as we ponder beauty in our everyday life.

Help us to grow in our awareness of the beauty all around us: in creation, in other people, in ourselves, and in human made beauty expressed in color, line, texture, word, symbol, sound, gesture, and movement.

Help us to grow in our appreciation of beauty's mystery, power, delight, an absolute necessity for our lives.

Give us the grace to contribute our own particular beauty to this world- especially through beauty's biggest expression: selfless love. We ask these things of you, “O Beauty ever ancient, ever new.” Amen

(adapted from page 3)

Reflection questions:

The questions from Sr. Melannie are thoughtful and good. Here are some of hers, along with a few additional ones. Please pick one or two and share your thoughts aloud.

Introduction

1. What do you find most beautiful, music, food, nature, people, dance, literature, buildings, art, or something else; why?

Chapter 1: What is Beauty?

1. Have you ever had an experience where beauty was definitely in the eye of the beholder? Can you name some things that are considered beautiful by most people?
2. Recall an experience of beauty you have had Recently. What made it beautiful? What effects did this experience of beauty have on you?

Chapter 2: How Beauty Affects us

1. What kind of beauty do you pause for?
2. Have you experienced beauty's power to lift your spirits, easier stress, or be a pathway to God? If so, when and how?
3. If beauty is so important for physical and spiritual well-being, how can you inject regular doses of beauty into your everyday life?

Chapter 3: The Healing Power of Beauty

1. Do you regularly and intentionally include beauty in your life? If so, how do you do this? If not, what is hindering you from doing this?
2. How aware are you of the beauty of your place of worship? Next time you go to church, look around and notice things you would label beautiful. Are there any aspects of the worship environment that you believe distracts from the beauty?

Closing Prayer

For who and what shall we pray...

Abide by Carrie Newcomer and Parker J. Palmer

Next time *The Grace of Beauty Chapters 4-8*