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## perfume beauty 40 Dreams Of Saint John Bosco Part 18

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Dream 18: Innocence Preserved By Penance Persons and Places In the month of July, 1884, Don Bosco had a dream which lasted all the night. He seemed to have in front of him an immense and beautiful slope, green with vegetation, all smooth and even. On the lower border, this meadow ended in a low step from which one could enter the path where Don Bosco was standing. It seemed an earthly paradise, brilliantly illuminated by a light purer and brighter than the light of the sun. This slope was all covered with tender fresh grass, decked with a thousand kinds of flowers and shaded by a great many beautiful trees which, intertwining their branches, stretched out like so many large festoons. In the middle of the garden, reaching to the edges of it, was stretched out a carpet of magic colour, which though was not bright, dazzled the sight; it was several miles wide and looked royally magnificent. By way of ornament, on the band which ran along the border, there were various inscriptions in letters of gold. On one side it read: *Beati immaculati in via, qui ambulat in lege Domini* - Blessed are they who pass through life's journey unstained, who follow the law of the Lord. On the other side it read: *Non privabit bonis eos qui ambulat in innocentia* - To innocent lives He will never refuse His bounty. On the third side was written: *Non confundentur in tempore malo; in diebus famis saturabuntur* - They will not be dismayed by adversity; in time of famine they will be well content. On the fourth side: *Novit Dominus dies immaculatum et hereditas eorum in aeternum* - Jealously the Lord watches over the lives of the guiltless: they will hold their lands forever. On the corners of the carpet, around a large, magnificent rose, were four other inscriptions: *Cum simplicibus sermocinato eius* - He will protect them that walk in simplicity. *Qui ambulat simpliciter ambulat confidenter* - They that walk sincerely walk confidently. *Voluntas eius in iis qui simpliciter ambulat* - He will be in them that walk sincerely. Then in the middle of the carpet was written this last one: *Qui ambulat simpliciter salvus erit* - He that walketh sincerely shall be saved. In the middle of the slope, on the higher side of the brilliant carpet, there stood a shining banner on which was written in letters of gold: *Fili tu semper mecum es, omnia mea tua sunt* - Son, thou art always with me, and all I have is thine. If Don Bosco had marveled at the sight of this garden, his attention was even more attracted by two beautiful maidens about twelve years of age who were sitting on the edge of the carpet where the slope ended in a step. The whole of their gracious behavior breathed a heavenly modesty. In their eyes ever turned upwards, there was not only an ingenuous dove like simplicity, but there shone forth an ardour of the purest love and a joy of heavenly bliss. Their foreheads, open and serene, seemed to be the seat of candor and sincerity; on their lips played a sweet and charming smile. Their features revealed tender and loving hearts. The graceful movement of their person gave them an air of sovereign dignity and nobility, which contrasted with their youth. A pure white robe reached to their feet, and on it neither stain nor crease was to be seen, nor the slightest speck of dust. They were girt about with a bright red sash, fringed with gold. On this sash there shone out a garland of flowers composed of lilies, violets and roses. As a necklace they wore a similar garland, composed of the same flowers, but of a different shape. On their wrists they wore bracelets of white daisies. All these things and flowers had a shape, colour and beauty impossible to describe. All the most precious stones in the world, though cut with the most exquisite skill, would seem but mud in comparison. Their white shoes were embroidered with white ribbon interwoven with gold and making a beautiful bow in the center. White, with little threads of gold, were also the laces with which they were tied. Their long hair was fastened by a crown, which encircled their foreheads, and it was so thick that it curled wave like from under the crown and fell down on their shoulders. Praises Of Purity They had begun a dialogue: Now they would speak by turns; now they would ask each other questions and would utter exclamations. Now they would both be sitting down; now one would remain seated while the other would stand, and sometimes they would walk to and fro. But they never went outside that shining carpet, and touched neither the grass or the flowers. In his dream Don Bosco was a spectator. He did not say a word to those maidens, nor did they notice his presence. One said to the other in a very sweet voice: What is innocence? The happy state of sanctifying grace preserved by means of the constant and exact observance of the divine law. And the preserved purity of innocence is the fountain and source of all knowledge and virtue. The first: What a brilliance, what a glory, what splendor of virtue to live among the wicked and yet to preserve the purity of innocence and the integrity of morals! The second rose to her feet and, stopping near her companion, exclaimed: Happy is that youth who does not listen to the counsels of the wicked and does not tread the way of sinners, but whose delight is in the law of God, on which he meditates day and night. He shall be as the tree planted near the running waters of God's grace, which will give in its time copious fruit of good works; in spite of the blowing of the winds, the leaves of good intentions and of merits shall not fall from him, and all that he does shall have good results. Every circumstance of his life co-operates in increasing his reward. So saying, she pointed to the tree of the garden loaded with beautiful fruits, which spread a delicious perfume on the air, while crystal clear booklets were flowing now between two flower covered banks, now falling in little cascades, and now forming small pools, washing around the trunks of the trees with a murmur like the mysterious sound of far off music. The first maiden replied: He is like a lily among thorns, which the Lord culls in his garden to make it an ornament over His heart, and he can say to his Lord, 'My beloved to me and I to Him, for He feeds among lilies,' So saying, she pointed to a great number of beautiful lilies, which raised their snow-white cups among the grass and the other flowers, while in the distance, a very high green hedge surrounded the whole garden. This hedge was made of close set thorns, and behind it one could see loathsome monsters wandering about like ghosts, trying to get into the garden, but they were prevented by the thorns of the hedge. That is right! What truth there is in your words! added the second. Happy the youth who will be found without faults! Who is he and we will praise him? For he has done great things in his life; he has been tried and found perfect, and he shall have glory everlasting. He could of sinned and he did not sin; he could do evil things and has not done them. Therefore are his goods established in the Lord, and all the Church of the Saints shall declare his good works. And what glory God has set apart for them on earth! He will call them: He will give them a place in His Sanctuary as Ministers of His Mysteries, and He will give them an eternal name, which will never perish, concluded the

first. The second rose to her feet and exclaimed: Who can describe the beauty of an innocent soul? Such a soul is splendidly robed like one of us, adorned with the white stole of Baptism. His neck and arms are resplendent with divine jewels; he has on his finger the ring of union with God. He walks lightly on his way to eternity; moreover, there stretches out before him a road adorned with stars.... A living tabernacle of the Holy Ghost, with the Blood of Jesus in his veins, colouring his cheeks and his lips; with the most Holy Trinity in his unspotted heart, he sheds around torrents of light, which clothe him with the brilliance of the sun; a shower of flowers rains down from on high and fills the air. Wafted all round are sweet strains of music of Angels, echoing his prayer. Mary Most Holy stands beside him, ready to defend him. Heaven is open to him. He is a charming sight to the immense legion of Saints and blessed spirits, who receive and welcome him. God, in the unapproachable splendor of His glory, points out with His right hand the throne He has prepared for him, while in His left hand He holds the shining crown which is to adorn him forever. The innocent is the desire, the joy, the applause of Paradise. His face is adorned with the ineffable joy. He is God's son; he has God for a Father and Paradise for his inheritance. He is continually with God; he sees Him, loves Him; he possesses and enjoys Him; he has a ray of the delights of Heaven: he is in possession of all His gifts and of His perfections. That is why innocence in the Saints of the Old Testament, in the Saints of the New Testament and especially in the Martyrs so glorious! O Innocence, how beautiful you are! When tempted, you increase in perfection; when humbled you rise more sublime; in the combat you come forth victorious; and in death you fly to your crown. In slavery you are free; in dangers you are tranquil and safe; in chains you are happy. The powerful bow down to you; the rulers welcome you; and the great seek you. The good obey you; the wicked envy you; your rivals emulate you; your adversaries succumb to you. Should men unjustly condemn you, you will always come out victorious. The Delicacy of Chastity. The Misfortunes of Him Who Loses It. The two maidens paused an instant, as if to regain breath after such an ardent exertion, and then they took hold of each other by the hand and, continued: Oh, if the young knew what precious treasure innocence is, how jealously they would guard the stole of Holy Baptism right from the beginning of their life! But unfortunately they do not reflect, and they do not imagine what it means to stain it! Innocence is a most precious liquor, but it is enclosed in a vessel of frail clay. Innocence is a very precious gem, but its value is not known; it is lost and easily exchanged for a worthless object. Innocence is a golden mirror which reflects the image of God. But a breath of damp air is enough to dim it, and one must keep it covered with a veil. Innocence is a lily. But the mere touch of a rough hand spoils it. Innocence is a white robe: *Omni tempore sint vestimenta tua candida* - 'Let your garments be glittering white at all times'. But one single stain is enough to soil it; therefore, one must walk with great precaution. Innocence is integrity; it is lost if it is spoiled by a single sin, and it loses the treasure of its beauty. Just one mortal sin is sufficient, and once it is lost, it is lost forever. What a pity that every day so many lose their innocence! When a boy falls into sin, Paradise is closed; the Most Holy Virgin and his Angel Guardian Angel disappear; the music ceases; the light is put out; God is no longer in his heart; the starry road which he had trodden vanishes; he falls and remains on one point like an island in the middle of the sea, a sea of fire, which extends to the furthest horizon of eternity and goes down to the depths of chaos. Above his head, in the darkened sky, the lightning of the Divine Justice flashes threatenly. Satan has rushed upon him and loaded him with chains, has placed his foot upon his neck, and raising his horrible ugly snout, has cried out: 'I have conquered! Your son is my slave; he belongs to you no more!' Joy is over for him. If, at that moment, the justice of God takes away that one point which supports him, he is lost forever. He can rise again! God's mercy is infinite. A good Confession will give back the grace of God and the title of son of God. But no more innocence! And what consequences of the first sin will remain in him! He knows evil, which he did not know before; he will feel how terrible are his base inclinations; he will feel the enormous debt which he has contracted with the Divine Justice; in spiritual combats he will be weaker. He will experience what he never experienced before; namely, shame, sadness and remorse. And to think that before it was said of him: 'Suffer little children to come unto Me. They will be as the Angels of God in Heaven....' 'Son give Me thy heart....' Woe To Those Who Give Scandal! Oh, what a frightful crime is committed by those wretches through whose fault a child loses its innocence! Jesus has said: 'He that shall scandalize one of these little ones that believe in me, it would be better for him that a millstone should be hanged about his neck and that she should be drowned in the depths of the sea'. 'Woe to the world because of scandals!' 'It is not possible to avoid scandals; but woe to him through whose fault the scandal comes...' 'See that you despise not any of these little ones, for I say to you that their Angels in Heaven always see the face of My Father, who is in Heaven, and they demand vengeance'. Unfortunate is the scandal giver, but not less unhappy are those who allow themselves to be robbed of their innocence! Means For Preserving Innocence. Here both maidens began to walk about. The subject of their conversation was concerning the best means for preserving innocence. One of them said A great mistake which boys make is that of thinking that penance must be practiced by sinners only. Penance is necessary also in order to preserve innocence. If St. Aloysius had not done penance, he would certainly have fallen into mortal sin. This should be continually preached, inculcated and taught to children. How many more would preserve their innocence, while at present they are so few! The Apostle says that we must carry everywhere with us the mortification of Jesus Christ in our bodies, that also the life of Jesus may be manifest in us. And Jesus, the Holy, the Immaculate One, passed His life in privations and sufferings. So did Mary Most Holy; so did all the Saints. It was to give an example to all youths, St. Paul says: 'If you live according to the flesh, you shall die; but if according to the spirit, you shall give the death blow to the inclinations of the flesh, you shall live'. Therefore, without penance, innocence cannot be preserved. And yet many would like to preserve their innocence and live a free and easy life... Fools! Is it not written, 'He was taken away, that wickedness might not contaminate his spirit, nor seduction lead his mind into error? Because the charm of vanity does not bring any good, and the whirl pool of concupiscence drowns the innocent soul. So the innocent have two enemies: 1) the false maxims and bad conversations of the wicked, and 2) concupiscence. Does not the Lord say that death at an early age is a reward for the innocent, to take him away from the combats? 'Because he pleased the Lord, he was beloved, and because he was living among sinners, he was taken away. Being made perfect in a short space, he

fulfilled a long time. For his soul pleased God; therefore He hastened to bring him out of the midst of iniquities. He was taken lest wickedness should alter his understanding or deceit beguile his soul.' (Wis. 4:10-14). Happy those children who will embrace the cross of penance and with a firm resolution will say with Job: Donec deficiam, non recedam ab innocentia mea - 'Till I die, I will not depart from my innocence.' Hence mortification in overcoming weariness in prayer. It is written: Psallam et accipietis. Pater Noster! - 'I will understand in the unspotted way. When shalt thou come? Ask and you shall receive. Our Father!' Mortification of the intellect by humbling oneself: Obeying the Superiors and the rules. It is also written: Si mei non fuerint dominati tunc immaculatus erro et emundabor a delicto maximo - 'If they shall no dominion over me, then shall I be without spot.' (Ps. 18.14). And this sinful dominion is pride. 'God resisteth the proud and giveth His grace to the humble'; 'He that humbles himself shall be exalted, and he that exalteth himself shall be humbled! Obey your Superiors . Mortification in telling the truth always, in revealing one's defects and the dangers in which one may find oneself. Then one will always have suitable advice, especially from one's confessor. Pro anima tua non confundaris dicere verum - 'For the love of your soul do not be ashamed to tell the truth'. For there is a blush which brings sin with it, and there is a blush which brings glory and grace. Mortification of the heart, checking its thoughtless movements, loving all for God's love, tearing oneself resolutely from anyone we perceive to be endangering our innocence. Jesus said: 'If thy hand and foot scandalize thee, cut them off and cast them from thee. It is better for thee to enter into life having one foot or one hand missing, than with both hands and both feet to be cast into everlasting fire.' Mortification in supporting courageously and frankly the mockery of human respect: Exacerunt ut gladium linguas suas; intenderunt arcum, rem amaram, ut sagittent in occultum immaculatum - They have whetted their tongues like a sword; they have bent their bow, a bitter thing, to shoot in secret the undefiled' . This human respect, which mocks while fearing to be discovered by the Superiors, will be conquered by thinking of the terrible words of Jesus Christ; 'He who is ashamed of Me and My words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him, when He shall come in His majesty....' Mortification of the eyes, in looks, in reading, shunning bad and unsuitable literature. An essential point: 'I have made a contract with my eyes never to look at a maiden.' And in the Psalms: 'Turn away thine eyes that they see not vanity' . Mortification of the hearing, never listening to bad, imprudent or impious conversations. In Ecclesiasticus we read: Sepiaures tuas spinis, linuam nequam noli audire - 'Put a hedge of thorns around thine ears and do not listen to the wicked tongue.' Mortification in speech, not allowing oneself to be overcome by curiosity . It is also written: 'Put a door and bolt to your mouth. Take care not to sin with the tongue, so that you may not fall to the ground at the sight of the enemies who oppose you and that your fall be not incurable and mortal.' Mortification in eating and drinking, neither eating nor drinking too much. Too much eating and drinking drew down the universal flood upon the earth, and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, and a thousand chastisements on the Hebrews . In short, to mortify oneself in all that happens throughout the day; cold and heat, and never seeking our personal satisfaction: 'Mortify your earthly limbs.' Remember what Jesus has commanded: Si quis vult post me venire, abneget semetipsum, tollat crucem suam, et sequatur me' - If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross, and follow Me . Holy Communion: Devotion To Mary God Himself, with His provident hand, girds His innocents with crosses and thorns, as He did with Job, Joseph, Tobias and other Saints. Quia acceptus eras Deo, neccessesse fuit ut tentatio probaret te - Because thou wast acceptable to God, it was necessary that temptation should try thee' . The way of the innocent has its trials and sacrifices, but it has its strength in Holy Communion, because he who communicates frequently has eternal life: he is in Jesus, and Jesus is in him. He who lives the same life as Jesus will be raised up by Him at the last day. This is the wheat of the elect, and the wine which produces virgins. Parasti in conspectu tuo mensam adversus eos qui tribulant me. Cadent a latere tuo mille, et decem milia a dexteris tuis: ad te autem non appropinquabunt - 'Thou hast prepared a table before thee, against them that afflict me. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but they will not come nigh to thee.' And the Virgin most sweet, beloved by him, is a Mother to him. Ego mater pulchrae dilectionis et timoris et agnitionis et sanctae spei. In me gratia omnis viae et veritatis; in me omnis spes vitae et virtutis. Ego diligentes me diligo. Qui elucidant me vitam aeternam habebunt. Terribilis ut castrorum acies ordinata - 'I am the mother of fair love and of fear and of knowledge, and of holy hope. In me is all the grace of the way and of the truth, in me is all hope of life and of virtue. I love them that love me. They that shall explain me shall have life everlasting. Terrible as an army set in array.' The two maidens then turned around and went slowly up the slope; and one of them exclaimed: The safety of the just comes from the Lord and He is their protector in the time of tribulation. The Lord will help them and set them free; He will take them out of the hand of sinners and will save them, because they have hoped in Him. God girded me with strength, continued the other, and made spotless the path which I tread . When the two maidens reached the middle of the magnificent carpet, they turned around. Yes, cried one, innocence crowned with penance is the queen of virtues . And the other explained: How glorious and beautiful is the chaste generation! Its memory is immortal and known both to God and men. People imitate it when it is present, and wish for it when it has departed for Heaven, triumphantly crowned in eternity, having won the reward of its chaste combats. And what a triumph, what a joy to present immaculate to God the stole of Holy Baptism, after so many combats, amidst the applauses, the hymns and the splendor of the heavenly hosts! While they were thus speaking of the reward which is prepared for innocence preserved by penance, Don Bosco saw bands of Angels appear, descending on the shining white carpet and joining the two maidens, who always remained in the center. They were a great multitude, and they sang: Benedictus Deus et Pater Domini Nostri Jesu Christi QUI BENEDICIT NOS... in ipso ante mundi constitutionem ut essemus sancti et immaculati in conspectu ejus in caritate, Christum - Blessed be God and the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us.... in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and unspotted in His sight in charity, who hath predestinated us unto adoption of children through Jesus Christ. The Cantic Of Innocence The two maidens then began to sing an amazing hymn, with such words and notes as only those Angels, who were nearest to the center could make. The others also sang, but Don Bosco could not hear their voices, although they were making gestures and moving their lips and shaping their mouths as if singing. The maidens sang: Me propter

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innocentiam suscepisti et confirmasti me in conspectu tuo in aeternum. Benedictus Deus a saeculo. Fiat! Fiat! Thou hast upheld me by reason of my innocence and hast established me in Thy sight forever. Blessed be God from eternity to eternity. So be it! So be it! Meanwhile, the first band Angels was being joined by others in ever-increasing numbers; their dress had a charming variety of colors and ornaments, each one different from the others, especially from those of the maidens. But the richness and magnificence was divine. The beauty of each one of them was such that no human mind can imagine even the shadow of it; the whole spectacle of this scene cannot be described; but by adding words to words, it is possible in some way to give at least an imperfect idea of it. When the maidens had stopped singing, the whole company was heard to raise together an immense canticle, so harmonious that its equal was never heard on earth, nor will ever be heard. They sang: Ei qui potest vos conservare sine peccato et constituere ante conspectum gloriae suae immaculatos in exultatione, in adventu Domini Nostri Jesu Christi: soli Deo Salvatori Nostri per Jesum Christum Dominum nostrum, gloria et magnificentia, imperium et potestas ante omne saeculum et nunc et in omnia saecula saeculorum. Amen. To Him who is able to preserve you without sin and to present you spotless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy in the coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ: to the Only God, Our Saviour, through Jesus Christ Our Lord, be glory and magnificence, empire and power, before all ages, and now, and for all ages. Amen. While they were singing, more and more Angels were continually joining them, and when the canticle was finished, little by little they all rose on high and disappeared; thus vanished the whole vision.

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