

## Alone – You Are Not”

This is not a quote from Yoda. It is a simple statement concerning the nature of our existence. The fullness of existence is *only* found in communion, a mutual indwelling in which our lives are known and experienced not just in their self-contained form, but in their relation to others and everything around us. True existence is a connected-ness. It is also the very place where the instability and fragility of our lives is most revealed. If we can withdraw into ourselves, it is possible to imagine that we are fine, and that the things and people around us are just noise, sometimes enjoyable and other times annoying. But we do not think of the things and people around us as if our lives depended on them.

Against this withdrawal are the words of St. Silouan: “My brother is my life.”

At the very core of Christian belief is the Trinitarian God. Trinity is not just a revelation of how we speak about God. It is also the revelation of the very character of existence. The monotheism of Islam substituted God as individual for God as Trinity. As such, it might be the first modern religion. That many modern Christians struggle with Trinitarian belief and expression is evidence of how far removed modernity is from classical Christian roots. For us, “relationship” is a word that describes how we are getting along with another individual. For the Fathers, “relation” is an expression of mutual indwelling and coinherence. This exists because that exists, and they exist in one another. That is the true meaning of relationship.

When Christ says, “No one comes to the Father except by me,” modern Christians take it to mean that non-Christians go to hell. It is, in fact, a statement about the nature of Trinitarian existence. No one can come to the Father apart from Christ because there is no Father apart from Christ. The Son is “Son,” because of the “Father.” But the “Father” is not “Father,” except for the “Son” (and so on).

This is true of God but is equally true of us. The limit within human existence is that we experience our *personal* existence as *individual* existence – or the temptation to do so is always present. It assumes that who we are only refers to what is within the boundaries of our skin.

A meditation: The breath we breathe. Is it part of us or is it something else? We cannot live without it. When we take it in or breathe it out, it is “our” breath. The only human existence without breath is a lifeless corpse. God “breathed” into the dust and it became a living soul. But the “breath” is also inherently the air around us. When does the air around us become “us,” and when does it cease to be “us”? Of course, this is just a meditation on breath and air. But the same meditation could be extended to everything else around us. It could and should be extended to every person around us. If there were no relationships whatsoever, we simply would not exist. There is nothing within us that isn’t something existing in relationship. Nothing.

We do not *create* relationships, nor do we *have* them. We *are* relationships and we either perceive this and pay attention or we do not. Inasmuch as we do not, we begin moving towards non-existence – death. This is not a description of massive and universal extraversion. It is possible to be very quiet, even a hermit, and yet be profoundly aware and responsive to our existence as relationship.

The Scriptures say that “God is love.” They do not say that God simply “has” love. God “is” love, which makes love a matter of ontology. That God is love is perfectly consistent with His existence as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. What we do not see clearly is that we are love, just as truly as God is love. Love is a mode of existence, indeed, *the* mode of existence.

“My brother is my life.” Consider the fullness of such a statement in Christ’s words, “I have come that they might have life and that more abundantly.”

*I will add a note of apology and explanation. I have previously written [articles](#) that criticize the use of the word “relationship,” and, yet, here I am using it myself. The earlier articles stand, but I am here seeking to recapture the word “relationship” and use it in its older, theological meaning. Despite that vast vocabulary of English (the largest language in existence), words still create limits. I hope the reader will understand and be patient with me. By Fr. Stephen Freeman*

## UPCOMING SERVICES AND EVENTS

**Today – Annual Meeting - CGS for children**

**Thurs.-Sat. November 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> – Fr. Daniel , Mat. Gail and Dr. Katya Hill will travel to present at the OCAMPR (Orthodox Christian Association of Medicine Psychology and Religion) Conference in Somerset NJ – This years theme "Compliance and Resistance: Discerning the Spirit". The Team will be presenting on the topic of how do we meet the needs of those who cannot speak, and provide them with the tools and training to help these members of our Body. Fr. Joseph Gall will be joining us as co-presenter with Dr. Hill and Fr. Daniel. Please pray for their travels and the wisdom of the Spirit.**

**Thursday, November 15<sup>th</sup> - Orthodoxy On Tap- Voodoo Brewery Meadville, PA 7pm**

**Saturday, Nov. 17<sup>th</sup> - Parish Ministry Meeting - 10-12noon**

**FEAST DAY - Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple:  
Tuesday, November 20<sup>th</sup> – Great Vespers with Lytia – 6pm  
Wednesday, November 21<sup>st</sup> – Divine Liturgy - 9:30am**

**Friday, November 30<sup>th</sup> - Missions Team Meeting**

**Sunday Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup> – St. Nic Party**

**Sunday, December 9<sup>th</sup> – Bake Sale**

**Sunday, December 16<sup>th</sup> – CGS Nativity Party**

# Saints Peter and Paul Orthodox Church

25636 N. Mosiertown Rd Crossingville, PA 1641

Archpriest Fr. Daniel Mathewson – *Rector*

V. Rev. David Smoley – *Retired*

**Lord’s Day – 11-4-2018** Parish phone: 814-734-3801

Find us on the Web at: [www.orthodoxcrossingville.org](http://www.orthodoxcrossingville.org)

or on Face book: Saints Peter and Paul Orthodox Church Crossingville

## GLORY TO JESUS CHRIST! GLORY FOREVER!

**23rd SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 6. Synaxis of the Holy Unmercenaries. Ven. Joannicius the Great (846). Hieromartyrs Nicander, Bishop of Myra, and Hermas, Presbyter (1st c.). Ven. Merkúry, Faster, of the Kiev Caves (Far Caves—14th c.). Ven. Nikander, Abbot of Gorodénsk (Novgorod—16th c.).**

**PLEASE INCLUDE THESE OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN YOUR DAILY PRAYERS:** Those in need –Fr. Andrew, Fr. David, Fr. Anthony, Mat. Gail, Mat. Donna, Mat. Pirsilla, Pearl, William, Karen, John, Mary, Stavros, Theona, Ann, Timothy, Theresa, Judy, Genevieve, Delani, Jeremiah, LiamThe Homebound..., Tanya, Richard, Helen, Ruth, Josephine, William, Claudia... Travelers. ...Rachockis Newly Illumined Charlotte Catechumens –Grace and Christian ...Our Missionaries Abroad...Fr. David and Mt. Rozanne, Military servers...Greg ...Newly Departed – Marilyn Filipos, Irene Hoovler, Catherine Kirzmanich John B., John S., ...Departed Orthodox Nickoli Emelianow Ann, Katherine, Vernon, Paul, James, Andrew, Peter, Paul, Margaret, Michael Mary Ann, Timothy... Special requests... Anthony, Ian, Paul, Daleen, Penni, James, Sean, Liam, Susan, James, Joel, Jen, Roger, Jasmine, Cassandra, Raquel, Zera Kim, Jim, Margaret, Loren, Nick, ....

**Today’s Hymns    Tone 5    Troparion    (*Resurrection*)**

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word, co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, born for our salvation from the Virgin; for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh, to endure death, and to raise the dead// by His glorious Resurrection.

**Tone 4    Troparion    (*Martyrs Terence and Neonila*)**

Thy holy martyrs Terence, Neonila, and their children, O Lord, through their suffering have received incorruptible crowns from Thee, our God.

For having Thy strength, they laid low their adversaries, and shattered the powerless boldness of demons.// Through their intercessions save our souls!

**Tone 8 Troparion** (Venerable Stephen)

Champion of Orthodoxy, teacher of purity and of true worship, enlightener of the universe and the adornment of hierarchs: all-wise Father Stephen, thy teachings have gleamed with light upon all things.//

Intercede before Christ God to save our souls!

**Tone 5 Kontakion** (Resurrection)

Thou didst descend into hell, O my Savior, shattering its gates as Almighty, resurrecting the dead as Creator, and destroying the sting of death. Thou hast delivered Adam from the curse, O Lover of man,// and we cry to Thee: O Lord, save us!

**Tone 4 Kontakion** (Venerable Stephen)

Thou didst plant a garden of the virtues, most glorious one, and didst water it with the streams of thy tears. Since thou hast received the tree of life, O Stephen, save thy flock from corruption by thy prayers! Deliver from all evil, all of those who fervently honor thee, O wise one, for we have acquired thee as a great intercessor through faith and love!

**Tone 5 Prokeimenon**  
Thou, O Lord, shalt protect us and preserve us from this generation forever. (Ps 11/12:7)

*v: Save me, O Lord, for there is no longer any that is godly! (Ps 11/12:1)*

**Tone 5**  
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

*v: I will sing of Thy mercies, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim Thy truth from generation to generation. (Ps 88/89:1)*

*v: For Thou hast said: "Mercy will be established forever; My truth will be prepared in the heavens." (Ps 88/89:2)*

*Today's Scripture Readings:*

**1 Corinthians 12:27-13:8 (Epistle, Unmercenaries)**

Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually. And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way. Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing. Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away.

**Ephesians 2:4-10 (Epistle)**

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

**Matthew 10:1, 5-8 (Gospel, Unmercenaries)**

And when He had called His twelve disciples to Him, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease. These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: "Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.

**Luke 8:41-56 (Gospel)**

And behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue. And he fell down at Jesus' feet and begged Him to come to his house, for he had an only daughter about twelve years of age, and she was dying. But as He went, the multitudes thronged Him. Now a woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any, came from behind and touched the border of His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped. And Jesus said, "Who touched Me?" When all denied it, Peter and those with him said, "Master, the multitudes throng and press You, and You say, 'Who touched Me?'" But Jesus said, "Somebody touched Me, for I perceived power going out from Me." Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him, she declared to Him in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately. And He said to her, "Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has made you well. Go in peace." While He was still speaking, someone came from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, "Your daughter is dead. Do not trouble the Teacher." But when Jesus heard it, He answered him, saying, "Do not be afraid; only believe, and she will be made well." When He came into the house, He permitted no one to go in except Peter, James, and John, and the father and mother of the girl. Now all wept and mourned for her; but He said, "Do not weep; she is not dead, but sleeping." And they ridiculed Him, knowing that she was dead. But He put them all outside, took her by the hand and called, saying, "Little girl, arise." Then her spirit returned, and she arose immediately. And He commanded that she be given something to eat. And her parents were astonished, but He charged them to tell no one what had happened.

