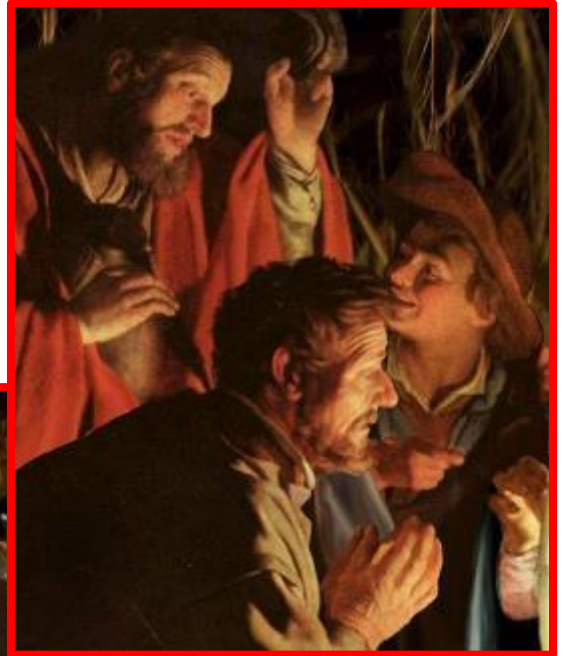




When the angels went away from them to heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go, then, to Bethlehem to see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us."

Luke 2: 15



Only love can enter into the heart of the mystery.

Ilia Delio, osf

December 25, 2018

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Francis loved Christmas and all it taught him about God-with-us, poor and humble. One year, he made great preparations to have an experience of Jesus' birth. He saw the manger prepared with hay and animals and he was happy.

There simplicity is given a place of honor, poverty is exalted, humility is commended. Cfr. 1 Celano, 85

Francis saw all creation transformed by the mystery of the incarnation. Jesus MADE a DWELLING PLACE with us, a place radiant with love and peace.

With the heart of a mystic,
what does my contemplative gaze penetrate on this silent and holy night?
Can I hear the song of the angels, proclaiming peace?
Where is its melody most needed?

We are invited to enter the world of the shepherds on this silent and holy night:
To go "to see the thing that has taken place"
To enter into the heart of the mystery
and be love and peace for all.

Wishing you God's blessings during this holy time of Christmas and the new year ahead.

Sr. Deborah LOCKWOOD, President IFC-TOR
Sr. M. Magdalena SCHMITZ, Vice-President
Sr. Dolores CANEO, Councilor
Sr. Joanne BRAZINSKI, Councilor
Bro. Franco KANNAMPUZHA, Councilor
Sr. Benigna AOKO, Councilor