

My self is an Other (Chrysostomos Stamoulis)

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[Previous Publication: <http://pemptousia.com/2016/04/give-to-your-brother-and-to-the-stranger-the-refugees-and-the-orthodox-church/>]

My dear friends,

Thus spake, in a little book entitled *A Collection of Thoughts*, Kiki Dimoula, an outstanding poet to whom the Department of Theology at the Aristotle University in Thessaloniki had the pleasure and honour last year to award an honorary degree. Exquisite words, threatening our certainty, which is linked to our everyday routine and everything that surrounds and shapes that, while ignoring the fact that this everyday life is not always connected to the mystery of our immediacy. In other words, with that reality which recognizes that 'one thing is needful'. And, in the Orthodox tradition, that thing is none other than an encounter with the person of the incarnate Word, Christ.



This is a statement which demonstrates from afar the *defeat* of our modernist reality- ecclesiastical and other- which, it appears, is confined within absolute internality and introversion, incapable of understanding that our destination, the final destination of our existence is not the enclosed and auto-erotic self, but the person of the Other. 'My self is an Other', confesses Nikos Gavriil Pentzikis, the prose punner, in his wonderful book *Towards Church Attendance*, and it may be here, in this poetic transposition/extension of the Biblical truth, that

the meaning of things is concealed. It may be that herein also lies the answer, of a sort, to the implied question which, in the form of affirmation provides us with the title of this paper at today's meeting: «*Give to your brother and to the stranger*». *The refugees and the Orthodox Church.*

[To be continued]