



December, 2016

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

With great attentiveness, cheerful expectation and renewed hope, we live the time of Advent as people who walk confident in the promises of our God, who is so very good.

In 1223, about fifteen days before Christmas, Francis sent for his friend, John Velito from Greccio, and he said to him: "... I want to do something that will recall the memory of that child who was born in Bethlehem, to see with bodily eyes the inconveniences of his infancy, how he lay in the manger, and how the ox and ass stood by." *1Cel 84-87*

Francis loved Christmas more than any other time. For him, it was the ultimate reminder of how much God loved us, to come to us, to become one of us and show us the way to be truly human. The Incarnation is the true compassion of God that Francis perceived so clearly. He was so filled with joy that he invited everyone else to discover the eternal mystery and, with him, to enter into it in a stark way.

Thomas Merton wrote, "Our discovery of God, is in a way, God's discovery of us. We cannot go to heaven to find God because we have no way of knowing where heaven is or what it is. God comes down from heaven and finds us..." [New Seeds of Contemplation](#)

May we welcome God who searches for us in every time and in every way: in God's Incarnation in the life of Jesus and in the heart of every person, not only as a moment in spiritual history, but as the eternal insertion of God, a deepening penetration of love, as God's enduring finding of each one of us.

Sharing this truth and love,
we greet you with great joy, hope and peace during this Christmas season of light and love,

Sr. Deborah Lockwood, President
Sr. Celestine Giertych, Vice-President
Sr. Klara Simunovic, Councilor
Sr. Maria do Livramento Melo de Oliveira, Councilor
Sr. Sinclare, FCC, Councilor