Cecilia has been honored as a martyr since about 545. According to a written legend, The Passion of St. Cecilia, she was a Roman Christian of the patrician class betrothed to the pagan Valerian. The Cecilia Passion has her singing to God in her heart on her wedding day. Cecilia tells Valerian she has made a vow of virginity and persuades him to convert to Christianity and enter into a celibate marriage. His brother, Tiburtius, also becomes a Christian. The brothers are later martyred. When Cecilia refuses to perform an idolatrous act, she too is martyred. Cecilia is the patron of musicians.

This young Roman martyr invites believers to be watchful on their journey toward the encounter with Christ, gladdening the earthly pilgrimage with the festivity of music and song.

May St. Cecilia accompany each of you from Heaven, dear brothers and sisters, and help you to carry out your mission fully in the Church.

— St. John Paul II, November 22, 2003