



# **A Mended and Broken Heart: The Life and Love of Francis of Assisi**

*Wendy Murray*

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Francis of Assisi is Catholicism's most popular saint. Tens of millions of spiritual seekers summon his name and example. But the *real* Francis—both his complicated personality and his complex theology—have been misunderstood for centuries.

In 1228, Pope Gregory IX rushed to canonize St. Francis only two years after his death. Soon thereafter, the Church eliminated significant aspects of his biography from the public record. For Francis's early life was defined by his profligacy; shortly before dying, Francis himself warned his brothers: "Don't be too quick to canonize me. I am perfectly capable of fathering a child."

In *A Mended and Broken Heart*, journalist Wendy Murray slices through the bowdlerized version of Francis's life promoted within the Catholic tradition and reveals instead a saint who was in every way also a real man. Murray stresses in particular the crucial but completely neglected role that Clare of Assisi played in Francis's life, both pre- and postconversion, and his theology.

A profoundly humane portrait of a misunderstood saint, *A Mended and Broken Heart* makes a powerful case that St. Francis's life and thought make him a role model for religious seekers of every faith.

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