

Today we celebrate the Feast of St. Lucy, virgin and martyr.

Lucy was born of a noble Greek family during a time of great Christian persecutions by the Romans. Her father died when she was five years old but her mother instilled in her a great love of Christ.

Later, her mother discovered that Lucy had decided to give her life to Jesus Christ by remaining a virgin for life and selling the family wealth so as to distribute alms to the poor and homeless. Embarrassed by the loss of his fiancé and outraged at the selling of the family fortune, Lucy's pagan boyfriend reported her to the authorities as being a Christian. Lucy was arrested, humiliated, tortured and eventually died from her wounds but she never wavered from her trust in Jesus Christ, her Savior.

Isaiah's readings today state "They that hope in the LORD will renew their strength." Lucy believed in the Lord Jesus and this was her strength. Matthew's Gospel reads, "Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest." Lucy knew that "rest" was eternal life with Jesus Christ.

In today's world it is easy to feel "uncomfortable" or "burdened" if we express our beliefs to others when they ridicule Christians. Or we may shy away from religious conversations and not stand up for our Christian faith.

Before the ChristLife series, I was that very person. After the Discovering Christ, Following Christ and Sharing Christ experiences my Christian faith became a reason for living. Now I understand that one phrase we repeat at every Mass during the Confession to God, "... and what I have failed to do. Through my fault..." How often have I failed to express my Christian belief.

May we learn from Isaiah, Matthew and St. Lucy. Let us be proud of our Christian faith no matter the consequences and know that Jesus Christ will be at our side - now and for all eternity.