

# Caedmon

*There is little known about Caedmon, and what we do know comes from Bede. He was a herdsman near Whitby who had a gift for singing and poetry. Although largely illiterate, usually a reason for not accepting someone into a community, he joined the monastery at Whitby under the Abbess Hilda, and devoted much of his time to composing songs based on the books of Genesis and Exodus. Almost all of his work has been lost, although there are some fragments attributed to him. Caedmon, the first English ecclesiastical poet, died c.680.*



- ① Sit down with the children and show them the series of pictures overleaf. You may wish to lay the sheets out either on a table or the floor, and then read the story.
- ② Ask the children the following questions and discuss them:-  
*Which picture did you like?*  
*How do you cope when someone asks you to do something you think is too difficult?*  
*What is your favourite song?*  
*Can you make up a song?*
- ③ Talk about Caedmon creeping away when it was his turn to sing.
- ④ How do you think Caedmon felt when he found he could sing?
- ⑤ The nursery rhyme activity section on iChild features song and rhyme lyric sheets, which you can use with the children.

# Caedmon



**Caedmon lived in  
Yorkshire and looked  
after the cows that  
belonged to the  
Abbey at Whitby.**



**His friends would spend  
their evenings singing  
songs passing the one  
harp they had.**



**Caedmon was scared to sing so he ran away and hid when it was his turn. In his dreams he saw a man who asked him to sing something and so Caedmon composed a song about creation.**



**When he woke up  
he told the Abbess  
about his dream.**



**Later Caedmon became a Monk at the Abbey and composed many other songs which helped people to understand bible stories.**