

Saint Cecilia

- Feastday: November 22
- Patron Saint of: musicians
- Birth: ~180 AD
- Death: ~230 AD
- Place of Burial: Basilica di Santa Cecilia in Trastevere, Rome, Italy



"Men call me Cecilia, but my most beautiful name is that of Christian."



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Saint Cecilia came from a rich Roman family. She is said to have worn sackcloth next to her skin, fasted, and invoked the saints and angels, beseeching them to guard her virginity. When she was given in marriage to a man named Valerian, she sang in her heart to God and before the consummation of her nuptials, she told her husband she had taken a vow of virginity and had an angel protecting her. Valerian asked to see the angel as proof, and Cecilia told him he would have eyes to see once he was baptized by Pope Urbanus.

Following his baptism, Valerian returned to his wife and found an angel at her side. The angel then crowned Cecilia with a chaplet of rose and lily. When Valerian's brother, Tibertius, was also baptized, the brothers dedicated their lives to burying the martyrs who were killed each day in the city. Both brothers were eventually arrested and brought before the prefect where they were executed after they refused to offer a sacrifice to the false gods.

St. Cecilia spent her time preaching and in her lifetime was able to convert over four hundred people, most of whom were baptized by Pope Urban. Cecilia was later arrested and condemned to be suffocated in the baths. She was shut in for one night and one day, as fires were stoked to a terrifying heat, but Cecilia did not even sweat.

Soon, an executioner was sent to cut off her head. Despite being struck three times, she was unable to decapitated and she was left bleeding. Crowds came to her and collected her blood while she preached to them or prayed. On the third day, she died and was buried by Pope Urban.

Officials exhumed her body in 1599 and found her to be incorrupt, the first of all incorrupt saints. She was draped in a silk veil and wore a gold embroidered dress. Officials only looked through the veil in an act of holy reverence and made no further examinations. They also reported a "mysterious and delightful flower-like odor which proceeded from the coffin."

St. Cecilia is regarded as the patroness of music because she heard heavenly music in her heart when she was married.