What Is Your Dream?

Today I read for ReadAloud in my first grade class as Gerrardstown Elementary School. One of the books I read was called *She Persisted* by Chelsea Clinton and illustrated by Alexandra Boiger. It describes the challenges some women have faced reaching their dreams. Women like Harriet Tubman, Helen Keller, Clara Lemlich, Nellie Bly, Virginia Apgar, Maria Tallchief, Claudette Colvin, Ruby Bridges, Margaret Chase Smith, Sally Ride, Florence Griffith Joyner, Oprah Winfrey, Sonia Sotomayor. They all had obstacles which they overcame to succeed.

I asked the children if they had dreams. Hands shot in the air. Some had tangible dreams…I want to be an astronaut, a lumberjack, a ballerina or to work at Quad Graphics or they dreamed of places they wanted to go…Space, California, Texas. But others were less tangible…I want to be a princess, I want to be rich, I want to own a fancy car. We talked for a minute or two about how we need dreams but we also need them to be tangible – so we can find out what we need to do to reach them. And all these dreams require hard work, just like the women in the book had to work toward their dreams.

What are our dreams? Do we still have dreams even if we have lived for awhile? I think we can dream at any age and achieve them if we realize like the women in the book did, all dreams take effort and many times even hard work. But if it’s what we really want to do or be or where we want to go, we won’t mind the work!

A couple weeks ago I visited Walt Disney World in FL. the place, their motto reads, where dreams come true. I became intrigued by Walt Disney who was the founder and for whom the park is named. One of his famous quotes is “If you can dream it, you can do it.” But Disney had more to say about dreams. He also said, “All our dreams can come true, if we have the courage to pursue them.” “The way to get started is to quit talking and start doing.” And “It's kind of fun to do the impossible.”

If you read about Walt Disney’s life you find he was named after his parents’ pastor but his father was rather abusive and Disney quit high school to try and join the military. When he was rejected by the military, he joined the Red Cross and drove an ambulance. Everything he did not come easily to him. He worked very hard, went bankrupt at one point and had people he thought were his partners take advantage of him. But he never gave up his dream. He and his brother Roy kept creating and working and what started with only a few cartoon movies became a huge motion picture, theme park company that now has parks all over the world.

Our dreams don’t have to be limited to what is offered at Walt Disney World. God offers us dreams through God’s Holy Spirit. “Then afterward I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even on the male and female slaves, in those days, I will pour out my spirit.” (Joel 2:28-29 NRS) God sent dreams to Jacob, Joseph and even to the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar. God then gave Daniel the ability to interpret his dreams. God sent a dream at night to Joseph, Jesus’ father telling him to take Mary and Jesus to Egypt.

Let’s not be afraid to dream dreams and pursue them. But let us also ask God if our dreams are the dreams God has for us. When we are dreaming what God has in mind, then we will find our dreams are God’s dreams and really do come true! But not just because we wished for them but because “it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.” (Phil. 2:13 NRS)