

## Monday Week 34 St Cecilia 2021

Devotion to St Cecilia spread far and wide because of the *Passion of Saint Cecilia*, which presents her as a perfect example of a Christian woman, who embraced virginity and suffered martyrdom for the love of Christ. A basilica is named after her in Rome. Nothing much is known about Cecilia except her existence and her name; along with many stories with little other historical facts. No-one knows why she become popular in the middle of the 6<sup>th</sup> century or her association with music. It may come from the description in the *Passion* of Cecilia singing to God “in her heart” while musicians played on her wedding day, or it may come from a linguistic confusion. In the *Passion* she is said to have been stifled to death *candentibus organis*, “with the pipes glowing red-hot”. This could have been misread as *cantantibus organis*, “with the organ playing.”

Hosea speaks of being betrothed to God with integrity and justice, tenderness and love. This is not a one-way action but a mutual response. What we may not realise is that this sense of being loved and loving in return happens regularly in life yet we fail to recognise it. Perhaps we do not think of our relationship with God in terms of betrothal. However, we do have special moments in life that speak gently but powerfully of God’s presence which can only be a loving presence. We wish we could hang on to these moments but they seem to pass too quickly. The synodal encounters, on offer, hope to give us the opportunity to speak about those special times, special encounters with God so that we might relive them and share the experience and the presence of God’s love with others. Use the opportunity!