

My Father's House

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TO DREAM IMPOSSIBLE DREAMS

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TO DREAM GOD'S DREAMS

God is a giver of dreams. We read in the Acts of the Apostles that in the last days the spirit of God will be poured forth in an amazing way. Young men shall see visions and old men will dream dreams. Yes, our God wants us to dream His dream.

God's Dream

God has a dream of a world...

- where His kingdom will come and He will rule as in heaven;
- where His children will live holy and pure lives;
- where family life will be loving and strong;
- where marriages will be faithful and stable;
- where children will grow up with wisdom and grace;
- where servant leaders will be His priests and ministers;
- where health and happiness will be just the way it is.

*God's dream is for His
Children to succeed and prosper
in every way.*

We read about God's dream in *John 3:2*: "I wish above all things that you would prosper and be healthy."

Get on God's Wave Length

The key to allowing God to work in us and through us in an amazing, remarkable way is to get on God's wave length. Remember, God has a marvelous plan for your life and mine. He promised us that if we dedicated our lives totally to Him, He would

- hear and answer our prayers;
- make us His disciples;
- fill us with joy, peace and love;
- give us the ecstatic awareness that He loves us unconditionally;
- give us the ability to love others with His love;
- tell us who we are in Him;
- tell us what we are to do;

- guide us each and every step of the way;
- make us His friends who constantly hear His voice;
- make us His apostles to bring His light and gospel to the world;
- make us friends and lovers of God and of His people;
- make us fellow ambassadors of His love and forgiveness;
- make us co-heirs with Christ and the riches of His kingdom.

This is only part of God's dream for us. He is a big and wonderful God - a magnanimous Father - who desires wonderful things for His children.

Dream With Me

God invites each one of us to dream with Him; to dream impossible dreams, that is: dreams only possible with the help of the Spirit.

Five Keys to Move with God, the Dreamer

If we wish to move with God, we must seek Him first. Then His will and His Kingdom and everything else will fall in line. Jesus said, "*Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be added unto you*" (Mt 6:32).

If we seek God's glory and His will, our dreams will flow with His. There are certain keys or principles to get onto God's wave length and to flow with His dreams.

First, trust in the Lord and His will bring you into the promised land (*Ps 37:3*).

In order to move into God's promised land, his Eden, His Kingdom, we must trust in Him as a little child trusts his daddy to lead him safely and securely. God has to do the leading. Only He truly sees and knows the promised land, the way to reach it, the obstacles to be overcome, and the graces necessary. So first trust, and trust yourself into His loving care. Give to Him the first place in your life. Trust that He will lead and He will.

Second, delight in Him and He will give you the deepest desires of your heart. Christianity is, at its core, a romance. God wants us to love Him and delight in Him. As a newfound love, He calls us to delight in Him. As we do so, we begin to see what our broken hearts really want. We do not really know ourselves or our deepest desires unless God reveals them to us. As we delight in His goodness, we see that our hearts long for the good. As we delight in His integrity, we can see that our hearts long for the truth. As we delight in His love, we intuit that our hearts long for His love. As we delight in God, we spontaneously praise and worship His love and our hearts are set afire.

Third, commit. Commit yourself and everything you are and have to Him. God wants us to be totally committed to Him. He wants us to give to Him the first part of everyday, the first consideration in every decision, the first recourse of every problem. He wants us to be totally surrendered to His will. He will anoint a life totally surrendered to Him. Those who are so surrendered, He fills with His Spirit and guides them into the fullness of His Kingdom.

Fourth, listen. Spend time alone with God, listening to Him. He cannot reveal His will or His dream unless you listen. God speaks to His children all the time but they must listen. All through the Bible He is speaking to His children. Over and over and over again, "the Lord said" ... "the Lord said" ... "the Lord said"! Their prayer was meant to be, "*Speak Lord, your servant is listening.*" We cannot do the will of God and go with the flow of His dreams unless He tells us, step by step, what His will is. He cannot tell us unless we listen. That is why steps one to three are so important. I must let go of my plans to do God's plans. I must surrender my dreams to flow with God's dreams. I must commit my time, talent, treasure, intellect, will and emotions to

Him. Thus, empty of self, I must learn to be still and listen. If you really want to know what God wants you do, then you must ask Him and He will gladly respond (cf *Jas 1:5ff*).

Fifth, obey. Once God tells you what to do, do it. Obedience is the quintessential virtue. God wants obedient children. Only to the obedient can He reveal His dreams and give His Kingdom.

To listen, discern and obey is the law of the Kingdom. Jesus said, *"The wise man who built his house upon the rock is he who listens to the word of the Lord and obeys it."* God is speaking to us all the time externally and internally, but we must be still, listen, discern His voice and obey Him step by step and moment by moment.

Are You One of God's Dreamers?

God has placed within each of us a dream to do something great and wonderful for Him and for His people. We are each called to greatness. He has placed within each of us a desire to have a deep union with Him, to fulfill His will, and to bring about His Kingdom on earth. There is something that God has uniquely chosen for you to do. No one else has been chosen to do it or be it - no one except you alone. If you fail, it stays undone for all eternity. That's the hell of it. If you do it, you begin to bring heaven to earth over and over again until heaven becomes an eternity not only for you, but also for those whose lives and hearts you have touched.

God's Dream is Jesus

Jesus is the first and best fulfillment of the Father's Dream. He always and forever did the will of His Father. He made the Father's Dream present and operative in our world. He, thus, became the way to bring heaven to earth and the reality of actually accomplishing it. I am the way, the truth and the life, He said. Jesus is the dream. The more we live and move in Him, the more real the dream becomes in us.

Jesus' Dream

The dream of Jesus is that the Kingdom of His Father will come on earth as it is in heaven. His dream is to form a covenanted people who will go when he says *go* and stop when he says *stop*; a people who will think as He thinks, love as He loves and act as He acts. He desires to form a people after His own heart who will love one another with the height, depth, length of His love; a people who will listen to, discern and obey His voice.

Jesus' Dream For Me

Jesus dreams that each member of His Mystical Body - His one, holy, universal, and apostolic church - will be filled with the Holy Spirit in a unique and personal way. He inspired St. Paul to describe this dream in His church epistle to the Ephesians where Paul says:

"To me, certainly the least of all the saints, this grace has been revealed so that now through the Church the manifold wisdom of God might be known to all the principalities and powers of heaven. It is for this reason that we kneel before the Father from whom every family, both spiritual and natural, takes its name. And I pray that He will bestow upon each and every one of you gifts and graces corresponding to the richness of His glory. May Christ strengthen your inner self through faith, and may His love become the root and foundation of your whole lives. Thus, you too may be able to experience the length, and breadth and height and depth of God's marvelous love for you and at last be filled with God Himself. To our God who is infinitely greater than anything we have ever thought or dreamt, to Him be given honor and glory forever and ever. Amen."

Most Want to Be Dreamers

God has made us for something wonderful. Mother Teresa was 'something beautiful for God.' He placed a dream in your heart to think magnificent thoughts and to dream impossible dreams. Remember the song, *"To dream the impossible dream, to fight the unbeatable foe, to bear with unbearable sorrow, to run where the*

brave dare not go. To right the unrightable wrong, to love pure and chaste from afar, to strive when your arms are too weary, to reach the unreachable star. This is my quest, to follow that star no matter how hopeless, no matter how far, to fight for the right without question or pause, to be willing to march into hell for a heavenly cause. And I know, if I'll only be true to this glorious quest, that my heart will lie peaceful and calm when I'm laid to my rest. And the world will be better for this, that a man scorned and covered with scars still strove with his last ounce of courage, to reach the unreachable stars."

Each Of Us Is A Dream Walking

Some of our dreams are inspired by the Spirit, some are inspired by ego. Thus, some are great, loving and wonderful while others tend to be selfish. Most of us have both kinds of dreams. If we want to find out what God's dream is, we must ask. If we want to find the Dreamer, we have to seek. And if we want impossible doors to open, we must knock.

We limit our dreams. How do we place limits on God and paralyze our ability to dream? Let's look at several things that can stop us from dreaming.

First, a poor self-image. All of us have to deal with this and the only way we can have a good self-image is to realize that Jesus has come to live in our hearts, that He forms the very core of our beings, that in our spirits we are made into His own image and likeness, that we are temples of His glory. With these insights, we can say, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

Second, believing the worst. If we look around and see the state the world is in, we will become depressed. If we look at our own weaknesses, faults and failings, we will be distressed. But if we focus on Jesus, we will be at rest. Don't let negative brainwashing rob you of God's best for your life.

Third, past guilt. Nothing is more paralyzing than guilt because Satan, the accuser of the brethren, plays upon it. Jesus has made an easy entrance into His mercy by giving us the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Every time we go to confession, three miracles take place. First, all sin and guilt is washed away through the saving Blood of Jesus. Second, all bitterness, anger and unforgiveness is cleansed as we forgive those who hurt us. And third, we are given the awesome ability to let go of the ashes – that is, to forgive ourselves and to get on with our dreams.

Fourth, dwelling upon the circumstances. Jesus teaches us that our attitudes are far more important than our finances, our state in life, our IQ's or our circumstances. Jesus had it as tough as any of us. The legitimacy of His birth was doubted, He was a member of a minority group in an oppressed nation, He was betrayed by friends, forsaken by His followers, scourged and nailed to a tree as a common outlaw. And yet, He triumphed. He fulfilled the Father's dream of saving the world through His shed blood.

Fifth, yielding to depression. You can choose to be happy or allow sadness and despair to rule your emotions. It's a matter of choice.

Freeing the Paralyzed Mind

What's the best remedy for treating a mind paralyzed by poor self-worth, a negative attitude towards life, guilt, overwhelming circumstances, and depression? Paul wrote to Timothy, "*God has not given us the spirit of fear but of power, and of love and of a sound mind*" (2Tim 1:7). How can you free your paralyzed mind? Here are some keys.

One, believe in yourself. God has made you to be a unique and irreplaceable masterpiece, a temple of His Spirit. You are a one-of-a-kind, original creation. God made you to be great and holy. If you take a \$20 bill and crumple it, it's still worth \$20. Even if you throw it on the ground and stomp on it, it is still valued at

\$20. Satan may try to knock you down and stomp on you, but you're still valuable to God.

Two, believe that the Spirit of God is within you. Once you are baptized, you received God's Spirit, and with the Spirit of God came all the gifts of the Spirit -- wisdom and understanding for your mind; love, compassion and forgiveness for your heart; and the power to serve, heal and evangelize for your life.

Three, begin to believe that you can do all things through Christ who strengthens you, for God's Kingdom can only be lived with God's wisdom, love, power and God's Spirit. Pray often. "*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*"

Four, spend quality time alone with God, especially in praising and thanking Him. Learn to listen to His inspirations that He pours into your mind and heart. Let your prayer often be, "*Speak Lord, your servant is listening.*"

Five, turn off the bad news. Filter out radio, television and even songs that carry a pagan or worldly message. At the same time that you tune out the negative, bitter, worldly, lustful, unkind, and angry thoughts, tune into the mind of Christ by meditating on His word, especially the beatitudes (*Mt5:1-12*).

Six, go to confession frequently. Once again... every time you do, you will experience three miracles of grace. First, every bit of sin and guilt will be removed through the shed Blood of the Lamb. Second, all bitterness, anger and unforgiveness will be released as you forgive. And third, you will be given the awesome power to forgive yourself.

Seven, go to Mass and receive communion frequently. Realize that every time you receive Christ, you become more and more like Him.

Eight, strive for holiness by asking Jesus continually to empower you to think as He thinks, to love as He loves and to act as He acts.

Nine, join a prayer group, preferably a Marian or Charismatic one, for wherever two or more are gathered in His name, there is the added wisdom, love and intercessory power.

Ten, say your rosary daily. Remember to say the new Mysteries of Light on Thursday.

Eleven. Evangelize. Bring good news to others that Jesus is alive, that the Church is His Mystical Body, that we are His hands, His eyes and His feet.

Twelve. Be willing to stand up and be counted. Get involved in your community. Get involved in a soup kitchen. Bring a meal to an elderly person. Help in a youth group. Write a letter to an editor. Learn more about your faith through classes taught in area parishes and your diocese. Christ calls us to serve in His name, or as the Cursillo Movement tells us, "To bloom where we are planted."

Be a Man From LaMancha

In the musical, *Man from LaMancha* Don Quixote's impossible dream was a person, a trollop by the name of Aldonza. Men used her and abused her. But for Don Quixote, she was a most sweet, most pure, and most fair lady. He called her by a new name, Dulcinea, my sweet lady. He redefined her own self image. He affirmed her in her brokenness and called forth the divine life in her. And little by little she changed from who she thought she was to who he knew she was.

As he was dying, alone and forsaken, it was Dulcinea who came to him and told him to try to remember

*"To dream an impossible dream, to fight the unbeatable foe,
to bear with unbearable sorrow, to run where the brave dare not go.
To right the unrightable wrong, to love pure and chaste from afar,
to strive when your arms are too weary, to reach the unreachable star.
This is my quest, to follow that star, no matter how hopeless, no matter how far.
And I know if I'll only be true, to this glorious quest
that my heart will lie peaceful and calm, when I'm laid to my rest.
And the world will be better for this, that one man scorned and covered with scars
still strove with his last ounce of courage, to reach the unreachable stars."*

Called to be Giants...Other Christs Our Vocation to Greatness

Mary, Our Icon

Most people have not really reflected both on the humility and, paradoxically, the greatness of Mary, our model. She was, in and of herself, a humble maiden from nowhere - a lowly handmaiden. But God who is mighty has done great things in her by the power of His Spirit. She who was nothing was called and empowered to be the Mediatrix of all graces, the mother of all God's children. What 'amazing graces' did she respond to?

Christ, Our Light

Jesus, her Son, has chosen to give us His Spirit so that we can think, love and act like Him. What an amazing call - a call to be the greatest. Filled with the light of His Spirit, He says to each of us, "*You are the light of the world*" - not just the light of your family or your place of employment, but of the world. So a poor soldier became St. Francis for all the world. A poor peasant from Italy became St. Pio for the world. A poor Albanian nun became Mother Teresa for the world. A little French girl became St. Therese of Liseux for the world. A poor peasant carpenter became St. Joseph for the world. A poor shepherd boy became King David, and a kidnapped boy named Patrick became Ireland's greatest evangelist.

The vocation of each of us is:

- to draw close to the light
- to embrace the light
- to become the light
- and to share the light.

Nelson Mandela said in his inaugural speech:

"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that frightens us most. We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented and fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be?"

You are a child of God. Your playing small doesn't serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We were born to make manifest the glory of God within us. It is not just in some of us; it's in EVERYONE. And, as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others."

We Are Called Not to Be Small But to Be Great

Each one of us is an awesome, unique miracle and masterpiece of nature and grace; a one-of-a-kind original son or daughter of a mighty God; another Christ for all to see; a temple of God's Spirit, filled to overflowing with His gifts and grace.

"I have come to give you life... in all of its fullness," says the Lord. "The things that I have done, greater by far than these you shall do."

Our Glory Is Never Completely Suppressed

Even among prisoners, misfits, and mental patients, you will be sparks of light. The average American still believes in God and the Ten Commandments; goes to church (sometimes) and, from time to time, prays, sings Christmas carols, says "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance, and wants to be the best for their kids. But that is not enough...not nearly enough.

Christ, Mary, St. Leo, and Nelson Mandela have put the finger on something far more. We act and live the way we do because it is our light and not our darkness that frightens us most.

"But We Are Only Sinners"

Yes, that's true. We are all sinners. But we can be redeemed and filled with the Spirit of the Living God, made into new creations in Christ, called to follow Him into glory.

2 Cor 3:18

Moses, a sinner (a murderer in fact), went to the mountains to see the glory of the Lord. Twice he fasted and prayed for forty days and forty nights. The first time around, the Lord hid him in the clefts of the rock, as His glory passed by. But the second time, the Lord filled him with His glory. When he came down, his face was aglow with the glory of the Lord - so much so, that the Israelites could not bear to look at him, so shining was his face. It was like looking bare-eyed into the sun. So they had to put a veil over his face.

St. Paul, reflecting on this in 2 Corinthians, says that this veil is left over our minds and hearts until we break through and accept Jesus as Lord. St. Paul then goes on to say in one of the most magnificent verses in the Bible - remember it? it's 2 Corinthians 3:18 - that *"We with unveiled faces reflect like mirrors the brightness of the Son, who is our glory. It is the work of the Spirit to transform us from glory into glory into Him whom we reflect."*

Dream to be Great

So dream to be great. You are an impossible dream walking - called to think, love and act like Jesus. Dare to be great in a compromising, lukewarm and darkened world. Dare to be pure in a sex-saturated and pornographic culture.

Recently a group of high school youngsters from Koinonia Academy - the People of Hope's own Catholic charismatic high school in New Jersey - spoke to their Catholic peers in a regular Catholic high school in Boston. When they mentioned that they were all virgins and were determined to stay such until religious profession or marriage, many of the other girls began to cry. They had compromised their virtue and been deceived by a blatant and impure culture. Dare to be pure in marriage - in an artificial birth control and adulterous generation.

Dare to Be

Dare to be a David, who takes on the giants of money, sex and power with the stones of poverty, chastity and obedience - evangelical counsels for all of us - according to our state in life.

Dare to be civil in a vulgar world, sober in a drunken and drug-infested world, honest in a greedy world, simple in a consumerist world, disciplined in an undisciplined world, holy in a sinful world. Dare to be bold enough to pull the plug on television, telephones, computers, the cell phone, the beeper when they call you from prayer or from open, loving relationships and humble service.

Dare to feed those who are hungry for truth and love, to give drink to the spiritually thirsty, to visit the sick and imprisoned, to comfort the grieving and sorrowful, and to stand up for life and decency. Of course, dare to forgive and be forgiven. In short, dare to be great and to manifest the glory of God.

“Will it be Easy?”

In no way. It will come only if you die to self and embrace the cross. It will be a narrow road that few will travel.

God’s Way

You see, when God wants to skill a man and thrill a man and squeeze him into greatness, watch His methods, watch His ways – how He ruthlessly perfects whom He royally elects. How He places him in the furnace of temptation and challenge; how He hammers him and fashions him with hammer blows of love - ‘til his bleeding heart does shout, “God knows what He is about!”

“At the time it is administered, all discipline seems a cause for grief and not for joy, but later it brings forth the fruit of peace and holiness to those who are trained in its school,” (Heb 12:11-12).

Listen to St. Paul. *“Praise be God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who chose us in Him before the world began to be holy and blameless in his sight.”*

Pope John Paul

Pope John Paul has given us, in his two latest apostolic constitutions, eight steps to greatness.

1. He calls us to holiness, to think and love and act like Jesus.
2. He calls us to have a reciprocal conversation with the Christ who lives within us.
3. He calls us to frequent reception of the Eucharist and to Eucharistic Holy Hours so that we will be transformed into Him whom we receive.
4. He calls us to frequent Confession, so that from time to time we can leave behind not only all guilt and sin, but all anger and unforgiveness, as well.
5. He calls us to live a life by the Spirit, allowing the Spirit to guide us into all wisdom, love and holiness.
6. He calls us to frequently meditate on the *New Testament* and the *New Catechism* which is a compendium of 2000 years of Catholic wisdom tradition.
7. He calls us to evangelize, to be apostles of truth (to have Christ in our minds), of love (to have Christ in our hearts), and of action (to have Christ in our hands).
8. During this Year of the Rosary, he calls us to pray the rosary, meditating on the mysteries (now 20) of the life of Christ so that we can contemplate the life of Christ in union with Mary

YOU ARE CALLED TO GREATNESS!!

Epilogue

“Christian, recognize your dignity and, now that you share in God’s own nature, do not return to your former base condition by sinning. Remember who is your head and of whose Body you are a member. Never forget that you have been rescued from the power of darkness and brought into the light of the Kingdom of God.”

- St. Leo the Great