

St Francis of Assisi

Francis grew up leading a privileged life as the son of a wealthy cloth merchant. Francis loved to learn and sing songs as a boy. At about the age of nineteen Francis went to battle against the nearby town of Perugia. Francis was captured and taken prisoner. He was held prisoner in a dungeon for a year before his father paid the ransom and he was set free. Over the next few years Francis began to see visions from God that changed his life. The first vision was when he was sick with a high fever. At first he thought that God had called him to fight in the Crusades. However, he had another vision that told him to help the sick. Finally, when praying in a church, Francis heard God tell him to "repair my church, which is falling in ruins." Francis gave all his money to the church. His father became very angry with him. Francis then left his father's home and took a vow of poverty. As Francis lived his life of poverty and preached to people about the life of Jesus Christ, people began to follow him. By 1209, he had around 11 followers. He had one basic rule which was

"To follow the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ and to walk in his footsteps". Francis was known for his love of nature and animals. There are many stories about Saint Francis and his preaching to animals. It is said that one day he was talking to some birds when they began to sing together. Then they flew into the sky and formed the sign of a cross.



Feast Day – October 4th