



A Christmas Reflection

From the Artists: Luigi and Kate Agnelli

The first live Nativity scene was re-enacted by St Francis of Assisi in 1223, in a cave near the Franciscan Hermitage in Greccio, Rieti, in the region of Lazio. After his trip to the Holy Land in 1219-1220, Francis was inspired to 'bring to life' the story of the Nativity in Bethlehem, to his homeland, and from that Christmas in Greccio, the tradition of the live Nativity scene was to be spread through the world by the Franciscan Order.

USE THIS SKETCH FOR A VISIO DIVINA.

Consider

On that hillside in Greccio, on Christmas Eve 1223:

What would people have seen?

What would people have heard?

Why would this have been an amazing sight 800 years ago?

Why was Francis so determined to bring the nativity to life.

When Francis looked at the nativity scene in Greccio he would have also celebrated the beauty of the natural world - the Christmas star, the animals, the wind in the trees, the moon shining brightly.

Consider

What images of the natural world can you see in the sketch?

What images of Christmas do you see in the sketch?

The Franciscan understanding of Christmas is that God is permanently incarnated,

committed in flesh in human history, in our individual lives, in the wonder of creation.

The Incarnation was not simply for a moment in the past, but for now— always and forever. ... The Incarnation is continuing in history! Christmas is every day! (accessed 26/08/2023 at <https://www.franciscanmedia.org/franciscan-spirit-blog/>).

Consider

How can you celebrate the incarnation all year round?

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