

### Tenth Set - 5. It is never too late

Visiting retirement and nursing homes in and around the parish . . . is a most enriching experience. What I like most of all is listening to the stories of those elderly people about the important moments of their lives. Suddenly, during a fairly routine conversation with someone who may seem to be nodding off, a gem of memory will emerge like a pearl from an oyster. 'Oh yes, didn't you know? I was a famous ballet-dancer. I travelled the world. My toes are all twisted now from it but, in my day, I was the best.'

Or, as on another day, an eighty-year old man shyly uncovered a collection of his rally-driving trophies. 'We were competitive, but we were friends.. It was the hardest life. There was less glamour about racing cars in those days. But winning was wonderful.'

There are many more accounts of magic moments and magic lives, dreams that came true and dreams that were denied. Some stories are true; some are fantasies. (In a sense, does it really matter?)

The mystics say that God dreams a dream in all of us when we're born. God hopes that one day our lives will fulfil that dream. Most of us lose the dream as we get older, or someone steals it from us. That is why we cry – when we see the distance between the dream we were born with and what we have turned out to be.

'Life breaks everyone,' wrote Ernest Hemingway, 'and some people grow at the broken places.' But not all people do. It is so sad to see the bitterness, the fretfulness and the emptiness of so many elderly people. The hurts of life, the wounds of failure, the pain of rejection, the bad memories of our past lives – all of these can destroy the soul.

The followers of Jesus say, that even though, for whatever reason, God's dream may seem to have died within us, it is never completely lost. It can always be regained. New life can be breathed into it. At any age our inner divinity can shine through. Is there a secret dream in your heart today – a dream you have kept hidden even from yourself? Is there any REAL reason for not taking the risk to pursue that dream? The alternative is to do nothing and so to miss something beautiful happening in your life. We find it so hard to believe that with God's power everything is possible. Some people dare to believe it and their lives are changed forever. And your age has nothing to do with it. Your holy and beautiful heart is always young. It will not mislead you. Listen to it. (Already Within)