

WHO IS THE BURNING BUSH BROTHERHOOD?

AUGUST 5th + The Year Of Our Lord 2021

*“The crisis of modern man is arrhythmia,”*¹ Fr. Roman Braga

Who is the Burning Bush Brotherhood? We are indeed a real brotherhood of priests brought together by the grace of God. Yet formal organization is not the essence of the Brotherhood. As it has been said before by others under the same name,² it is not a mass movement in the secular sense or a political expression. It is a call for *“an interior revolution,”*³ a rededicating of ourselves to the eternal life of the Church in Christ Jesus. This Brotherhood is convinced by the Holy Orthodox Tradition that one of our main ailments is spiritual arrhythmia. Our impure hearts have lost the beautiful harmony of beating in time with the heart of the Church. We see this happening at an unprecedented rate due to the brokenness of our times.⁴

The Burning Bush Brotherhood is a call for all faithful Orthodox Christians to look deeply within and ardently seek to re-harmonize our beating hearts with Christ and His Church. This, we confess, will only be possible through a faithful clinging to the Holy Traditions of the Faith. For too long have we allowed the beat of worldly reasoning to dictate the rhythm of our hearts. If we, one by one, will re-attune our hearts to Life in Christ, then this interior revolution will spill over into our world. Our Lord has said, *“The one who believes in Me, even as Scripture said – rivers of living water shall flow out of his belly.”*⁵ This Divine Spring, ever-flowing from the inner life of the Saints, is the only hope in this epoch of the last times.

Words written in Romania after the Second World War need little adjustment to describe the spirit of our age: *“Suddenly we found ourselves in the presence of Communism, this beast with an apocalyptic stench, with an odor of vodka and military sweat, filling the country with posters announcing carnivals and meetings; it was a time of yellow press, political prostitution and a reversal of values. We were overwhelmed with the fear that these waves of evil would transform us all into an anonymous mass without form, without conscience, without responsibility. Where could we hide if not in the chambers of our soul? And here the miracle happened – man searching for himself met God; he entered into the realm of the Holy Spirit.”*⁶

¹ Fr Roman Braga, *Exploring the Inner Universe*, HDM Press, p. 112

² The original Burning Bush Movement was founded in 1945 in Romania by Sandu Tudor.

³ Fr Roman Braga, 121

⁴ Please see our “Open Letter” in which we elaborate some deep concerns of the times.

⁵ Jn. 7:38

⁶ Fr Roman Braga, 115

Here, in the depths of our souls, we begin to hear the voice of the Lord crying out *“Fear not! I am with you. Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?”* Only in our Lord Jesus Christ will we find life and truth. Only through giving our hearts over to Him will we find peace and renewal in the midst of the storm.

We have spoken out and will continue to speak, and we call you to join this fold mystically. The enlisting will be one made in collective prayer and struggle, by taking a firm resolution to stand firm in the Faith against the evil one and the attacks being made upon the Bride of Christ, the Church. Our battle is best fought on the battlefield of the heart. So, we share the sentiments of those confessors in Romania who first chose "Burning Bush" for their movement. *“The name Burning Bush was selected not simply because it is a familiar symbol of the Mother of God but, more specifically, because she is a type of perfect prayer, as the Akathist of the Burning Bush says, ‘...in her for the first time the heart of God and the heart of man beat and remain beating together’ (Kontakion 8).”*⁷

We ask all those who would join this movement to:

- First, firmly resolve no longer to align your heart with the sinister, arrhythmic beat of this world that is infecting the faithful through secular-humanistic reasoning and ecumenism and undertake to cultivate deeper repentance. The heart must be turned away from sin and love of the world and back to love for God, who is calling the world to repentance through the crisis of the past eighteen months. Spiritual struggle must become the priority of our lives if we ever hope for God to deliver us from the current tragedy we experience. Every action should relate itself to the heart, *“that existential center in us; otherwise it becomes superficial and loses authenticity.”*⁸
- Second, make a simple offering to the Lord of praying daily, in addition to your regular rule of prayer, saying the Jesus prayer three-hundred times and to the Panaghia one-hundred times (*“Most Holy Theotokos, save us”*). For, *“during prayer, man enters into a divine rhythm, the rhythm of the Holy Spirit.”*⁹ Acquire an icon of the Theotokos of the Burning Bush, take the upcoming Akathist of the Burning Bush off our website,¹⁰ and pray it once a week with us. Choose a number of prostrations to do each day to humble yourself before God in seeking His grace and mercy. He gives both in abundance to the humble who cry out to Him. This small rule helps us cultivate an interior life, the only way we will find healing from

⁷ Fr Roman Braga, 114

⁸ Fr Roman Braga, 112

⁹ Ibid, 114

¹⁰ We will have this Akathist available soon.

the insanity around us.

- Third, gather together with fellow Christ-minded believers and offer the above prayers together, study books from a recommended reading list we will post, and encourage one another in Christ the Lord. We are seeking to ignite, by God's grace, interior revolutions. Now is the time, for the day is far spent and night is at hand.¹¹

Brother clergy, resolve to uphold the Faith and feed Christ's sheep at all costs. Faithful laity, likewise uphold the Faith. Pray for your bishop and priests, that they may stand firm in the one Faith in these difficult times. Encourage your clergy to uphold the Faith without compromise. Let us all firmly reject the wolf in sheep's clothing, humanistic-ecumenism, that is infiltrating the Church.

As a brotherhood, we have discerned it best to remain concealed at this time. For, *“It is not the noise or religious demagoguery that strengthens the faith; these are rather a manifestation of vainglory, because the Church does not have heroes—the Church has saints—and saints do not beat their drums on the streets. The Burning Bush [is] not a mass movement, but an individual conversion, and interior revolution.”*¹² This movement is not about our identity, but calling to the remembrance the Divine Spirit that ignited the fiery zeal that engulfed the Saints. We do not promote anonymity for personal gain, but for the continuation of this work.

These meager offerings we hope serve as tinder for a consuming divine fire, *“I have come to cast a fire upon the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled”*¹³! Our hope is that we all may begin to burn ever more with the divine fire that does not consume, as is imaged in the Burning Bush.

We have heard the pain and witnessed the tears of the Church suffering from spiritual malnourishment, and call all hearts to beat together in an ignited voice, petitioning the Lord to *“grant us with one mouth and one heart to glorify and praise [His] all-honorable and majestic name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.”*¹⁴

¹¹ Cf. Romans 13:12

¹² Fr Roman Braga 121

¹³ Lk. 12:49

¹⁴ The Holy Anaphora