SAINT FRANCIS of ASSISI

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FRANCIS WASHES AND NURSES THE SICK

LEAVING town, Francis was manhandled by robbers and rejoiced to suffer for Christ. He then helped out in a monastery kitchen.

Later he reached the town of Gubbio, where a friend gave him a hermit's cloak, a rope to tie around his waist, shoes, and a staff.

Francis spent his time at a hospital, nursing the sick, especially the lepers. He washed their feet, bound up their sores, and often even kissed their wounds.
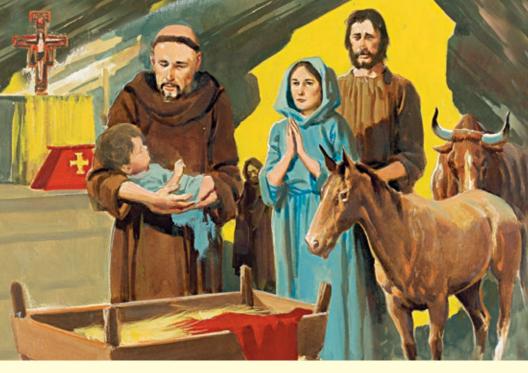
FRANCIS' LOVE FOR ALL GOD'S CREATURES

FRANCIS was a lover of nature. He believed in a loving Father Who made all things. And he regarded all God's creatures as his brothers and sisters.

He composed a famous poem called the "Canticle of the Sun" in which he praised God for all his creatures.

He thanked Him for our brother the sun, our sister the moon, our brother the wind, our sister water, our brother fire, and for our mother the earth.

Every creature was for Francis a word of God. Each one told us something about God and about ourselves.

Francis once saw a flock of birds in a field. Drawing near, he said: "Praise the Lord, my little sisters!" He talked and they listened.

FRANCIS AND THE FIRST CHRISTMAS CRIB

FRANCIS also started the Third Order of Penance for those who wished to lead a life of holiness but could not leave their families.

One Christmas Francis invited the people of Greccio for Christmas Mass. Two animals and a manger with straw had been brought into a cave where the Mass was celebrated.

Francis spoke to the people about the birth of Jesus. Afterward, some saw in the manger a little Child asleep, Who woke up when the Saint took Him in his arms.