

St. Francis of Assisi was always looking for new ways to make God's truths easily understandable to others. At Christmastime 1223, while visiting the town of Greccio, Italy, he had the idea of showing people what Jesus' birthplace must have been like. He found a mountain cave near the village and fashioned it into a rough stable. St. Bonaventure (d. 1274), in his *Life of St. Francis of Assisi*, gave this account of what followed: ***"Then he prepared a manger and brought hay and an ox and an ass to the place appointed. The brethren were summoned, the people ran together, the forest resounded with their voices, and that venerable night was made glorious by many brilliant lights and sonorous psalms of praise. The man of God [St. Francis] stood before the manger, full of devotion and piety, bathed in tears and radiant with joy. Then he preached to the people around the Nativity of the poor King; and being unable to utter His name for the tenderness of His love, he called Him the Babe of Bethlehem."***

## *Christmas Blessings*



*to our Shepherd of the Field*