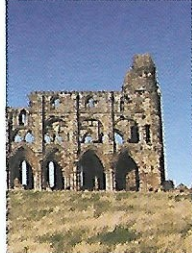


SB museum include the book that was passed from abbot to abbot from the twelfth century to the sixteenth, in which was recorded the story of the monks, their lives and the abbey's fortunes. Other threads of Whitby's history include the story of *Dracula*, written by Bram Stoker after a visit here in 1890, and it has also inspired books and paintings by J.R.R. Tolkien, Lewis Carroll and J.M.W. Turner.



A few years ago Whitby Abbey was named Britain's most romantic ruin in a poll published in the BBC's *Countryfile* magazine, and its dramatic location stays with you long after you've left. If you want to stay for longer than a day, the YHA hostel next door has some of the loveliest bedrooms in town, and certainly the best views.

ST HILDA AND THE SNAKES

Whether you're overnighting or not, the town is well worth a wander around – and if you do have time, a boat trip is hugely enjoyable. As you walk around the abbey and down into the town, look out for ammonites, which are closely intertwined with the story of St Hilda. The tradition tells that they were created by Hilda, as she got rid of a plague of snakes by fossilising them – the snake-like pattern in the stones is apparently the legacy.

One final legend is centred on the bells that once rang at Whitby Abbey. Apparently after the dissolution they were transferred on board a ship to be taken away and sold. But the ship sank, the bells were lost – and to this day, it is said, if you listen carefully you can sometimes hear them ringing on the breeze.

For more information, or to plan a visit, see www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/whitby-abbey/

Mass text

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

The love of God has been poured into our hearts through the Spirit of God dwelling within us, alleluia.

FIRST READING Acts 2:1-11

PSALM Psalm 103

RESPONSE **Send forth your Spirit, O Lord, and renew the face of the earth.**

Or **Alleluia!**

1. Bless the Lord, my soul!
Lord God, how great you are.
How many are your works, O Lord!
The earth is full of your riches. **R.**

2. You take back your spirit, they die,
returning to the dust from which they came.
You send forth your spirit, they are created;
and you renew the face of the earth. **R.**

3. May the glory of the Lord last for ever!
May the Lord rejoice in his works!
May my thoughts be pleasing to him.
I find my joy in the Lord. **R.**

SECOND READING Galatians 5:16-25

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Alleluia!

GOSPEL John 15:26-27; 16:12-15

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke of the marvels of God, alleluia.

Next Sunday's Readings:
Deuteronomy 4:32-34, 39-40
Romans 8:14-17
Matthew 28:16-20



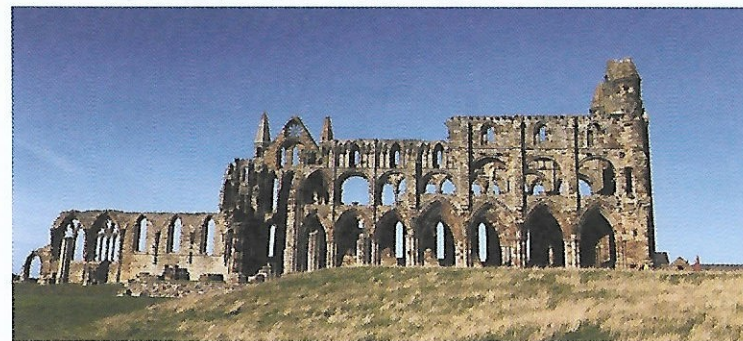
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SUNDAY BULLETIN



THE CHURCH ON THE CLIFF-TOP



Whitby is day-tripper paradise; and the most dramatic and fascinating landmark of the town is the ruined abbey, perched on the headland, a monastery once presided over by one of the most impressive and important figures of the early Catholic Church. She was St Hilda, confidante of popes and kings and convenor of one of the most important meetings in Christian history.

Hilda founded the abbey here in AD 657 and, in common with most monasteries of its day, it was an institution for both monks and nuns (living in separate accommodation). Hilda was the overall head of both sections, and in 664 she was at the centre of a synod that debated the hottest topic of the day (and one with a resonance in Britain's recent history): how connected England was to Europe, and how far it was on a separate island that wanted to make its own rules. The question had been brought into focus by a clash over how to calculate the date of Easter Sunday. In Europe they worked it out using a method championed by Rome, but in this country there was a Celtic formula. In the end, the synod voted to stick with Europe.

Hilda died in 680 and in subsequent centuries the monastery fell into ruin, triggered at least partly by Viking raiders who ransacked the buildings, causing the monks and nuns to flee. Soon after the Norman conquest, though, a soldier called Reinfrid arrived on the headland and was so moved by the ruins that he decided to found a new monastery on the same foundations. Its outline can still be seen in the grass on the abbey site – it remained until the dissolution of the monasteries in the mid sixteenth century.

Two years ago in 2019 English Heritage, which owns Whitby Abbey, invested £1.6 million on a new museum that pays tribute to the history and spirituality of the place across thousands of years. Among the exhibits are stones from an ancient cross that go back possibly as far as Hilda herself. Other standout attractions at the

Catholic heritage in Britain



Joanna Moorhead visits Whitby Abbey in Yorkshire.

23 MAY 2021

PENTECOST SUNDAY

YEAR B

DIVINE OFFICE WEEK IV