

We all have dreams.  
Some occur when we are asleep.

You know them.  
Those wacky dreams caused by pizza or chili...  
Or by stress at home  
or by anxiety at work.

Most of us wake up  
and remember  
"Ah yes these aren't real."  
Sometimes we're thankful for that.

But did you know God has a dream too.  
I like to use the term God's dream  
Or vision instead of God's kingdom.

Somehow, the term dream seems more appropriate to me  
to someone who is invisible,  
and created all that is,  
seen and unseen.

There are two differences between God's dreams and ours.

First, God's dream is real.

Unlike the dreams that come from our subconscious mind,  
the dream that comes from God's mind  
is incredibly real,  
more real than anything we could imagine  
or build  
or hope for.

God's dream, is universal love,  
universal compassion,  
not limited to a few people or a few places or a few times,  
but love spread throughout the entire creation  
like God,  
God's self.  
Everywhere,  
Every when.

We get tiny glimpses of that,  
Sometimes in our dreams,  
sometimes in a romance,  
sometimes in our service to others and in our work for justice.

Dr. Martin Luther King Junior summed up that dream

in his famous I have a dream speech –

He proclaimed

**“I have a dream that my four little children  
will one day live in a nation  
where they will not be judged by the color of their skin,  
but by the content of their character.**

That Dream still lives

And it is much larger than simply relations  
between African-Americans and Caucasians.

It involves the whole world becoming and being Beloved community,  
Living God’s dream of universal Love.

*It’s a global vision*

*in which all people can share in the wealth of the earth.*

*In the Beloved Community,*

*poverty, hunger and homelessness will not be tolerated  
because international standards of human decency will not allow it.  
Racism and all forms of discrimination, bigotry and prejudice  
will be replaced by an all-inclusive spirit  
of sisterhood and brotherhood.*

Today, All Saints Sunday,

we celebrate the vast totality of that dream.

On All Saints Sunday we remember those who have gone before us,  
these whom we have loved and those who have loved us.

In that celebration

we also celebrate the fact that  
God’s dream lives on.

Today, All Saints,

it’s not just the day when we lift the quarterbacks on God’s team  
to our shoulders and carry them across the field of life.  
Although we do that.

Today is about the dream of UNIVERSAL compassion,  
love in with and through all people,  
not just a chosen few.

Here are a few examples.

St Nicholas of Myra-

More commonly known these days

As jolly old St Nick

Or Santa Claus.

He was a Bishop in fourth century Asia Minor,  
Present day Turkey.

His primary claim to fame was not in giving away  
Toys and presents to children  
But his remarkable generosity to the poor.

Here's another one-  
Very familiar to most of us,  
St Francis of Assisi.

He was so filled with love for all creation  
That he preached to the birds  
And called the sun brother  
And the moon his sister.

He was the original poster child  
For earth awareness and ecology.

He knew the universality of love-  
That it doesn't simply exist in human hearts  
But in all of our relationships with the entire creation.

There are others not so famous  
Whose pictures you have placed here.  
They too are living pictures of God's love.

And then there is my father.  
When he died last Thanksgiving week,  
he was 91 years old.

He had learned a long, active, and service filled life.  
He and my mom, and my stepmom,  
worked and served in the community  
and traveled around the world.

But for the last eight years or so of his life  
my dad's world had shrunken.

Alzheimer's disease, had gradually taken away his capacity  
to relate, communicate,  
move, and finally live.

In a very real way, his death was a mercy.

The last few years of his life

taught me a valuable lesson,  
about the value of people in the persistence of compassion.

Even when the lights go out,  
even as we walk off the stage of life,  
in our darkest moments,  
there is still God's Dream ,  
there is still compassion.

Today  
whether your loved ones' pictures and names are seen or spoken within these walls are not,

All Saints bids us remember them all in compassion.

Within the next week or so,  
you will be receiving a letter from St. John's leadership,  
asking you to re-commit your time and your treasure  
to Saint John's Episcopal Church for the coming year.

I can think of a lot of really great causes out there.

It is a great joy of my ministry among you  
to celebrate the work you all do  
and the money you give all through our community,  
not just here at St. John's.

However,  
at this time  
in this place  
in this month of November,  
in the dying of the year  
while we remember those who have passed,  
we are going to be asking you  
to commit yourself anew to God's dream,  
to that life of compassion  
which we are celebrating this morning.

It's not about the size of the check you're writing,  
it's not about an electronic funds transfer,  
nor is it just about the many hours  
you spend here and elsewhere-volunteering.

It's really about the larger dream of compassion,  
God's dream.  
May it be our dream  
and may it become our reality evermore.  
Amen.

