

7 Quick Takes Friday (or why I own a large stuffed Sprite can)

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When I made the commitment to blog about my life every day this week, I hadn't thought as far ahead as Friday. One of my favorite parts of the week is writing my 7 quick takes—when I write about 7 random things and link up to other Catholic bloggers.

But, of course, when you're writing every day about wrapping paper fundraisers and \$3.99 skeleton purchases, what enthralling items could you possibly have left for a Friday post?

Still, once I asked that question, I just had to try. I do love a challenge.

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If you have been following along on my daily posts this week, you may have wondered why I own a large stuffed Sprite can.



It's a legitimate question.

The Sprite can was a gift from my parents because of the Story of the Last Sprite. Not familiar with it? You must not be one of my parents or siblings. So here you go: Many years ago when I was about 6, my family took a trip to Boston to visit relatives. While we were there, we stopped at Louisa May Alcott's house and went to see the Concord Bridge.



Flickr Creative Commons / dbking

This was back when you air-conditioned your car by rolling down the windows, and we were all hot and thirsty. We begged my parents for a drink from the cooler, but they said there were none left.

So my father dragged four of his five sweating, whining children (and a cousin or two, I believe) into the sweltering heat to experience the history of the Shot Heard 'Round the World, while my second oldest sister, who had a headache, stayed behind with my mother. I don't remember anything about the bridge. What I recall is that when we returned to the station wagon, my sister was sitting there drinking the last Sprite.

As a child, I thought it was terribly unfair. As a mother, I have a whole new perspective on when white lies are appropriate—and that was one of those times. Still, I always told my parents that when I wrote my middle-child biography, I would

call it The Last Sprite. It quickly became a family joke, and when my mother saw the huge Sprite can, she bought it and gave it to me for Christmas one year. We have moved four times since then and always whittled down our possessions. But we've always held onto the large Sprite can—and the story.

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Am I the only mother who struggles to get her children to dress properly for the weather? If Leo had his choice, he'd wear a T-shirt and shorts every single day. He tells me that “my double-best friend” at school doesn't even own long-sleeved uniform shirts, and he speaks with pride about playing outside just in short sleeves. When we saw our pediatrician today, I tried to get his support and he said, “You're talking to the wrong guy. I grew up in the mountains. I don't wear a coat until January.” I don't think I'll be quoting him around the house.

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Among the most exciting moments this week was discovering that the Ninjago Warriors Twitter page tweeted my blog referencing Leo's joy over his new, handed-down Ninjago T-shirt.



I tried to explain this excitement to Leo and realized it was impossible. My blog is not exactly a mystery to him, but I couldn't begin to explain Twitter.

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Are you ready for Halloween?



Skeleton by Leo, almost 6

Our sons have three Halloween parties at school next week, and I'm bringing something to each one. What are the chances I'll remember to send grapes to preschool and tablecloths to kindergarten and who knows what I'm signed up to send to the after-care party?

And I still need to finish off Daniel's costume. I really think our construction worker needs a tool belt, but the tool belts I see online cost more than the rest of his costume. So I tell myself I'll make one, but I'd rather put that time into unpacking boxes from our move. Any suggestions on a quick and easy tool belt I could find or create?

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What do you give your father for his birthday? Here's what we gave my dad—our sons' Grandpa when he celebrated his birthday earlier this week:

- *A box of Raisin Bran (his favorite cereal)*
- *A case of Dr. Pepper (his favorite soda)*

- *Work gloves*
- *Batman hand towels*
- *Cobwebs to put on his bushes*
- *Halloween hand soap*
- *Wonder Woman's invisible plane toy*

It was only as my father was opening the airplane that I realized we could have given him an empty box and said it was holding Wonder Woman's plane. But the boys thought the gifts were terrific, and when their cousins called from out of town to ask about his presents, they were quite impressed.

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Last weekend John was out for a bit, and the boys were both awake. I sat down and read a book for 20 minutes. No one interrupted me. It was amazing. It hasn't happened since and it may never happen again, but it was remarkable.

Read more quick takes at Clan Donaldson's blog, where she's hosting for Jen today!