St. Francis of Assisi.
1181-1226.

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God..." Matthew 5:9.

"Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation." Mark 16:15.

St. Francis of Assisi preached to the birds as his brothers and sisters and not as property or resources to exploit and eat. He taught that we have a sacred duty to respect the natural world. He moved worms off paths to prevent them being crushed by people and he released trapped rabbits and fish back into the wild where they belonged. In 1225 just before he died, St. Francis composed a Canticle praising God's Creation as: Brother Sun, Sister Moon and Stars, Mother Earth, Brother Fire, Sister Water, Brother Wind and Sister Death. It is the earliest surviving work of Italian literature with a known author; it celebrates our interconnection with creation and embraces death as a peaceful transition to God.

The Legend of St. Francis and the Wolf tells of a wolf terrorising the Italian town of Gubbio, eating sheep, cattle and attacking people.

The townspeople planned to kill it. St. Francis, out of compassion and trust in God, met the wolf with respect. He made the Sign of the Cross, commanded the wolf in the name of Christ not to harm anyone and the wolf lay at his feet. St. Francis made a pact: the people would feed the wolf daily and it would stop attacking the town. The wolf placed its paw in Francis' hand and lived peacefully in Gubbio for two years.

Feast Day:
4th October