



**A Sermon preached in Christ Church, Grosse Pointe, Michigan  
by The Reverend Andrew Van Culin, *Rector***

**The 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter (Year C)  
08 May 2022**

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for by His great mercy we have been born anew to a living hope, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Amen.*

I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages. Long before a mother births a new child into the world, before the new burgeoning life squirms within her creative womb, I suspect even before the potential of life is conceived within her, many mothers have begun to dream. It was certainly true in our home.

Long before Sam and before Catherine were born into our hearts and lives, Jessica and I were filled with dreams, dreams for each of them, individually. Dreams, also, for us as parents. Dreams, also, for us as a new family together. Those dreams are still with us, some happily fulfilled. Over the years, a few have been gently laid, some with relief, others with sadness, to the side. And some, of course, are still calling out to us, even today. While I suspect that there are common themes among the dreams of mothers for their children, the dreams of every mother are uniquely her own. But the dreaming itself is a very natural, dare I even say human, thing it would seem. It seems that dreaming is not only a natural element of our humanity, but even more, a natural expression of our love. For we do not commonly dream for all people.

We do, however, commonly dream for those for whom we love. We dream for our sons and daughters. We dream for our spouses and partners and dearest friends. And as we grow and mature, we begin to dream even for our parents. At our best, we may dream for our community or even our nation, but always for those whom we love in some real way. And the dreams we harbor for our loves are always profoundly for their good. They are dreams about happiness and joy. They are dreams about peace and stability and safety. They are dreams about love and passion and fulfillment. Of course, it's not only mothers who dream for their children, but parents and spouses dreaming for one another, and



children for their parents and their friends. But what is common among all these dreams is the good that they hope for another and the love from which they spring.

What may come as a surprise, though hopefully not a large one, is that God, too, dreams. And God dreams for you, individually and passionately and for us, collectively, as a human people. In today's lesson, from the book of Revelation, we are reminded of God's dream for all people. I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count from every family, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages. One of the most ancient dreams we are reminded of, one of the most ancient dreams of God told here in Scripture and throughout all of Scripture is God's dream for God's kingdom.

As Chuck Winder reminded us about two years ago in our first series of Sacred Conversations, God dreams for God's kingdom. God dreams of a human society made up, not of one bland community, but of a great multitude from all nations and tribes and languages. God's dream is not for a homogenous society, but for a rich tapestry of diverse identities and cultures, each bringing a treasure trove of unique gifts to the people. This diverse kingdom, however, is marked by another dream woven within it, a kingdom in which hunger and thirst will be unknown.

Among the most profound and common dreams we harbor for those whom we love is simple security and safety. Every mother, every parent, I suspect, dreams first for a child's simple security, that her child will be filled, not gluttonously, but sufficiently, so that she will know hunger and thirst no more. So it is with God's dream for us, that we, individually, and we, collectively, will know the sufficiency of life together, that we will know hunger and fear and thirst no more. This has ever been God's dream for people, for humanity, for society, that we will come together in our diversity and fulfill the needs that we harbor together. This is an expression of God's love for you and for all people.

The question for us is, "When will we harbor that same love and longing for one another and not just for our children? When will we come to see one another as gifts to one another, not resources for one another?" We know what it is to dream for those whom we love. God, today, places or reminds us of God's dream for us, as well. We are invited to participate in that dream and to work for that kingdom. Amen.