



————— *Art as a Carrier of Faith* —————  
*Born Among the People: A Neapolitan Crèche*  
*December 5, 2019*



**Title:** Crèche (Naples, Italy, 1725-1775)

**Dimensions:** 430 × 465 × 140 cm (overall)

**Figures:** Polychromed terracotta heads with painted glass eyes, wooden limbs, and bodies of wire wrapped in hemp; clothing made variously of 18th- or 19th-century silks, cottons, linens, leather, and paper, some with metallic threads; some figures with additional elements in gold, silver, pearl, coral, ivory, bone, and wood; additional smaller figures composed entirely of polychromed terracotta or polychromed carved wood  
**Animals:** Polychromed terracotta, painted wood, iron, and lead; some with painted glass eyes and additional elements in leather, string, and metal  
**Objects:** Painted terracotta, copper, iron, silver or other metals, ceramic, wax, raw clay, paper, glass, fabric, string, straw, basket fibers, alabaster, and marble  
**Furniture:** Wood, metal, leather, and fabric  
**Setting:** Cork, wood, papier-mâché, twigs, and moss with watercolor and gouache  
The crèche is housed in a 19th century cabinet with a late-18th-century carved and gilded cornice.

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Thank you for joining the Illinois Patrons of the Arts in the Vatican Museums this evening. I would like to thank our speakers this evening, Rebecca J. Long, Reverend Louis J. Cameli, and John Shea for their artistic and theological perspectives on this magnificent crèche.

*Anne*