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## One of You

"My help comes from God, the maker of heaven and earth." Psalm 121:1

Dear Ones,

It's the end of the week, and I feel like a story, today! Here is one of my favourites – in my own words, but taken from the great American psychiatrist and author, M. Scott Peck. It is from his book, *The Road Less Travelled*. I hope you enjoy it as much as I have!

Once upon a time there was a monastery that had fallen on hard times. Once it had been strong and full of monks, but now it had dwindled down to twelve old men, living out the end of their lives in the shell of a religious community.

In the woods behind the monastery was a little cottage, a house of prayer where the local rabbi used to go to spend time with God, to reflect on the Torah and to attend to his soul. The monks were all very fond of the rabbi, for he was a wise and spiritual man, and they would eagerly share with each other the news when the rabbi was in the woods.

The abbot of the monastery, who was also a wise and good man, enjoyed going to the rabbi's retreat house to talk with his friend. One day, he sighed and said, "Rabbi, I do not think that our monastery is going to survive. We only have 12 men. Young men are not joining us. In a few years we will all be dead, and our way of life will be gone."

The rabbi listened carefully and replied, "There is something that I must tell you. Jesus Christ is one of you."

The abbot was astounded by what he had been told, and he ran back to his brother monks to share the news that Jesus Christ was one of them. The monks questioned their abbot on who it might be, but he told them he was not given that part of the wisdom. No one knew what to do.

They began to watch each other carefully, looking for some sign. Brother Thomas, who tended the garden, was gentle and humble. Was it him? Brother Emmanuel, the cook, was jolly and welcomed anyone to come and eat. Could it be him? The abbot was wise and learned. Maybe he was Jesus Christ?

The monks could not decide which one among them was Jesus Christ, and so they kept watching each other carefully, treating each other with gentle forgiveness, savouring the Christ-like qualities they found.

The villagers, who would come to the monastery for vegetables, to buy the monks' fine cheeses, and to attend church, noticed the deep respect present among the monks. Although they did not know why, they could feel a new quality within the community. Something life-giving. Something they wanted for themselves. Before too long, a young man presented himself at the gates and asked to be taken in as a postulant, to learn the life of the community. Soon another came. And then another.

All this happened because the rabbi in the woods had said, "Jesus Christ is one of you."

**Grace to you, and peace,**

**Kate**

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*"Our relationship with God and each other strengthens us, and helps make the world a better place.  
We welcome and include **everyone** into congregational life."*

