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SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER

OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS REGIONAL FRATERNITY

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We are busy! Many of us have been shopping and we will be spending time getting ready to celebrate Christmas with family and friends. It is truly a special time of year.

Okay, this is the part where you expect to hear about commercialism and taking time out to meditate on the season and about not forgetting to say "Merry Christmas."

Really? **We are Franciscans!** We rejoice every day because God was willing to empty Himself and take the form of a child so that He could be one of us!

Yes, we celebrate together in the community of our families and our fraternities. We work a little harder to make it extra special, but as Franciscans we strive for this special love and togetherness **all year long**. And, not only do we try to make it special for one another, but we **reach out** to care for others whom we might not even know. We want every day to be special for them too.

No one has to remind us to say Merry Christmas. **We are grateful** for the birth of Christ every day of our lives, and because of that **we strive to respect others** because we were all created by the same God. **His fingerprint is inside each and every one of us!**

It is because **we remember who we are before God** that all of our words and actions remind others that **Christmas** is not just a word or a season, but a **way of life**.

Lord God, help us to be living reminders always!

May the remainder of your Advent be fruitful and may the choicest blessings of the Christ child be yours.

Diane F. Menditto, OFS

Minister, Our Lady of the Angels Region