

Rv 4:1-11

Lk 19:11-28

Gold Coins

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All of us have God-given gifts and talents. Some of us are very good in doing arts and crafts, like sewing and making homemade greeting cards; some of us are very good teachers; and a number of us are excellent cooks. Some of us are great in fixing things around the house; some of us are athletic and good in sports; others have the gift of singing, writing music and playing musical instruments. We are all good students and dedicated to our studies and ministries. A number of us are great in doing big tasks, such as food shopping and paying our bills and small things such as acts of thoughtfulness and kindness. All these are our gold coins, as we have heard in Luke's Gospel – the Parable of the Ten Gold Coins - and thank God we have them.

Since we do have these gold coins, we can simply do our best to trade them and gain more coins or to allow these gifts, these golden coins to multiply, just like the first and the second servant did in Jesus' parable. Notice that a gold coin is not a reward, but actually a responsibility and obligation. In the parable, the nobleman tells his 10 servants, who were given ten gold coins, "*Engage in trade with these until I return.*" Take the first servant, for example. From one gold coin, he was able to gain 10 more gold coins for his master. Since he was faithful in this small endeavor, he was given 10 cities to take charge of. From one small task came additional responsibilities. But that's what faith, love and sharing are all about. We don't keep our God-given gifts and coins to ourselves, but we share them with others; we use these to help, serve and minister to other people.

Jesus says in Luke's Gospel, "*to everyone who has, more will be given; but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.*" Wouldn't it be a waste if we wrapped our gold coin in a handkerchief and stored it away somewhere, as the third servant did in the parable? There is no joy, peace and love in this kind of action since we are unable to share it and use it for the good of others.

St. Cecilia, whom we celebrate today, was also given gold coins and she used them well. Although Cecilia is one of the most famous of the Roman martyrs, the familiar stories we know about her are apparently not founded in authentic material. There is no trace of honor being paid to her in early times. A fragmentary inscription of the late 4th century refers to a church named after her, and her feast was celebrated at least in 545 A.D..

According to legend, Cecilia was a young Christian girl, from a wealthy pagan family, who was engaged to a Roman named Valerian. Through her influence Valerian was converted and was martyred along with his brother. The legend about Cecilia's death says that after being struck three times on the neck by a sword, she lived for three days. She left her possessions to the poor and her home to the Church, to be used as a house of worship. Since the Renaissance period, she has been portrayed with a viola or a

small organ.

Cecilia's faith, love and dedication to Jesus Christ were her gold coins. Her faith meant everything to her in a time when faith was unpopular and a dangerous thing. She vowed her virginity to God, desiring to root herself even more deeply in her Baptismal consecration. Despite the fact that the Roman prefect attempted to persuade her toward more "politically correct" behavior, Cecilia refused to give up her Christian faith.

Like Jesus Christ, St. Cecilia was a witness, a witness of a love stronger than death. Like any good Christian, she sang in her heart and with her voice. Her music is the eternal heavenly call, which sounds in the soul despite the noise and pressures of our world today. Cecilia's life and witness inspires us to respond to God's call in our daily lives, and to continue to share our gifts and gold coins and live our unshakeable vows of love and community life, even unto death.