



St. Elizabeth Mission Society

A Ministry of the Franciscan Sisters of Allegany, NY

Christmas 2015

God Dwells in All of Us

“Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?”

– 1 Corinthians 3:16

Dear Friend,

Last month I told you about some of my experiences as a pilgrim in Assisi, and I’m called to continue in that theme as we honor our Savior’s birth this month. We celebrated Christmas in September by visiting the site of the first Christmas crèche in Greccio, Italy followed by a traditional Italian holiday feast overlooking the lush Rieti Valley.

According to St. Bonaventure’s biography, St. Francis got permission from the Pope to set up a manger with hay and two live animals—an ox and an ass—in a cave in the Italian village of Greccio. The villagers were invited to gaze upon the scene while he preached about “the babe of Bethlehem.” (Francis became so overcome with emotion that he couldn’t say “Jesus.”)

Francis’ simple celebration urges us to contemplate a truly human Christ who chose to become poor for our sakes. God inserted himself into our humanity, therefore we know He understands our suffering. Also, not just the Blessed Mother gave birth, but all of us give birth to this word made flesh in the way we live. God came for everybody. **Every single one of us is a dwelling place for God.** We are all significant in the eyes



Site of First Christmas Crèche
Greccio, Italy

St. Francis is credited with staging the first nativity scene in Greccio in 1223. Since that time, we have re-created the scene in our homes, churches and public places as a way of remembering our Savior’s humble beginning.

Christmas Intentions

Please remember the following persons and intentions in the Christmas Eve Mass at the St. Elizabeth Motherhouse Chapel in Allegany, NY and in all the Masses celebrated during the Christmas Season.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

of God, and we all have a purpose.

For over 150 years, our Franciscan Sisters of Allegany have witnessed to God's love in the Franciscan tradition by recognizing the face of God in whom they encounter. Without prejudice, they serve ALL those who need their help. To the right are a couple examples of our Sisters' ministries that the St. Elizabeth Mission Society supports.

On behalf of all the Franciscan Sisters of Allegany who see God dwelling in everyone, we wish to thank you for your generosity. You have provided the means for us to accomplish God's work in serving those who are poor in Jamaica, Brazil, Bolivia and the United States. Please accept our Christmas card as our gift to you by indicating how many you would like in the form below.

Many Christmas Blessings,

Laura C. Whitford

Laura Whitford
President, St. Elizabeth Mission Society



Sr. Kathleen Maire, OSF works with St. Joseph's Food Pantry in New York City.



Sr. Maria José Monteiro, OSF works with low-income students at a school in Palmas, Brazil.

2015
Christmas Card

Give the gift of prayer this Christmas by including your loved ones' intentions in Christmas masses at the Motherhouse Chapel.



Inside message:
St. Bonaventure's writings about St. Francis and the first Christmas crèche.
"May a Most Blessed Christmas Be Yours"

Yes! I would like to help the Franciscan Sisters of Allegany reach out to those who are poor in Jamaica, Brazil, Bolivia and the U.S.

I am enclosing my gift of: \$200 \$100 \$50 \$25 Other

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____ Ph _____

Please send me _____
Christmas cards.

Donations can also be made on our website, www.franciscanhope.org, using PayPal.