



Dreaming With Your Eyes Wide Open

by Vicky Otto, *Precious Blood Companions* Director

Anyone who knows me is aware that I love musicals. It doesn't matter if they are old or new, I love them all. Recently I saw the movie musical "The Greatest Showman." There was a line in one of the songs that struck me. As P.T. Barnum begins to gather people for his circus he offers them this challenge, "... And you know, you can't go back again to the world that you were living in 'cause you're dreaming with your eyes wide open." As spring begins and we start the great celebration of Easter, it feels to me like we are crawling out from under our blankets where we have been all winter. We can begin to embrace the

world around us, see anew the world around us, and dream about all the possibilities available as we look to the future.

Over the last few years, the Companion Retreats have truly challenged Companions to reflect upon their own ministry and most especially their relationship with the Missionaries of the Precious Blood. Last year, Fr. Ben Berinti challenged the Companions to reflect upon what it means for them to be part of an apostolic society. He encouraged all the Companions

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to reflect and discern what their own apostolic works would be. This year, Fr. Joe Nassal challenged the Companions who participated in the days of reflection or retreats that were held across the country to begin to discern what it means to be a new creation.

At each retreat and day of reflection we listened to the song, “I Am for You” by Rory Cooney. The theme for the retreat and its message was clearly seen in one of the lines of the song, “There is a world that waits in the womb; There is a hope unborn God is bearing.” The Companions reflected about what it means to be part of God’s dream—especially if they were willing to serve the new life that waits in the womb. Recognizing that this new creation is something that God is bearing and that we are needed to make this new creation a reality allowed the Companions to begin to comprehend that the new creation was not something they are supposed to watch the community do. Rather, each of them is called to participate in making the new creation a reality. The sentiment in the song gave all those who participated a fresh idea of what “new creation” means. Opening up this dimension for the Companions sparked new energy and creativity regarding the role of the Companions in the new creation of the community. During each of these special times the energy in the room was palpable as participants began to dream about the new things that they would like to see Companions accomplish, and how they saw God’s dream being born anew in them as individuals and in our community.

The message of both these retreats continues to resonate with Companions, especially as the community explores the possibilities of what it means to be a new creation. Companions across the country are discerning and dreaming about the possibilities that may become reality. Companions continue to treasure the relationships that they have with the community and hope that the new creation allows everyone to deepen these relationships. They also dream of the possibility of working hand to hand with members in different apostolates around the country. They look forward to building a new creation where everyone’s gifts and talents are freely used for the benefit of all. The words of the song that I quoted at the beginning of this article are coming to life. Companions honor and respect all those that came before them in the Companion movement and

are grateful for all that they gave to the community, yet they have no desire to stay in the same place they were twenty-five years ago when Companions began in the community. The Companions of today eagerly await and look forward to greater opportunities to stand up, step out and speak clearly about the gift of Precious Blood spirituality.

Sometimes dreamers have a bad reputation in society. “You’ve got your head in the clouds.” “You need to be more realistic.” Yet dreamers, like prophets, help us see a vision of a new creation. Harriet Tubman wrote, “Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world.” May this time of our new creation allow each of us to utilize all our passions and patience to truly “dream with our eyes wide open.” ✠