



**Brothers of
the Christian
Schools**

Retreat 2



DREAMER
**"Flowers sprout
from the rocks"**

(Br. Rafa Matas)

Brief introduction

– Motivation and start:

Who doesn't dream once in a while!

Dreams have always been with us. Dreaming is an experience common to all human beings. Dreams inspire, guide and speak to us. Many poets and singers draw their inspiration from dreams. The Bible and other ancient texts show us how dreams play an important role in our lives. St. Joseph's experience is also marked by dreams which, in his house, are God's mediation.

In this time of retreat let us dream. Without fear. Or, better, let us recreate and think about our dreams, those that push us to keep walking.

Before we begin our personal time, we raise our eyes to St. Joseph and proclaim together, slowly, taking what the content of the prayer may inspire us. After being proclaimed this prayer, we begin our personal time in silence.

Saint Joseph, son of the Father,
husband of the Blessed Virgin,
father and educator of Jesus in Nazareth.

We recognise in you an example of an educator,
walking with Mary,
listening to and accompanying Jesus.

We ask for your intercession as a Lasallian Family
to increase our faith
in the presence of God the Father,
who challenges us from the educational needs
of today's children, young people and adults.

At this time of pandemic
May our evangelical creativity be increased
and our fraternity be without limits,
so that humanity may see in us Lasallians,
Jesus Christ himself,
Who is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

In union with the Spirit,
who renews all things,
help us to work tirelessly
to build bonds of fraternity
among all the peoples of the earth.

We trust in your intercession,
Also, in the intercession of St. John Baptist de La Salle
and that of our Saints and Blessed Brothers,
confident that God wills everyone to be saved
and come to the knowledge of the truth. Amen.

– **Personal time:**

Indeed, poets, thinkers and singers of all times have found creative inspiration in dreaming. Sometimes dreams as desire, as nostalgic thought, as hope which, in the words of Aristotle, is the waking dream, as illusion and even as mere dreaminess. Antonio Machado, José Luis Borges... from that romantic "All I have to do is dream" by Andy Gibb and Victoria or The Everly Brothers, to "Eternal Flame" by The Bangles..., to the group ABBA with their famous "I have a dream" to the suggestive "No dejes de soñar" (Don't stop dreaming) by the Spanish Manuel Carrasco.

From Freud in his "Interpretation of Dreams" (1900) to Carl Jung in his "On the Essence of Dreams", Stephen LaBerge, Howard Rheingold, Juan Antonio López Benedí, Tenzing Wangyal Rinpoche, Dyla Tuccillo, Jared Ziezel, Norma O'Connor, Clara Tahoces... to name but a few of the many authors who have studied and published on the subject. There is a study published in 1990, entitled: "Anthropology and experience of the dreams" by Ed. Abya, based on a seminar coordinated by the French anthropologist Michel Perrin, which helps a lot to understand the meaning of dreams in Amerindian peoples such as the Dene-tha, the Beaver Indians, Sioux, Lakotas... the Otomías, the Guajiros, the Mapuche... among others; there is no society that does not conceive of a significant space for dreams.

We know that in our dreams we receive messages whose interpretation conditions us in our decision making or warns us of negative situations and can even be a place of divine manifestation. Although, as Calderón de la Barca wrote, "dreams are dreams".

And if this is so, it was also the case in Joseph's time. Of the two "Josephs". Joseph, the son of Jacob and Joseph, the father of Jesus. Both of them have dreams that disturb them, break up their daily lives and complicate them enormously. Although... as we know, sometimes what seems to be is not and what does not seem to be turns out to be. Pope Francis reminds us in *Patris corde* that flowers sprout from the rocks, and often, from apparently worthless suffering, fulfilling lives emerge. Both arrived in Egypt by different paths and experiences.

Joseph, Jacob's favourite son, and therefore envied by his brothers, almost always dreamed to the point that his brothers conspired against him: "They said to one another: "Here comes that master dreamer!

Come on, let us kill him and throw him into one of the cisterns here; we could say that a wild beast devoured him. We shall then see what comes of his dreams." (Gen 37:19-20). We know the rest of his story and how he, who was despised by his own people, was welcomed by Pharaoh precisely because of his ability to interpret dreams. Thanks to this he became prime minister and, from his position, was able to help his family in time of famine once his heart had been reconciled with all the evil he had experienced: "I am your brother Joseph, whom you once sold into Egypt. But now do not be distressed, and do not reproach yourselves for having sold me here. It was really for the sake of saving lives that God sent me here" (Gen 45,4.5). A beautiful lesson of life! In the words of Pablo Neruda, "they can cut all the flowers, but they cannot stop the spring". What might have seemed a misfortune became salvation thanks to dreams.

On the other hand, God, infinitely creative, thwarts our plans as he thwarted those of Joseph whom he chose as the husband of Mary and the first educator of Jesus because "for nothing will be impossible

for God " (Lk 1:37). Pope Francis reminds us: "As he had done with Mary, God revealed his saving plan to Joseph. He did so by using dreams, which in the Bible and among all ancient peoples, were considered a way for him to make his will known" (Patris corde, 3).

And so it was. Joseph, like Mary, was visited several times by the "angel of the Lord". In this case without mutual dialogue, because the angel's visit to Joseph finds him completely asleep, with no possibility of questioning or negotiating. According to Matthew, there are four dreams; in his first dream he understands and accepts that he cannot divorce Mary. The others are clear and concise orders: get up... flee... stay there until... set out... And only one "do not be afraid", for the others he will have to take action. Joseph will have to turn to his heart of mercy, to look with the eyes of faith and adhere to what the Lord was asking of him. It is not necessary to understand; it is all about doing and moving forward.

It is this inward look that enables Joseph to interpret the truth of his dreams and to set himself always on the way: " When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him " (Mt 1:24). At all times "God helped him by enlightening his judgment" (Patris corde 4). It is quite human that his emotional wounds would have suggested other responses, but his generous choice was always to allow himself to be moved and, overcoming any macho temptation, to walk his path of holiness from "one dream to another" or "from commitment to commitment" as our Founder would say. In this way Jesus was able to discover the greatness of service and self-giving as an unconditional response to God.

Joseph's life and his itinerant dreams are not unlike our own. He is not a saint because he is perfect but because he is able to live his dark nights from the perspective of faith, hope and love. That is why they manage to bring forth flowers from their poor soil. Didn't St John Baptist de La Salle have to live those dark nights, those deeply critical personal experiences? And what about us? They did not have to face the coronavirus, but their ability to believe, love or hope were tested. They had, and we have, to live an ongoing process of conversion in order to overcome resistance without dwelling on it.

Only one answer: "Let it be done", "I adore". And mine? Let us not forget, "God would not have given you the ability to dream without also giving you the possibility of turning your dreams into reality", in the words of the Mexican writer and former Lasallian student, Héctor Tassinari.

And, as a gift, I leave you this poem by Mario Benedetti for you to enjoy and let your spirit fly in search of...

Bring dreams to life

Give life to the dreams that feed the soul,
never confuse them with vain realities.
And even if your mind feels the human need
to achieve goals and climb mountains,
never break your dreams, because you kill the soul.
Give life to your dreams even if people call you crazy,
don't let them die of boredom, little by little,
don't break their wings, which are made of fantasy,
and let them fly with you in company.
Give life to your dreams and, with them flying,
you will touch the stars and the wind, whispering,
will tell you secrets that it has kept for you and you
will feel the body with caresses, bathed,
of the soul that wakes up to be by your side.
Give life to the dreams you have hidden, you

will discover that you can live these moments with
your eyes open and your fears asleep,
with your eyes closed and your dreams awake.

Time to share

- Start:

- a) Taking up the poem by Mario Benedetti, we invite each person to read aloud a word, phrase... that has touched them most. It doesn't matter if they are repeated.
 - b) Once this moment is over, we invite you to write on a piece of paper (previously prepared) a synthesis of what you have felt, thought or prayed during your personal time. Please write clearly and without signing it. Once written, it is placed on a table in the centre. Afterwards, each person takes one of the sheets of paper and reads it slowly out loud.
 - c) After the reading of all the sheets of paper and an appropriate moment of silence, the participants are invited to participate in the form of thanksgiving.
 - d) Finally, we conclude by listening to a song that invites us to dream. Each animator, in the language known to all, will have selected a song and may even provide the lyrics.
- (For the Spanish language, we suggest the song "No dejes de soñar" by Manuel Carrasco).

