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The Grace of Beauty: Its Mystery, Power, and Delight in Daily Life by Melannie Svoboda, SND

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



Week 3 -Chapters 9-13

Check in Question: After reading pages 48–49, choose one of the statements that best reflects your own understanding of beauty and our moral sense, **or** write your own sentence in a similar style that expresses how beauty shapes the way you recognize what is good and right.

Opening Prayer

Thank you, God, for Familiar things.
For all bedroom slippers, so comfy on our feet,
offering ample space for bunions and each individual toe.
Thank you for soft living room chairs,
that welcome every plop or flop of ours,
inviting us to relax awhile at the end of a long day.
Thank you, God, for our cars with their specific quirks
we are long accustomed to.
Thank you for old dogs, even after all these years,
still greet us with their tag tails wagging
as if we were someone new and fresh.

Thank you, God, for familiar scripture verses
that tell us unceasingly of your unceasing love for us,
and for the sacred rituals we partake in,
and sometimes dare to yawn or doze through.

Thank you for familiar people in our lives
who are always near or a phone call away,
until they aren't.

Thank you, God, for familiar things—
the unusual, the ordinary, the everyday—
all those things we so often take for granted
without taking the time to offer you
a good and proper “thank you.” Amen.

(adapted from page 65)

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.

Chapter 9: Can beauty help us to be Good?

1. Who or what helps you to stay in touch with your own goodness? How do you help others to stay in touch with their own goodness?
2. Identify one of your prejudices. What steps might you take to begin to “reduce” this prejudice?

Chapter 10: Reverencing the Ordinary

1. Do you usually take ordinary things for granted or do you reference and appreciate them? If possible, give a few examples of ordinary things you tend to take for granted and those you tend to reference and appreciate. What makes the difference?
2. Have you ever experienced something ordinary as luminous, that is, as dazzling and revelatory?

Chapter 11: The Beauty of Movement

1. Does the movement inherent in the cosmos influence your concept of God? If so, how? If not, why not?
2. Do you ever dance for God or with God? For example, have you ever danced your prayer?

Chapter 12: The Beauty of Familiar Things

1. Has a little child ever made you appreciate something you were taking for granted? Recall the incident and your feelings before, during, and after the incident.
2. Select something or someone you are taking for granted. Try looking deeper. Or look at this object or person as if for the first or last time. Was your attitude toward the object or person changed at all by doing this?

Chapter 13: Beauty Jesus

1. What aspect of Jesus is beauty touches you the most? Why
2. How are you trying to follow in the way of Jesus?

Closing Prayer

For whom or what shall we pray...

Room at the Table, *by Carrie Newcomer*

Next time <i>The Grace of Beauty</i> Chapter-14-18
