

## St. Hilda

*Born into a branch of the northern royal house of Northumbria in 614, Hilda was christened in York by St. Paulinus. In her early thirties she became a nun, and in 649 was made abbess of a convent in Hartlepool by St. Aidan. Eight years later she founded a joint community at Whitby where she remained until she died in 680. Because of her birth and family background as well as her standing as an abbess, she had tremendous influence over kings, rulers and lords.*

*Whitby became famed for its learning and as the equivalent of a seminary for training for the priest-hood. The monastery was chosen as the place for the very famous Synod of Whitby, when the Church in these islands had to debate and decide on whether to follow the Roman practices and calendar, or those of the Celtic tradition. Although Hilda had been brought up in the Celtic tradition, when the decision was made to follow that of Rome she accepted it with unquestioning loyalty.*



- 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(s) did you like and why?*  
*Are there any pictures that you don't like?*
- 3 Ask the children to talk about their favourite stories, and the things that make them happy.
- 4 Talk to the children about how they might resolve differences.
- 5 Look at a map of Great Britain, can the children find Whitby?

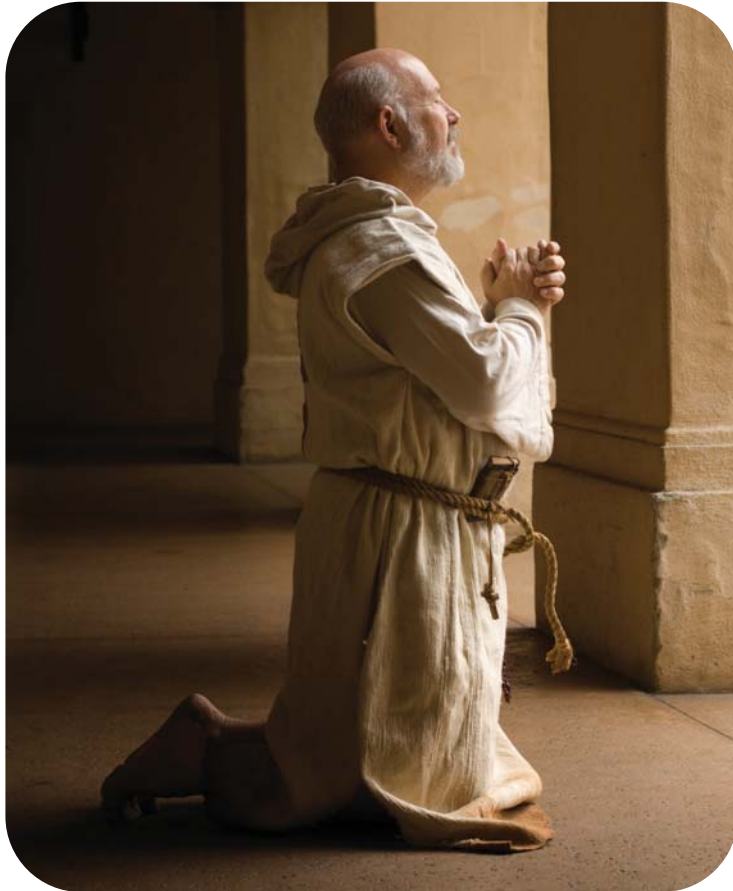
# The Story of St. Hilda



**Hilda became a nun when she was 33 years old. She was persuaded by St. Aiden to begin her work in Hartlepool.**



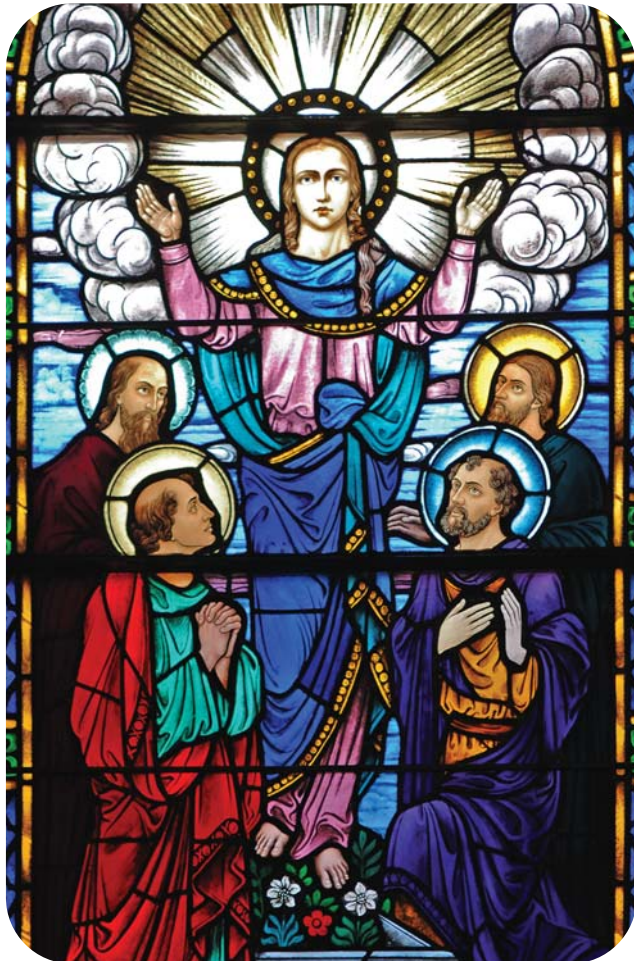
**Later she started a  
new abbey in Whitby  
overlooking the sea.**



**This abbey was a very happy place. The men and women who lived there prayed to God and also took care of the poor people who lived nearby.**



**Hilda was able to read and write. This was quite unusual in those days, and so she taught the monks and nuns to read the Bible.**



**There were some differences amongst groups of Christians, so the Pope decided that Whitby would be a good place to have a meeting and talk about them. The Synod of Whitby (the council of the Church), decided the day Easter would be celebrated.**