

# Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee

Bernard of Clairvaux, 12th Century (Jesu dulcis memoria)

translated from Latin by  
Edward Caswall, Lyra Catholica, 1849

Jesus, the very thought of Thee  
With sweetness fills the breast;  
But sweeter far Thy face to see,  
And in Thy presence rest.

Nor voice can sing, nor heart can frame,  
Nor can the memory find  
A sweeter sound than Thy blest Name,  
O Savior of mankind!

O hope of every contrite heart,  
O joy of all the meek,  
To those who fall, how kind Thou art!  
How good to those who seek!

But what to those who find? Ah, this  
Nor tongue nor pen can show;  
The love of Jesus, what it is,  
None but His loved ones know.

Jesus, our only joy be Thou  
As Thou our prize will be;  
Jesus be Thou our glory now,  
And through eternity.

O Jesus, King most wonderful  
Thou Conqueror renowned,  
Thou sweetness most ineffable  
In Whom all joys are found!

When once Thou visitest the heart,  
Then truth begins to shine,  
Then earthly vanities depart,  
Then kindles love divine.

O Jesus, light of all below,

Thou fount of living fire,  
Surpassing all the joys we know,  
And all we can desire.

Jesus, may all confess Thy Name,  
Thy wondrous love adore,  
And, seeking Thee, themselves inflame  
To seek Thee more and more.

Thee, Jesus, may our voices bless,  
Thee may we love alone,  
And ever in our lives express  
The image of Thine own.

O Jesus, Thou the beauty art  
Of angel worlds above;  
Thy Name is music to the heart,  
Inflaming it with love.

Celestial Sweetness unalloyed,  
Who eat Thee hunger still;  
Who drink of Thee still feel a void  
Which only Thou canst fill.

O most sweet Jesus, hear the sighs  
Which unto Thee we send;  
To Thee our inmost spirit cries;  
To Thee our prayers ascend.

Abide with us, and let Thy light  
Shine, Lord, on every heart;  
Dispel the darkness of our night;  
And joy to all impart.

Jesus, our love and joy to Thee,  
The virgin's holy Son,  
All might and praise and glory be,  
While endless ages run.

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translated from Latin by  
John H. Neale (1818-1866)

Jesu! the very thought is sweet!  
In that dear Name all heart-joys meet;  
But sweeter than the honey far  
The glimpses of His presence are.

No word is sung more sweet than this:  
No name is heard more full of bliss;  
No thought brings sweeter comfort nigh,  
Than Jesus, Son of God most high.

Jesu! the hope of souls forlorn!  
How good to them for sin that that mourn!  
To them that seek Thee, O how kind!  
But what art Thou to them that find?

Jesu, Thou sweetness, pure and blest,  
Truth's Fountain, Light of souls distressed,  
Surpassing all that heart requires,  
Exceeding all that soul desires!

No tongue of mortal can express,  
No letters write His blessedness,  
Alone who hath Thee in his heart  
Knows, love of Jesus! what Thou art.

O Jesu! King of wondrous might!  
O Victor, glorious from the fight!  
Sweetness that may not be expressed,  
And altogether loveliest!

Remain with us, O Lord, today!  
In every heart Thy grace display;  
That now the shades of night are fled,  
On Thee our spirits may be fed.

All honor, laud and glory be,  
O Jesu, virgin-born, to Thee!  
All glory, as is ever meet,  
To Father and to Paraclete.

