

Reflection Tuesday Week 33 St Hilda 2020

Saint Hilda was born in Northumbria in 614, the grandniece of King Edwin of Northumbria. She was received into the Church, aged 13, by Paulinus at York, along with King Edwin and many nobles. The first part of Hilda's life were years of constant warfare. When 33, Hilda wanted to join a convent in France with her sister, St Aidan intervened, so she established a small religious house on the north bank of the Wear where she stayed for a year. She then took charge of the monastery of Hieu in Hartlepool, proving to be an able and wise superior. Several years later, she established the famous double monastery at Whitby which she governed for the rest of her life. Hilda was an extraordinary woman. Her influence was widespread and her advice valued by high and low alike. She was a great example of peace and charity. All who knew her called her mother, such were her wonderful godliness and grace. She emphasised the study of Scripture and insisted on careful preparation for the priesthood. Her community included the first English poet, Caedmon. It was at her monastery that the important Synod of Whitby was held in 644 to decide upon a common Church order. She died on 17th November 680.

Zacchaeus inspired Jesus to say that he had come to seek out and save what was lost. Maybe Zacchaeus already believed that by seeking out Jesus and being acknowledged. Like Zacchaeus and St Hilda, we too seek out God for guidance for healing, yearning for forgiveness, encouragement and affirmation, for God's love. For St Hilda the searching and discovery of Jesus and giving her life totally to him led her to inspire a great sense of community and friendship. Her presence inspired hope, charity and peace. People felt the presence of God in her and the power of grace that inspired them also to reflect the presence of God. We may not found monasteries, we may never be a great leader or influence as many people as Hilda, but we can reflect the beauty, charity, peace and godliness that she did. She is not only testimony to this; she stands before us today encouraging us to follow Jesus as wholeheartedly and lovingly as she did.

- Human beings are the only creatures on earth that allow their children to come back home. - *Bill Cosby*
- I busted a mirror and got seven years bad luck, but my lawyer thinks he can get me five. - *Stephen Wright*
- I am free of all prejudices. I hate everyone equally. - *W. C. Fields*