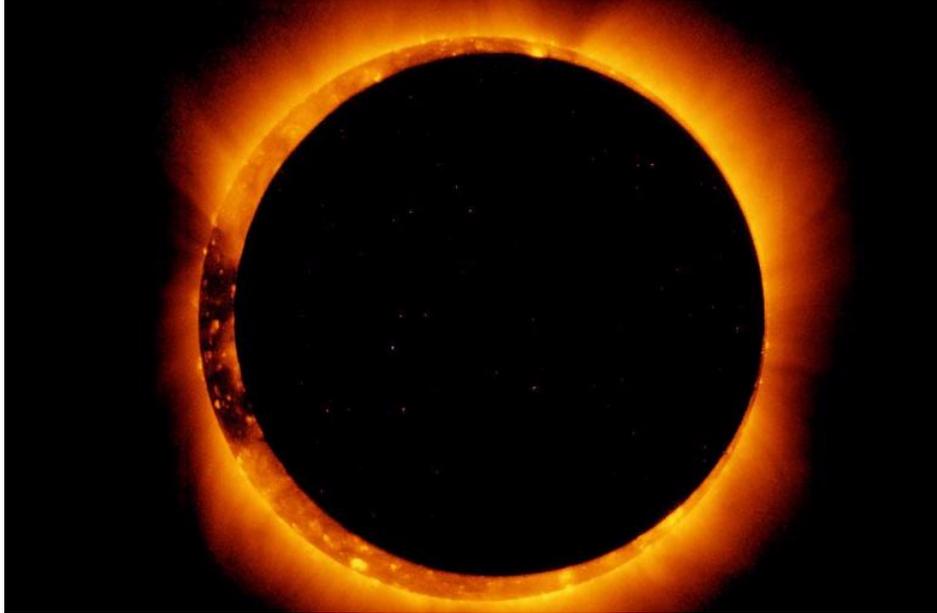


Of saints, friends, books, and what's going on in my crazy life.

Glorious Eclipse Coming!



Hello friends! Are you ready for the solar eclipse that's coming on August 21? It promises to be quite the sight. NASA is estimating that here in northern Virginia, about 81 percent of the sun will be covered. It's a good reminder that regardless of how sophisticated our human intelligence becomes that God's in charge, in this world and beyond. So be sure to get your special glasses... and revel in the mystery of His might during this once-in-a-lifetime event!

Sts. Cunegund & Henry: Of Ruling and Serving

Yes, men and women are different. But different doesn't mean incompatible. I'm sure that if you're a woman reading this little newsletter, you count at least one man--husband, father, brother, son, other relative, coworker, priest/spiritual adviser, or friend--among the people who inspire you. It was the same for female and male saints. I've written before about [Louise de Marillac and Vincent de Paul](#); [Jane Frances de Chantal and Frances de Sales](#); [Ludmila and Wenceslaus](#); [Gwladys and Gwynllyw](#); and [Darerca and Patrick](#), but for the next month or so, I'm going to focus weekly posts on what we can learn from these female/male relationships, not solely the woman's story. (Maybe I'll get brave enough to write something about Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross in less than 400 words, but that'll take some doing!)

This series will start with Cunegund and Henry II, empress and emperor of the Holy Roman Empire in the early 11th century. There are different theories on why they didn't have children; what matters to me that they stayed together, both devoted to the Lord, ruled at least somewhat wisely, and built churches and monasteries. Of course, you and I don't have to be rich or famous to work with our male friends to bring souls to the Kingdom.

To learn more about women saints and blesseds, [see the Wednesday's Woman entries in my blog.](#)



Friends in Faith: Rose Folsom



When I met Rose Folsom of the [Virtue Connection](#) last October, if I had had to use one word to describe her, it would have been perky. I mean that in the most positive sense possible. Whenever I saw her at the conference we were both attending, she was engaged with people, listening closely or talking animatedly, always with a big smile on her face. This year, Rose has joined the team organizing that conference, and between that and reading her periodic ministry messages, I'm getting to know her better. What I initially saw as perkiness I now realize is humble confidence. Her posts carry headings like "Many of Us Haven't Finished Blooming Yet. But It's OK" and "Sure I'm Unworthy-But So What?" Rose shows me that acknowledging our deficiencies doesn't have to include donning a hair shirt. It does have to include the faith that the Lord loves us despite or perhaps because of them.

Which of your friends inspires you?

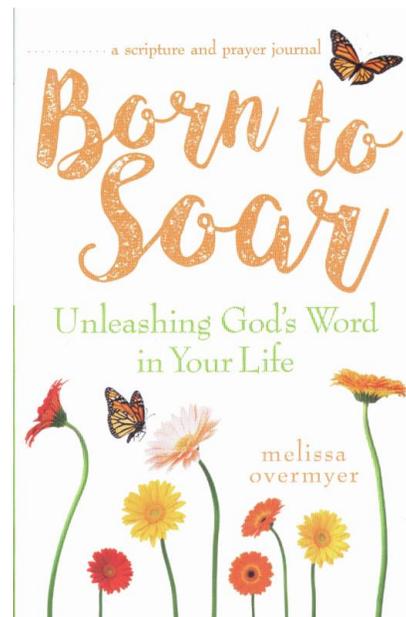
On the Nightstand: *Born to Soar*

Don't you just love it when God shows you the overlaps in your life?

A few weeks ago, I was contemplating what I was going to use for study until my parish's [Walking with Purpose](#) women's Bible study program begins again in late September. Right about then, I got an email about Melissa Overmyer's *Born to Soar: Unleashing God's Word in Your Life*. It sounded just about perfect--six weeks of lessons--so I ordered it. Shortly thereafter, I learned that Overmyer lives not far from me in the District of Columbia, and is involved in [Walking with Purpose](#) in a big way herself (to the point that WWP founder Lisa Brenninkmeyer provided a blurb for *Born to Soar*).

Even more than the overlaps, I'm looking forward to *Born to Soar's* message of allowing the Lord to transform us as He desires. Sometimes, it's hard to summon up the faith to untether ourselves from our worldly concerns and take flight. We can all use reminders of how beautiful life is when we trust Him, and do that.

What's on your nightstand?



Take Me Out to...

Fun month ahead! I'm hoping to finish revising the novel manuscript I've been working on for some time (it's about a couple, married in name only, finding their way back to each other and relationships with God). In addition, I'll be seeing several friends, local and visiting, whom I don't get to visit with in person nearly frequently enough. Two more Washington Nationals games are on the calendar, and my first-ever Washington Redskins game (pre-season). In July, I had the good fortune to be at the Nats' game where they had four home runs in a row (and went on to a 15-2 win). Here's hoping your August is similarly filled with a good blend of joy, activity, and contemplation.



May God bless you exceedingly! --Melanie

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