

## THE CRIB

The activities about the crib that follow are designed for

**PAGES 2 AND 3**

### **A STAR FOR THE CRIB:**

The star for the crib could be used at all levels and might be something for the children to bring home for the family crib. It could be printed, mounted on card and cut out to create a star to hang on the crib, a prayer card to give as a gift or a Christmas card for a special person. It is available in colour and black and white.

**PAGE 4**

### **STRAW FOR THE CRIB**

**ALL LEVELS**

There is a tradition that families used to put straw into the empty crib as a way of beginning to get ready to welcome Jesus on Christmas morning. Each member of the family put a piece of straw in very evening until finally there was enough straw to make the crib comfortable. Each piece of straw represented something good that they had done during the day as a way of preparing to welcome Jesus. They would then place the donkey and ox into the crib, Mary and Joseph and finally an empty manger into which the baby Jesus would be placed on Christmas morning.

**PAGE 5**

**LEVEL 1**

**JUNIOR INFANTS**

**PAGE 6**

**LEVEL 1**

**SENIOR INFANTS:**

Draw a line between the figure and their name

**PAGE 7**

**LEVEL 2**

**PAGE 8**

**LEVEL 3**

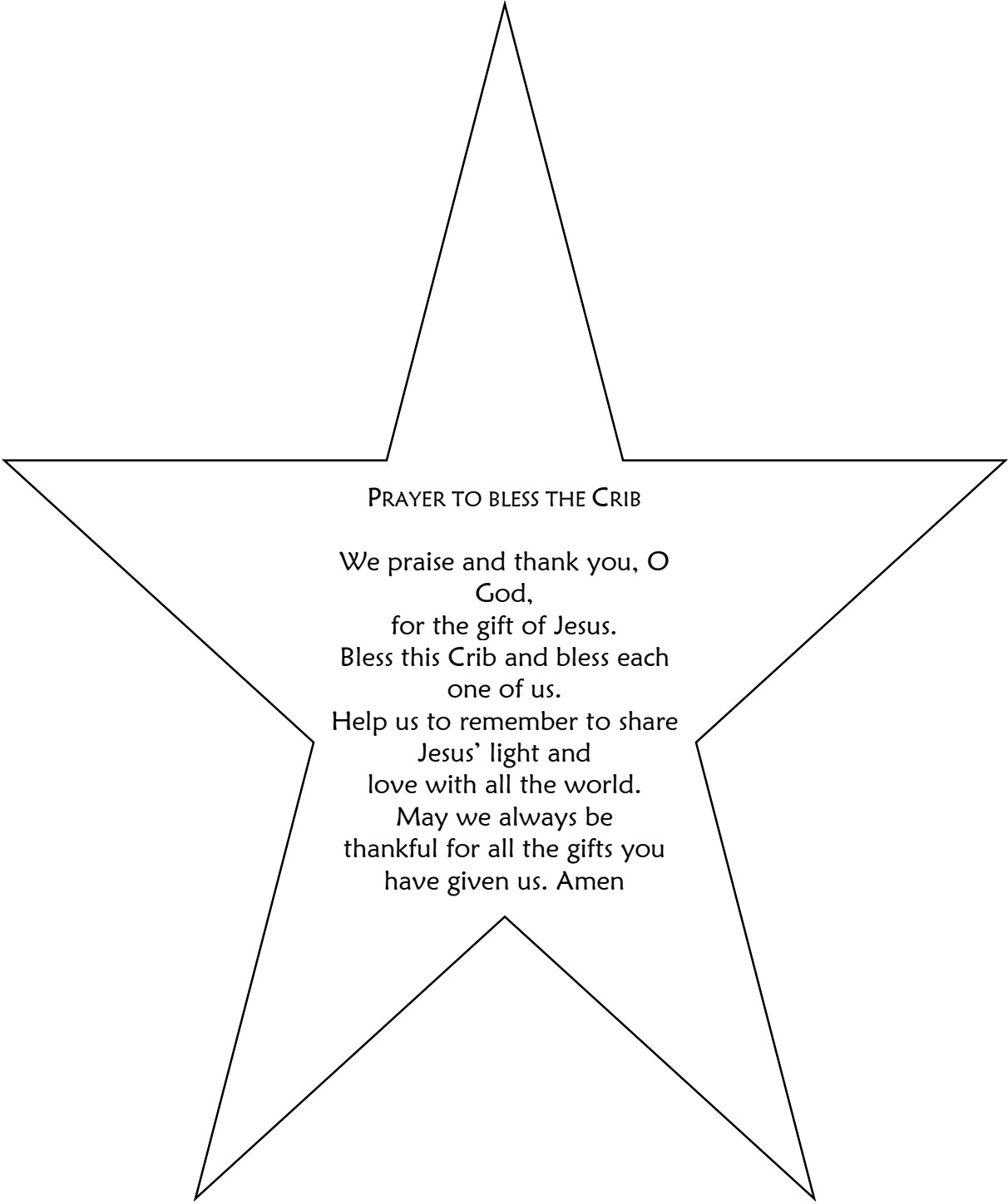
**PAGE 9**

**LEVEL 4**



PRAYER TO BLESS THE CRIB

We praise and thank you, O  
God,  
for the gift of Jesus.  
Bless this Crib and bless each  
one of us.  
Help us to remember to share  
Jesus' light and  
love with all the world.  
May we always be  
thankful for all the gifts you  
have given us. Amen



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## CRIB TRADITIONS

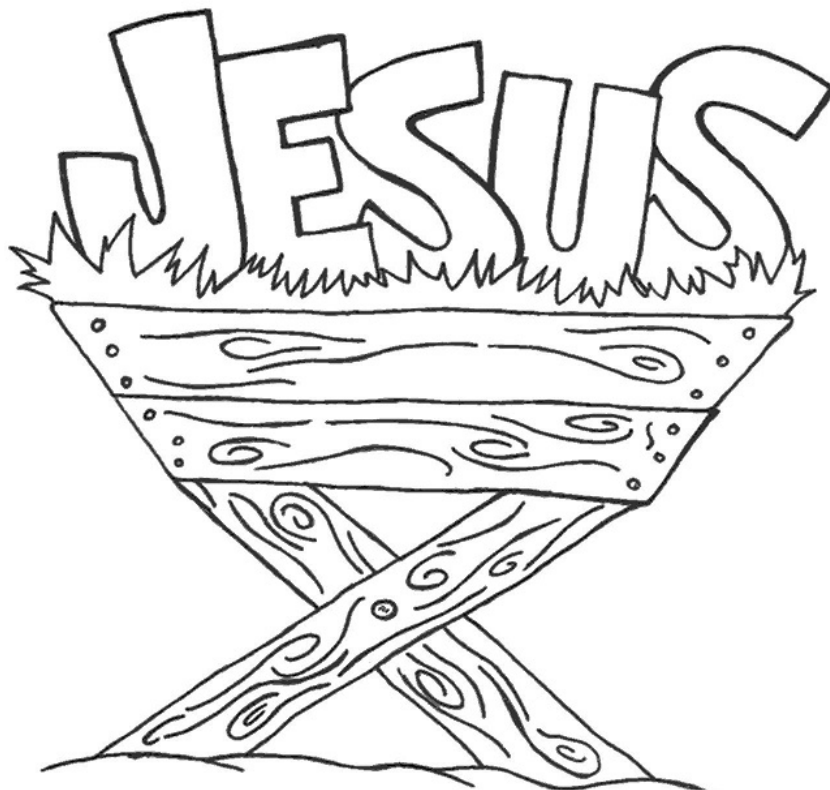
### CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

#### BUILDING A CRIB FOR JESUS

Place the empty crib in your Prayer Space during the first week of Advent. Using shredded paper the children could be encouraged to write or draw something good that they have done on a strip of paper each day for the first two weeks of Advent. Alternatively, you could have a bundle of shredded paper on your desk and each time a child makes a special effort you could give them a piece to put into the crib.

Place the crib figures at different places in the classroom and move them closer to the crib each day as they journey towards Bethlehem.

During the third and fourth weeks the figures could gradually begin to arrive in the crib.



Circle and Colour the People You will Find in the Crib





**King**



**Jesus**



**Shepherd**



**Joseph**



**Mary**

## MARY AND JOSEPH GET READY TO WELCOME BABY JESUS

Number the sentences 1 – 7 so that the story is in the right order

Mary went to visit her cousin, Elizabeth, to tell her about the new baby.  
Elizabeth was very happy.

They were getting ready to have a new baby

Mary and Joseph lived in a town called Nazareth

A man came to the town and told everyone that they had to be counted.

When Mary and Joseph got to Bethlehem, it was very busy. They looked for somewhere to stay. There was no room anywhere. At last they found a stable where they could wait for the baby to be born.

Mary went to visit her cousin, Elizabeth, to tell her about the new baby.  
Elizabeth was very happy.

Mary and Joseph had to go to Bethlehem. Mary went on a donkey because it was too far for her to walk.

## ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI AND THE CRIB

St Francis was a decent and very holy man. We know Francis loved creation, nature and animals. We also know that he visited the Holy Land and went to Bethlehem to see the place where Jesus was born.



The first Christmas Crib dates back to St. Francis whose Feast Day we celebrate on October 4. In 1293 Francis had an idea. He wanted to show the people of Greccio, near Assisi, what it was like when Jesus was born. He wanted to tell them the story of the first Christmas in a different way.

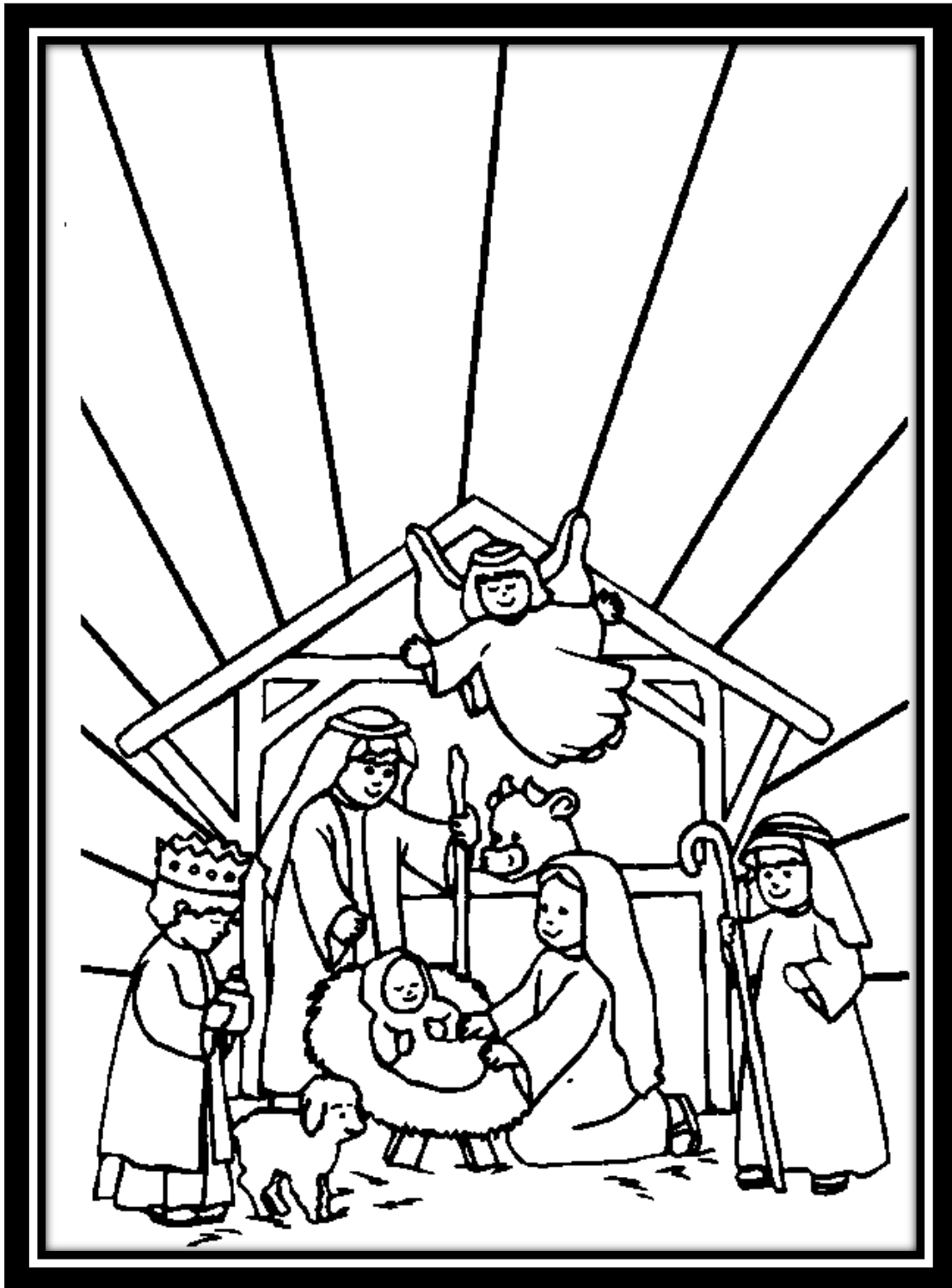
Francis had a very good friend called John who lived in the town of Greccio. About two weeks before Christmas Francis went to visit John and asked for his help. Francis told John that he wanted him to get hay, a donkey and an ox and to bring them to a place in the woods that he had chosen. John did what Francis asked. Lots of people helped John get ready and the news about what Francis was doing spread all around the neighbourhood.

On Christmas Eve all Francis' Brothers and the people of the neighbourhood gathered around the crib. They brought candles and torches to brighten the night. St. Francis arrived and saw that everything had been prepared. The crib was ready, the hay, the ox and the donkey were put in place. It was just like they were in Bethlehem. The crowds prayed and Mass was celebrated

That tradition lives on in our homes, in our church and in our schools each Christmas as we put up our crib. This Christmas, let us remember St Francis and his love of nature, and the wonder of God's creation, as we put up our crib.







Rugadh Slánaitheoir daoibh inniu, is é Críost an Tiarna é – i  
gcathair Dháibhíd