



DECEMBER 2013

# eTroubadour News



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2011-2014  
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CONNECTING OUR SECULAR FRANCISCAN COMMUNITY THROUGHOUT THE REGION.

ELECTRONICALLY PUBLISHED ON A MONTHLY BASIS BY *OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS*

*REGIONAL FRATERNITY OF THE SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER IN THE USA.*

*Let Earth Receive  
Her King*



*Wishing you a joyous and peace filled Christmas!*

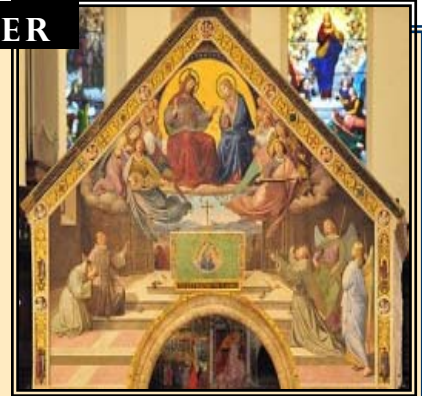
*From all of us at*

*Our Lady of the Angels Regional Fraternity.*



## LETTER FROM OUR REGIONAL MINISTER

DECEMBER 2013



*Dear Sisters and Brothers,*

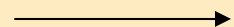
Every year, I waited as a child for the arrival of my uncle, Gabor (Hungarian for Gabriel) who lived in New York City and would spend the holidays with us. His coming each year marked the beginning of the serious preparations for Christmas. I knew that the Christmas tree would “miraculously” appear after I went to sleep once my uncle had arrived by bus from New York. We would all pile into the car to go and meet him at the bus stop, and his arms would be full of gifts. He always brought really neat stuff! My mother would spend what seemed like days cooking and baking for the holiday making all of her special Hungarian dishes and special Christmas pastries and cookies. My Dad would be warming up the pinochle cards—a game they loved to play as did I. I loved my uncle Gabe; he was my favorite, and it was exciting to prepare for his arrival.

The Greek word used to refer to Jesus’ arrival, which is most often translated into English as “second coming” is “*parousia*.” This term was adopted by the early Christians from the usage in Greek and imperial Roman days. It had to do with the visit of an important political leader, and the eager anticipation and preparation for the arrival of such a visitor. If it were to be the Emperor, the preparation of the city and its people would be magnificent and appropriate for such a high-ranking official. Preparations would be made for great banquets, and the leading citizens would all be decked out in their finest attire to meet and greet the emperor. This was a major event in the life of the city and the people.

In Latin, the equivalent word for the Greek *parousia* is *adventus*. Advent for Christians is also about waiting and preparing, about joyful anticipation. How do we prepare for the coming of our King? St. Paul advised the Church in Rome to seek the good of their brothers and sisters. He said:

We who are strong ought to put up with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. <sup>2</sup> Each of us must please our neighbor for the good purpose of building up the neighbor. <sup>3</sup> For Christ did not please himself; but, as it is written, “The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me.” <sup>4</sup> For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. <sup>5</sup> May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In first-century Rome, there were divisions between Jewish and Gentile Christians and between the “strong” and the “weak” so Paul was asking the Church to do as Jesus did—“to be in harmony with one another.” The Greek word in the scriptures here is *phroneo* that is, to be of one mind or to think in harmony. Anyone who sings in a choir knows the experience of being in harmony and contrarily, of dissonance. Harmony is a pleasing and beautiful sound while dissonance can “rattle your bones” like fingernails drawn across a chalkboard.



## LETTER FROM OUR REGIONAL MINISTER

... continued

The Church today experiences different kinds of divisions that are similar to the experience of the Church of Rome to whom Paul speaks. Our differences are between those who have different viewpoints regarding the liturgy and church discipline or the emphasis on one or another area of doctrinal concern or even in terms of political viewpoints. These also threaten our ability to “be of one mind” in order to prepare for the coming of the Lord. Paul’s advice that we “welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God,” is not just a nice idea, it is the characteristic that should set apart Christians who are preparing to greet Jesus. We should be welcoming all into the Kingdom, making room for all especially those once marginalized or excluded.

Recently, Pope Francis issued his message for the World Day of Peace in which he reflected on the importance of *fraternity as the foundation and pathway to peace*. In it, he reminds us of “that irrepressible longing for fraternity which draws us to fellowship with others and enables us to see them not as enemies or rivals, but as brothers and sisters to be accepted and embraced.” How much more important is it that we Franciscans experience and give witness to that sense of fellowship and brotherhood and sisterhood within our own Franciscan fraternities! What an opportunity for us to “rebuild the Church” through our witness of fraternity life. Can others in our parishes point to our fraternities and say, “look how they love one another?” We possess within our fraternities a “privileged place” which should be for us, above all, a school of friendship and love—a place where we can learn the skills and nurture the experiences which lead to harmony and fellowship. Our Rule teaches us:

As the Father sees in every person the features of his Son, the firstborn of many brothers and sisters, so the Secular Franciscans with a gentle and courteous spirit accept all people as a gift of the Lord and an image of Christ. A sense of community will make them joyful and ready to place themselves on an equal basis with all people, especially with the lowly for whom they shall strive to create conditions of life worthy of people redeemed by Christ.

And later in Chapter 2:

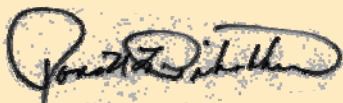
Mindful that they are bearers of peace which must be built up unceasingly, they should seek out ways of unity and fraternal harmony through dialogue, trusting in the presence of the divine seed in everyone and in the transforming power of love and pardon. Messengers of perfect joy in every circumstance, they should strive to bring joy and hope to others.

May your Advent be a time of joyful preparation and anticipation, a time of growing friendship, the experience of unity, of harmony and of love and,

May the Lord give you His Peace!

A blessed Christmas and a New Year filled with God’s choicest blessings!

Fraternally,



Ron Pihokker, OFS  
OLTAR Regional Minister

**Do** not be men and women of sadness: a Christian can never be sad! Never give way to discouragement! Ours is not a joy born of having many possessions, but from having encountered a Person: Jesus, in our midst; it is born from knowing that with Him we are never alone, even at difficult moments, even when our life’s journey comes up against problems and obstacles that seem insurmountable, and there are so many of them!”

**Pope Francis**  
**XXVIII World Youth Day**  
**24 March 2013**



# YOUFRA



This past summer Celia Lourenco and I attended our first National Confab for JPIC & YouFra. We had a great time and learned many things. Some of those things I will share with you in this column.

Did you know that in 2008, we had 15,811 professed members, and we now have 12,163; that's a loss of 2,483 members?

We also had a decline of Fraternities. In 2008, we had 718 Fraternities, we now have 613; that's a decline of 105.

Although these numbers are staggering they should not discourage us. Numbers are declining for the first and second orders as well.

However, it does leave us with the question, **"Where is our future?"** especially with  
1% of our order being under 35;  
8% are 35-50;  
35% are 50-65; and  
56% are 66 and over.

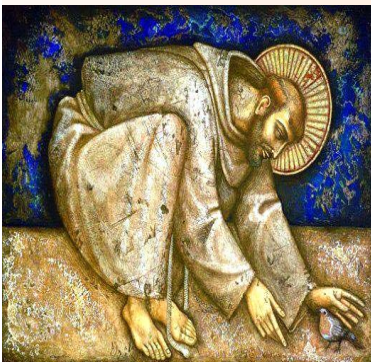
## OUR ANSWER SEEMS TO LIE WITH YOUNG ADULTS.

Current surveys show that the millennium generation is looking for:

- Faith based communities.
- Opportunities for improving the world.
- Good people.
- Mentors/role models- largely due to the breakdown of most families.

We as Franciscans have what they are looking for and according to ARTICLE 45:1 –*The Promotion of Vocations to the Order is a duty of all the brothers & sisters and is a sign of vitality of the fraternities themselves.*

We need to start making them a priority, and it



all starts in our local fraternities because AS FRANCISCANS WE HAVE A TENDENCY TO GO WHERE NO ONE ELSE WANTS TO GO, AND WE HAVE BEEN PREPARING PEOPLE FOR LEADERSHIP FOR A VERY LONG TIME.

WE ARE CALLED BY OUR RULE #24 TO REACH OUT TO THEM.

## THE GOOD NEWS IS WE HAVE A PLAN! WE ARE WORKING IN CONJUNCTION WITH:

### JPIC ~

Our Rule lived out in action with prayer and contemplation. It's the restoration of a right relationship with God, each other, creation and ourselves.

### EARTH CORE ~

A network of young adults created by the Franciscan Action Network, (FAN), that integrated spirituality and care of creation.

### FRANCISCAN MISSIONS ~

Catholic lay people, single men and women and married couples, called through our baptism to mission.

## WE ALREADY HAVE IN THE WORKS:

- New structures, resource materials, leadership training, how-to manuals & formation materials.
- A YouFra Commission.
- YouFra Regional Chairs.
- Yearly retreats, gatherings, pilgrimages, Hands-on apostolic action.
- Handbook to assist local fraternities.



**HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP:**

- BECOME A LEADER OF A YOUFRA GROUP.
- IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO SPONSOR A YOUFRA GROUP, LEND SUPPORT AND INSPIRATION TO ONE THAT ALREADY EXISTS.
- SUPPORT FRANCISCAN VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS TO GUIDE YOUNG ADULTS.
- SPONSOR SOME OF THEIR OUTREACH MISSIONARY WORK TO THE POOR.
- BE A SUPPORT TO A LEADER OF YOUFRA BY HELPING OUT WHEN YOU CAN BY MENTORING, FINANCIAL SUPPORT OR COLLABORATING ON SOME EVENTS.

I also have a blog; you may like to check it out at:

<http://dawnsfaithconnection.wordpress.com>



You can sign up to receive new posts via email.

There are currently five Young Adult groups and four Teen groups in the United States right now, and we hope to see that number grow.

Celia and I are available to help, support and give resources to anyone interested in being a part of this new YouFra movement. We are available to any Fraternity and/or leaders at anytime for assistance. Please contact us.

Pax et Bonum,

*Dawn*

Dawn Rusinko



**OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS**

**REGIONAL FRATERNITY**

**YOUFRA REGIONAL CO-CHAIRS**

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**CELIA LOURENCO** [Celia18L@aol.com](mailto:Celia18L@aol.com)



**WINTER PRAYER**

by Valerie Moreno, OFS

Christmas Child,  
be my guide  
as I kneel here at your side  
to cradle You in my heart  
where You'll stay safe and warm  
amid sorrow tide and fading light.

Send the minstrels from above  
who found You  
in their search for love  
they passed life's bitter night  
now Home, House of Light.

Beyond brilliant moon and sun  
life lessons not yet done  
I'm a child in Your Eyes  
darling Lord, sweet and wise.

In my heart, I know you're real  
not what I'm told, but all I feel  
See the light wheel turning slow  
You are free  
like air and sea.

Child to child, You are kind  
tolerance true and sublime  
I listen closely  
to loves flow  
in all I am  
and all I know  
darling baby that I hold  
every song I'll ever know.

# RECENT FRATERNITY TIDINGS



## 2013 CHAPTER OF MINISTERS

Held November 16, 2013,  
at Holy Angels Church  
Little Falls, NJ.

Visitation from the  
National Fraternity:  
Fr. Matthias Wesnofske,  
OFM Cap and  
Elaine Hedtke, OFS.

LOOK FOR MORE DETAILS AND PHOTOS  
ON THIS MEETING AND OTHERS  
IN THE UPCOMING  
PRINTED ISSUE OF  
*THE TROUBADOUR*  
COMING YOUR WAY JANUARY 2014.

**It** was wonderful to see so many Secular Franciscan brothers and sisters at our yearly Chapter. Truly a joyful day!

Photos have now been posted to the website for your viewing pleasure.

Many thanks to our photographers of the day, **DIANE MENDITTO, OFS**, Region Vice Minister;

<https://plus.google.com/photos/107894385408068980693/albums/5948934142766461089?banner=pwa>

and **ED WOJCIECHOWSKI, OFS**, from St. Anthony's Fraternity in Butler, NJ;

<https://picasaweb.google.com/StAnthonySFO/ChapterOfMinisters2013>



Photo credit: DIANE MENDITTO, OFS

# FRATERNITY TIDINGS

Dear brothers  
and sisters  
in Saint Francis,



# 2014

Gatherings or events need not be formal or elaborate to be listed. I have been contacted many times to see whether there are any local events.

You are all invited to participate in sending local fraternity events for listing in the monthly calendar of the *e-Troubadour News*.

Secular Franciscans gather together to support and help one another's endeavors; and also have great fun together. Please send your planned fraternity events with as much time in advance as possible to me (*Editor*) via regular mail (*see page 12*) or via email at: [TroubadourEditor@aol.com](mailto:TroubadourEditor@aol.com)



**ST. JOHN VIANNEY FRATERNITY 135, COLONIA, NJ,**  
INVITES EVERYONE TO COME JOIN THEM IN THEIR FRANCISCAN MINISTRY EVENT:

**CHRISTMAS PARTY AT SAINT JOSEPH'S HOME**  
Sunday, January 12, 2014 at 1:00 P.M.

We visit the St. Joseph Senior Home about 4-to-5 times a year, mostly on the main holidays. Refreshments are brought in and served by our members. Members give a short bible study with questions which residents enjoy answering. A member also plays the guitar, and we sing songs. At Christmas time they especially enjoy the Polish carols. The residents thrive on our communicating with them since many have few visitors; some have none at all. Just a smile and concern for their health brings smiles.

The success of the Christmas Party depends on our participation.

Please bring cakes, cookies, candies (something soft and tasty), fruits (bananas, seedless grapes) and blueberries; beverages (apple, cranberry and grape juice). No sodas, please! Please pray for nice weather and a successful party. Everybody counts!

Let's get involved!

St Joseph Senior Home is located at:  
1 St. Joseph's Terrace, Woodbridge, NJ 07095, (732) 634-0004  
<http://stjosephseniorhome.com>

Contact: Anna Zielski, OFS (732) 325-7779  
or email at: [azpolonia@comcast.net](mailto:azpolonia@comcast.net)

Please let her know if you are coming and what you are going to bring.



**PAX ET BONUM! PEACE AND GOODNESS!**



THE CATHOLIC ARTISTS SOCIETY AND THE THOMISTIC INSTITUTE ARE  
PLEASED TO PRESENT:

This 6-part lecture series exploring the nature and purpose of Art, Beauty and their place in the social order. This monthly, Saturday-night series will feature talks by six renowned philosophers, theologians and artists.

It is directed to professional artists in all disciplines, students and patrons of the arts, and to all those who take in interest in culture and artistic endeavor.

Attendance is free, but space will be limited.

For more information, please visit:

[catholicartistsociety@gmail.com](mailto:catholicartistsociety@gmail.com) or

[www.thomisticinstitute.org/nyartists](http://www.thomisticinstitute.org/nyartists)



**TIME:** 7:30 p.m. Saturdays,  
followed by a Reception and sung Compline.

**PLACE:** The Catholic Center @ NYU  
238 Thompson Street, New York, NY 10012

# The Art of the Beautiful

FOUNDATIONS FOR A  
CATHOLIC UNDERSTANDING  
OF THE ARTS

**JANUARY 25, 2014**

LOVE AND ARTISTIC GENESIS.  
Anthony Esolen  
Providence College

**FEBRUARY 15, 2014**

VIRTUE AND THE ARTISTIC  
IMAGINATION.  
Fr. Joseph Koterski, SJ  
Fordham University



**STREAMING  
VIDEO EVENTS!**



## Francis, the Saint and the Pope

[https://www.youtube.com/  
embed/BcOU3bYmMOA](https://www.youtube.com/embed/BcOU3bYmMOA)



Submitted by Victoria R Schultz, OFS  
St. John's Fraternity, New York City



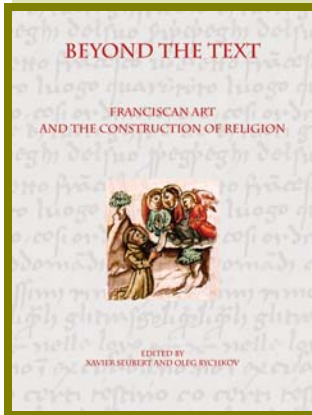
This is a brief 6-minute video from *Catholic News Service*, which looks at the person and place of St. Francis of Assisi, the inspiration for the name of the Pope. It illustrates the comparison of both men and their strong similarities in following the Lord in simplicity and humility.



RECENT RELEASES

BEYOND THE TEXT: FRANCISCAN ART AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF RELIGION

Edited by Xavier Seubert, OFM and Oleg Bychkov, PhD



Art frequently reveals what is not or cannot be articulated in words. Textual evidence, however, is very often the exclusive or privileged tool for understanding the past. From art historical, social, theological and philosophical perspectives, the essays in this volume probe the art and visual culture of the early Franciscan movement to reveal insights and nuances of the life and power of this revolutionary phase of the Catholic religion.

2013 - 252 pages  
ISBN: HC 978-1-57659-340-0  
\$65.00

“‘Beyond the Text’ has an ambitious and integrative goal. Its signal originality is way it collates the work of serious and accomplished art historians with that of serious and accomplished theologians and religious historians,” said John Fleming, author of “From Bonaventure to Bellini: An Essay in Franciscan Exegesis.”

“It achieves a comprehensiveness of vision that will make the book required reading for scholarships in many disciplines for whom Francis and his friars are subjects of serious interest. Medievalists in several disciplines will welcome this important and groundbreaking book. Art historians will particularly appreciate the high quality of its generous pictorial illustration.”

In addition to his work at St. Bonaventure University, Xavier is also a professor of liturgy and sacramental theology at Christ the King Seminary in East Aurora, N.Y. He has published widely in sacramentality and the religious dimensions of art, and is presently working on a book about the sacramentality of art. He is a frequent lecturer at The Cloisters of The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.

Contributors to this collection include David Haack, OFM, a retired SBU art history and studio art professor; Robert Lentz, OFM, who paints Byzantine icons; as well as William Barcham, Oleg Bychkov, William Cook, Theresa Flanigan, David Flood, Holly Flora, Cristina Cruz Gonzalez, Trinita Kennedy, Irving Lavin, Marilyn Aronberg Lavin, Beth Mulvaney, Lynn Ransom, Xavier Seubert.



FRANCISCAN INSTITUTE PUBLICATIONS is a leading publisher of books and journals on medieval Franciscan history, sources, spirituality, philosophy and theology as well as contemporary issues on Franciscan life and ministry.

Known for many years for its critical editions of leading medieval Franciscan philosophers and theologians, *Franciscan Institute Publications* has more recently endeavored to make available to a wider reading public the very best of modern scholarship on the history, spirituality and intellectual tradition of the Franciscan movement.

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**'The LORD bless you and keep you;  
the LORD make His face shine upon you  
and be gracious to you;  
the LORD turn His face toward you  
and give you peace.'**

**Numbers 6:24-26**



# HAVE YOU SEEN THE BABY?

by  
RANDY KILGORE

## WERE YOU BEFORE THE MANGER? HOW DID IT CHANGE YOU?

When the angels interrupted the quiet of the night long ago to tell a group of shepherds that Jesus was born, even the angels must have wondered why God picked them to be told. Certainly, that must have crossed the shepherds' minds as well. Why us?

Because a shepherd living off the land is as precious to God as a king.

Nothing's changed; the lowliest worker in the newest job is as important to God as the richest CEO. And isn't it just like God, in a world turned upside down by financial upheaval, to make it possible for today's shepherds to change the world again.

Shepherds, we need you now!

We're not talking, about the clergy right now, though their role as shepherds of God's flock brings us hope, too. No, today, it's the world-weary, street-savvy, been-there-done-that hard-times Christian, whom God picked to star as shepherds in this year's Christmas story.

You have news and experience people of privilege often lack, and suddenly they need you more than they know. Why? Because you've lived through life's storms and come out the other side. Living paycheck to paycheck, you've been in the storm so many middle class and upper-middle class co-workers now face, and you know there's life after the storm. The wisest of you even know *there's life in the storm*.

You've heard and seen the worst, and have learned to live life in the face of uncertainty. For so many people this Christmas, their worst nightmares have leapt from their imagination to reality, and they need the comfort of your company and the benefit from your experience. But more than that, they need you to point them to the hope that kept you going even in your darkest days; the hope that keeps you going even today. They need to know you've heard the angels and seen the Baby.

This isn't some poetic plea aimed at stirring you to think; it's an earnest call to act. God grows impatient with the all-talk, no-action Christian, who talks a game they never live out.

Thousands and thousands of people who never dreamed they'd be in need **are** now, some for the first time ever, truly in need. While you've already learned there's no such thing as complete security; many of them are only learning it now the hard way. It's their first time in the darkness.

They need you to show them how to move around in that darkness; and how to find joy in the smallest moments during those dark days; because it will link them to the day when there will be no more sorrow and no more pain; that wonderful day when Jesus stands up to end for all time the sin that racks this world God never intended to suffer.

But until He does; until the Savior stands a second time to bring us that day of eternal joy; it's up to us, the ones whom the angels have sung to, the ones who have learned that this life is but a foretaste of that greater one; it's up to us to tell the world we've seen the Baby.

Were you before the manger? How did it change you? If you don't have a story to tell of the hope the birth of Christ brings you, then it may well be that you've never really met Jesus. The ones who've seen the darkest nights know best just how much even the tiniest flicker of hope can light that night. This Christmas, let the shepherds be the wise ones as we point our friends, neighbors and coworkers to the Light that never goes out.

May this Christmas season have found us waiting on others as we waited on Jesus.



# SECULAR FRANCISCAN

# saints among us

A new group of martyrs belonging to the Order of Friars Minor and the Secular Franciscan Order was added to the Franciscan martyrology.

The new blessed are part of a larger group of 522 martyrs who were beatified in Tarragona (Spain) from October 13, 2013.

They offered their heroic witness of faith in the course of the bloody religious persecution in Spain in 1936.

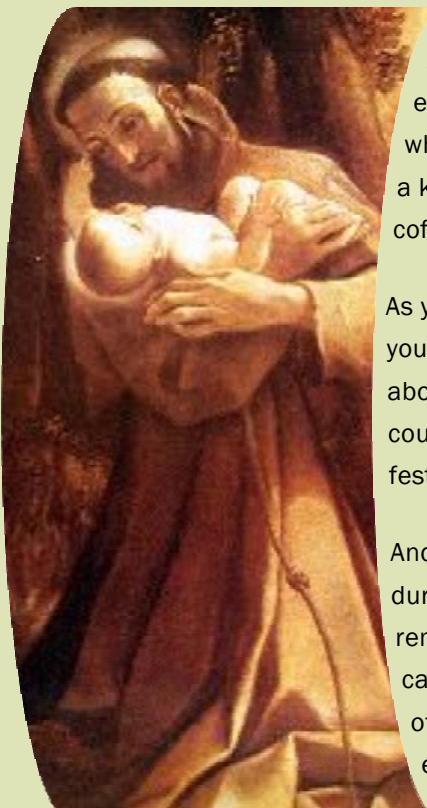
These are: Br. Antonio Lopez Faundez, Br. Buenaventura Munoz Martinez, Don Pedro Sanchez Barba, and Don Fulgencio Garcia Martinez.



**CHRISTMAS SEASON** is a time we focus on giving gifts and doing good to others, but as Secular Franciscans, we want to emulate God's giving and goodness all year long.

That starts by focusing on the way He gives. It's an overflow of His character and an example of how He calls us to share what we have with others.

Let's all  
develop  
our  
giving  
gift  
by  
giving  
more like  
our Father  
and by being  
a blessing  
to others!



As you're running errands, look to see who you can bless with a kind word or a cup of coffee.

As you are removing your decorations, think about whose home you could bring some festivity to.

And as you pause during your day, remember who you can give the gift of prayer and encouragement to.

*Lord God,  
You are my example for how  
to give good gifts.  
Please give me Your heart to be  
generous and a blessing to others.  
Help me be mindful of the receiver  
and to give carefully to ensure  
my gift is a blessing.  
In Jesus' precious Name, Amen.*



OUR LADY OF  
THE ANGELS  
REGIONAL FRATERNITY  
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ADMINISTRATOR  
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REGIONAL WEBSITE

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angels.region.org/](http://www.ourladvoftheangels.region.org/)



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REGIONAL DATABASE  
ADMINISTRATOR  
ANNA GERACI, OFS

*Come let us*



*adore Him*

**"For God so loved the world, that he gave His only  
begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him  
should not perish, but have everlasting life."  
St. John 3:16**

**DON'T BUY ANY GIFTS FOR ME**

**Don't buy any Christmas gifts for me,  
I have enough material things already.  
Just come. Or call.**

**Let's listen to Christmas music together.  
Or let's meditate on the Holy Bible together.  
Share your time!  
Show you care!  
Open your heart!**

**Let us enjoy and contemplate the mystery  
of the Nativity of Jesus given to us as  
a priceless gift from the Almighty God.**

**Anna Zielska, OFS  
St. John Vianney Fraternity, Colonia, NJ**