

Selection of texts

Thoughts

Blessed madness for Christ, which turns tears into pearls and makes un love the Christ.

Oh, Blessed Jesus, when will this farce end! When will the day come in which we can leave this body with all its defects and ills, when we can leave the world with all its deceptions.

Let us not live for what is external, where all is vanity and sooner or later passes; les us be quickened to live in Christ, and in Him only.

Believe me, if it's possible to enjoy anything in this life, it's to know oneself to be loved of Christ.

Ah, Lord, how long must I remain here, seeking and searching for You, and calling out for You, my heart knowing no rest or tranquillity, conscious of the wretchedness that prevents us from enjoying You once and for all time.

Lord, the heart asks for love, asks that You take it once and for all, and expand it, or that You stop it. Lord, this isn't life is in You, and at times I see You so far off. Ah, my Lord an my Got!

We must take for our pattern Jesus, who while He was being crucified asked forgiveness for His enemies. We, o the other hand, miserable sinners, feed hurt when we're humiliated, and give way to tears when we're affronted, whereas it should be the reverse - we should feel pleased when someone with, or with- out reason, scourges or wounds us.

The world can't understand either, the necessity of madness for him who loves Christ. The madness - yes, there's no other word- of the Cross which makes the soul act beyond the bounds of mere reason.

When He has all the Brothers gathered together, there, at the invocation of a man He comes down from Heaven, and so that our human nature may not be over-awed, appears under the species of bread and wine for us to adore Him.

The miseries and the weaknesses offered to Jesus by a heart truly filled with love, are accepted by Him as though they were virtues.

Blessed Jesus, how shall I express to You, oh Lord, the great tenderness which my soul feels at the sweetness of Your love? What have I done, my Got, that You should treat me thus? As quickly as my soul is overwhelmed by profound bitterness, it is filled with exultant rejoicing in thinking of You and of what You have promised me at the end of the journey.

What have I done, Lord? Today in Holy Communion I have felt the consolation of knowing myself to be near. You, when everything seems to have abandoned me. I have wanted, Lord, to engrave in my heart these words which I say every day: "Lord, do not let me be parted from You".

Embracing Thy Cross I entered the Chapterhouse; at the foot of Thy Cross I drew the sustenance necessary for my weak nature, at the foot of Thy bloodstained Cross I found the comfort for writing these lines.

How difficult it is to explain why one embraces suffering with joy! But I think it is made clear by the fact that it is not so much suffering in itself, as in Christ, and he who loves Christ loves His Cross.

And I don't know to express this, though I understand it. I love Jesus so much that I want nothing I outside Him. And I realize that Jesus loves me so much that I would die of sorrow if I thought that I loved anyone more than Him. I feel so united to His will that when I suffer I cease to do so in realizing that He wants it thus.

Ah, Lord Jesus, how I love You! Were I to have a thousand lives, a thousand I would give You. With Your divine grace and the help of Mary I can do it all. May You be blest.

True humiliation is our inability to receive God *elsewhere*; it has to be here, within our wretchedness, in our soul which is subject, to this matter which drags us down when the eyelids heavy with sleep want to close.

Jesus is in the Tabernacle, there He receives His friends, consoles, heals and forgives them. How great is the intimacy of Jesus with those who sorrow!

Everywhere on earth there is strife, but there is this difference among the combatants: the triumphs of those who while fighting are united with the Tabernacle, will only be seen in Heaven.

In La Trapa, the thing which is accounted of least regard is La Trapa and the Trappists. The first the only thing, is a Tabernacle in which is concealed the greatness and the immensity of God.

Let us hide ourselves with Jesus in the Mystery of the Sacrament; may live with our hearts united with the Tabernacle. May your life be a continued act of love for Jesus.

There are a multitude of Tabernacles all round the world, but only one God; who is Jesus in the most holy Sacrament, Jesus the true comforter, who unites the monk in his choir, the missionary, in pagan lands, the layman in his parish, regardless of distance, age. At the foot of the Tabernacle we are all united by God, let us ask Him through the meditation of Mary that one for love of man, conceals Himself under the species of bread and wine. I would like to make reparation for the forsaken Tabernacle.

If this God who veils Himself in a little piece of bread weren't so forsaken, men would be happier, but they don't want that.

Around the Tabernacle all the activity of the Cistercian monastery turns.

The sorrows and the tears which overwhelm me for him, have turned into peace and calm, for I have the Lord; let me live united His Tabernacle, picking up the crumbs of the convent, and I happy, happy in my "nothingness", and in my all, which is Jesus.

Jesus offers me Himself in the Tabernacle, where He stays day and night entirely to listen to what I may ask, to attend to my soul that it may be sustained in my monastic life through the channel of Communion; He hearkens to me in the silence of my heart.

God became man, and not content with that, veils Himself in the humility of a Tabernacle that He may be our comfort in our life on earth.

My window doesn't give on to the sea, nor on to a valley or a hill; from it I view neither seas of clouds nor sunsets. From in I see some yellow stores next to some ties and worm-

eaten wood, the holy Ark of God. The apse, Romanesque, whose architecture doesn't interest me, as I see in it only the rough stone shaped by men, fro -let the sea marvel, the mountains of the earth tremble, and you, worlds turning in space, stay your course- those yellow stones and those Castillian tiles, are the house of God!

I see other things from my window... I don't know... it doesn't matter to me. There are trees grass, and one can see the sky, and a village... what does it matter! From my window to the Sanctuary it is only a few yards, and in that distance a few crumbling stores catch the sun. What other view could I wish for? What in all the world could give me more pleasure and contentment to my soul?

In the moments which I spend looking across from my window I see more grandeur in God in the sublime mystery of His dwelling among men, than in all the works which come from their hands and are exhibited in the world.

How great is God! How infinite is His wisdom. How well His great glory ordains events for all time. He doesn't need to take me through the world and show me His wonders in order that my poor soul shall sink herself in her "nothingness" and adore Him in His all-powerful Majesty.

He doesn't need my freedom nor my health, nor my praises in contemplating the works of His hands; He is satisfied with the profound wonder inspired in me at the sight of His Sanctuary humbly hidden among the stones of earth and the clay of men.

My window doesn't give on the sea; from it I see none of earth's grandeurs, nor is my soul presented with landscapes which set it dreaming. I have neither horizons nor awesome depths. I am not so insensate as to want to enjoy the dreams of men - what I used to call my ardent longings for freedom. God is just, God is thrice-Holy; God the Infinite wants me here in tranquillity, sick, in silence, rejoicing in my solitude, looking out of my windows. God clipped my wings... I cannot fly!

After a meal I may rise from the table, and like a mortal man, wretched, and a creature of the flesh, go bewailing the affliction of my illness at the foot of the Tabernacle. Ah! if I were an angel I wouldn't shed tears over this, but I'm a man, and there are few like me, God knows. Help me, Lord, give heed to me when I am tempted; do not leave me, Lord, for I am alone. What am I to do?

How happy I am in the midst of my sorrows and sacrifices, how fortunate in being able to be a soul that suffers for Jesus, able to lay my fervent longings, my desires, my weaknesses as well, at the foot of the Tabernacle.

From "My notebooks"

Just God and I

La Trapa, January 4, 1937

Silence on the lips, song in the heart. A soul which lives in love, dreams and hopes, a soul which lives in God, which looks into the distance, very far from the world, spending life in silence, singing in the heart.

La Trapa... a Monastery... men... Only God and I!

The days pass quickly, and with them goes life; we dream of the past, waiting for what is to come. The soul searches far off for the only life, which she discerns in a sea of hopes, and which she expects may be better.

A Trappist Monastery, songs to God. What do the names matter? Fog or sun? What do the things around us matter? All is nothing, and what is nothing isn't worth our attention.

The soul seeks for what she doesn't find here; she seeks on high her longings for God, and when she receives the rays of light Christ sends her, of what account are men, darkness or daylight?

And she sing in silence, whispering of love, and looks for her consolation in the serene peace, the quiet and the calm of the one who expects nothing, and passes her life without looking at the world which doesn't know what prayer is.

The days pass tranquilly in the sweet calm of love that waits. The soul realizes that nothing in the world can satisfy her; the earth is of clay, men are of small, frail and perishable, and the soul longs to find herself in Heaven, looking at the Virgin, gazing on God.

Monastery of men, home for a day. Penitent monks, birds of passage who sing as they fly; flowers and thorns, tears and crosses, winds and frost, hymns of joy, moments of anguish, bells, incense, all that vibrates, all that encircles the soul in life -all is the flower of a day which now has its prime and then is over. Nothing interests her that is not Christ, nothing stirs her that is not God, and she hides deep her longings, sorrows, crosses, her love.

Now she is weary of everything, she does not seek in men what they can never give her; neither skies nor earth, men nor beasts, nor the world, which is mortal dust, exist for her.

The soul has only one concern which fills her whole life, a great longing for Heaven, and a God to give Him adoration.

In the monastery the days pass, what does it matter?

Only God and I!

I'm still living in the world surrounded by men. What does that matter? Only God and I. And in looking at the world I don't see grandeurs, or wretchedness, or haze; I don't notice the sun, the whole world is reduced to a point. In that point is a Monastery, and in that Monastery, only God and I!

Translated by Mairin Mitchell. London, 1964.