



ANNIVERSARI
TERESIANI
2023-2025

**Reading the writings of Therese of the Child Jesus
Teresian Anniversaries 2023-2025
2025: Prayers and other writings**



Text 3:
Abandonment is the delicious fruit of love
(Poem 52)

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Abandonment is the delicious fruit of love (Poem 52)

Suggestion for the community meeting:

1. Read the text together
2. One of those present, having prepared a contribution in advance, discusses the text using the commentary (and other aids, if necessary).
3. Community dialogue on the text.

It would be helpful to have made individual readings and reflections on Therese's text before the community meeting.

Abandonment is the delicious fruit of love

J M. J T.
31st May 1897

1. There is on this earth
A marvelous tree
Its root, O mystery!
Is in Heaven....

2. Never under its shade
Can anything hurt,
There without fear of the storm
We can rest.

3. Of this Ineffable Tree
Love is the name,
And its delectable fruit
Is called Abandonment.

4. This fruit from this life
gives me happiness
My soul is happy
By its divine smell.

5. This fruit when I touch it
Seems like a treasure to me
Bringing it to my mouth
It is even sweeter to me.

6. It gives me in this world
An ocean of peace
In this deep peace
I rest forever...

7. Only Surrender Delivers Me
In your arms, oh Jesus
It is he who makes me live
Of the lives of the elect.

8. To you I surrender myself
O my Divine Spouse
And I am not ambitious
But for your gaze so sweet.

9. I want to smile at you
falling asleep on your heart
I want to say it again
How I love you, Lord!

10. Like the daisy
With the vermilion chalice
Me little flower
I open myself to the sun.

11. My Sweet Sun of Life
O my Loving King
It is your Divine Host
Little like me...

12. Of his Celestial Flame
The bright ray
Gives birth in my soul
To the perfect Surrender.

13. All Creatures
can leave me
I will know without complaint
Near you I can do without.

14. What If You Leave Me
O my divine treasure
Deprived of your caresses
I want to smile still.

15. In Peace I Will await
Sweet Jesus, your return
And never suspend
My songs of love.

16. No, nothing worries me
Nothing can trouble me
Higher than the lark
My soul knows how to fly.

17. Above the Clouds
The sky is always blue
We touch the shores
Where the Good Lord reigns.

18. I Await in Peace the glory
of that heavenly abode
Because I find in the Ciborium
The sweet Fruit of Love!

Introduction to the Text

This poem dates from May 31st, 1897, and unlike the preceding one (Text 2 – Poem 17), was requested explicitly by Sister Therese of Saint Augustine. It was she who had forced Therese's hand to her first composition in 1893 (Poem 1 : *The Divine Dew or The Virginal Milk of Mary*). As virtuous as she was rigid, this sister had made the vow of abandonment to God's good pleasure.

In the first three stanzas, we find the symbol of the tree, which is rare for Therese. For her, it never evokes the cross of Jesus, as is usual in Christian literature. Here it is both the Paradise of *Genesis* and *Song of Songs*.

In Stanzas 4, 5 and 6, the delectable fruit is the antithesis of that in Genesis. One can touch it without fear and eat of it, it will not bring the disorder of sin and death, but rather an 'ocean of peace' and 'from this life gives me happiness'.

Stanzas 7, 8 and 9 bring us into the abandonment of love. Abandonment here is delicious, its force and authenticity come from the fact that it is combined with passive abandonment and relinquishment.

Stanzas 10, 11 and 12 show us the Eucharist as the source of abandonment.

Stanzas 13, 14 and 15 connect abandonment and relinquishment, a theme begun a few stanzas earlier. Therese discreetly alludes to her spiritual trial.

The poem concludes with stanzas 16, 17 and 18, with the victorious liberty of love. The same day, Mother Agnes cites stanza 17 and speaks of a 'more powerful attraction to Heaven' (*Letter of correspondents of Therese*, LC 182).

For community discussion:

1. *What is the text saying?* Understanding the content and initial meaning of Therese's text.
2. *What does the text say to us today?* Discern the present-day relevance (social, ecclesial, spiritual. . .) of the text.
3. *What does the text say to me/us?* Consider the personal and community relevance of the text.

The purpose of this process is to allow Therese to speak to us herself, to question and encourage us, and to open us up to her clarifying and confirming our own personal and community path. The questions suggested are only indicative, and could perhaps be used in individual meditation and community sharing.

Questions:

1. This poem, one of Therese's last, has 18 stanzas. One way to structure this poem is to divide it into 6 parts, each with 3 stanzas: what title could I give to each part?
2. What are the principal effects of Abandonment for Therese?
3. This poem evokes in many ways the Mystery of the Eucharist: how does Therese understand this Mystery? What essential fruit does it produce in her life? What is our own relationship to the Eucharist, could we join with Therese in this?
4. This poem by Therese could be seen as a spiritual testament, where she deepens the meaning of true abandonment. See Letters 226, 258 and 263 from the same period. '*Perfect abandonment, that's my only law*' (Poem 32). How do we experience this abandonment? How can we describe it? Does this impulse occupy a central place in our spiritual life and our apostolic activities?



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