

“Our Lady of Kirkstall” – for the formation of a parish.

“Look now, Seleth*. See the place I showed you

In your dream. The vale by the river Aire,

Called ‘Kirkstall’; close to the city of York.

See how the abbey still stands, a place for

Pleasure now, and sometimes prayer. Your home once,

After months of faithful searching. Home too

For holy monks in years of grace and hope.

See the peaceful cloister and the windows

Of the high church, now open to the sky,

A place of light and transience, where once

Candles and plainsong called people to stay.

Today, Seleth, a new dream is dreaming.

Beyond the abbey walls a community

Of faith is being built, named after me,

To inspire devotion, to end division.

‘Our Lady of Kirkstall’ – a good name for

A parish to grow into. A good name

For praying with and proclaiming God’s Son

To an ungodly world. Let’s watch, Seleth,

And help all those here to act with kindness,

To be generous in deed and in thought,

To welcome the stranger and feed the poor,

To visit the sick, the lonely and lost.

Let’s pray for them, Seleth. May their hearts be

Joyful; may their hands be willing; may their

Faith grow strong in the service of Our Lord.

Amen.”

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*Seleth was a 12th century Hermit who dreamed that Our Lady told him to seek a place in the north of England and to found a religious community there. This became the Cistercian abbey at Kirkstall in Leeds, West Yorkshire.