## Our Amazing Dreams

To ask “What is your dream?” is one of the most important questions in human life. To dream can mean to project oneself into the future, to wish for something good for oneself or for others.  Dreaming is related to being happy.

We employ art, music, films and literature to visualise and communicate the stories of dreams (think of ‘Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat’).  They attract us and touch us deeply, because dreaming is a journey of passion for the meaning of life and the deep desire to find our place in this world.

We use all kinds of media as a way of giving image and body to our dreams, and then sharing our dreams whether it be through a song, a message, photos, or even just a narrative that enthrals the listener.

At least one way of understanding the Internet is as a huge networking of expressions of people dreaming about many things.  What do people share in social media? Many things, of course, but these include things related to their dreams of loving, getting into college, getting a new friend, a new job, or travelling...

Many a human and scientific discovery has come from people’s dreams. Paul McCartney’s ‘Yesterday’, arguably one of the Beatles’ greatest hits, came to him in dream. And Einstein’s theory of relativity really came to him as a teenager. He dreamt he came upon a farm with a bunch of cows huddled behind an electric fence. When the farmer — who was at the opposite end of the field — turned the fence on, all of the cows jumped back at the same time. However, when he went to talk to the farmer, the farmer said he saw them jump away one-by-one from the fence. This dream led to his realisation that events look different depending on where you are standing, due to the amount of the time it takes light to travel.

What about dreams from a biblical and religious point of view? Biblical dreams are a dynamic of dialogue between the person and God. The knowledge gained thus becomes a path of discernment and responsibility. Joseph of the Old Testament and Joseph of the New Testament! So, we too can see the dream as a challenge, perhaps a glimpse into God’s plan for our life. But it is also good to remember that incident in the Book of Numbers:

When there are prophets among you,
 I the Lord make myself known to them in visions;
 I speak to them in dreams.
 Not so with my servant Moses;
 he is entrusted with all my house.
 With him I speak face to face (Num 12:6-8).

Don Bosco is considered the saint of many dreams.  It is not our task  here to enter into the many questions related to his dreams.  What we want to focus on is that Don Bosco followed his first significant dream to the end of his life.

Don Bosco’s dream at 9 years of age is amongst the most famous of his many dreams.  We all know this dream.  I simply  want to point out three aspects of the dream from a communication perspective.

Note how Don Bosco puts questions to the “nobly-dressed adult” who appears to him. Who you are? How can I do this?   The art of framing questions is extremely important as a way of communicating.  We can say that Don Bosco’s dreams are a veritable encyclopedia of questions. He always wanted to know the meaning of his dreams. The ‘why?’ Questions lead to pondering, discovery of meaning…

Don Bosco also shared his dreams. These  dreams were profoundly linked to his mission to others. Don Bosco dreamed with his his young people!

Of course, not all of us have such special dreams as Don Bosco had.  Yet, life is made of dreaming.

To have a dream is to have a purpose in life. But to have  a dream also means that it is not concrete yet. We don’t know for sure.  But the idea is there in the back of our mind. It is alive in our hearts.  The dream is about carrying out a purpose, a desire, a mission...

Listening to young people’s dreams is a great way of communicating. It is about helping someone to open up, to express themselves, so that the inner life can grow and create an inner network where they discover themselves, their inner source, the generator of life and of gifts.

Another aspect of Don Bosco’s dream at 9 years of age is the sense of being there for others, to educate them, to shepherd them, to create new a momentum among young people (the second part of that dream) of social sharing and fellowship.

If we go back to Jesus, we realise that his vision of the Reign of God was to reach out to people, especially the poor, the sick, the sinners, to embrace them mercifully, and give them a perspective for sharing who they were, to create a friendly environment, to share their talents and service.

The heart of the Gospel is fraternal communication.

For Jesus, communication is relationship and presence.

These two words are the heart of Don Bosco’s Preventive System.   When one is present, one knows the other better. That was God’s message to Aaron and Miriam when he said of Moses: “With him I speak face to face.” Whoever is present builds trust. Whoever is present loves and shows love.

Don Bosco was a man with a profound desire for communion and inclusion. This is why he created such an extensive network of welcome and acceptance for young people, and for caring for them.

What if Don Bosco had hidden his dreams? If he had not responded faithfully to his own most important dream?

The one who dreams, communicates! What is your amazing dream?