St. Roch.

c.1295-1327

(exact dates unknown).

"Whenever you enter a town and they receive you, eat what is set before you. Heal the sick in it and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.'"
Luke 10:8-9.

"But whoever is joined with all the living has hope, for a living dog is better than a dead lion."
Ecclesiastes 9:4.

St. Roch was miraculously marked from birth with a red cross on his breast. Early in his life he showed great devotion and ascetism. When he was 20 his parents died and he gave all their wealth to the poor, entered the Franciscan Third Order and went on pilgrimage to Rome where the plague was rife. He cared for plague victims in Italy and France, curing many with the Sign of the Cross. After catching the disease himself, he withdrew to a cave so as not to be a burden. Here a dog brought him bread every day from its master's table and licked his sores clean until its owner discovered the saint and took him home.



Once recovered, Roch returned to helping the sick. He showed people the plague scar on his thigh believing it was divinely sent to imitate Christ's sufferings. Unjustly accused of being a spy he died in prison. However, the red cross on his breast revealed his identity and holiness. Roch's tomb became a place of miracles. He was invoked throughout Europe as the patron saint of plague sufferers and is always pictured with his faithful dog.

Feast Day:
6th August