December 13th: Memorial of Saint Lucy, Virgin and Martyr

Gospel text (*Mt* 25:1-13): Jesus told his disciples this parable: "The Kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were wise. The foolish ones, when taking their lamps, brought no oil with them, but the wise brought flasks of oil with their lamps. Since the bridegroom was long delayed, they all became drowsy and fell asleep. At midnight, there was a cry, 'Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!' Then all those virgins got up and trimmed their lamps..."

Saint Lucia, virgin and martyr (IV century)

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Today, we commemorate Saint Lucia, virgin and martyr. Lucia—a name that means "light to the world"—was educated in the Christian faith and made a virginal commitment to God. For defending her virginal love for Jesus Christ, she was martyred in the year 304. It was the time of the third great persecution against Christians, undertaken by the emperor Diocletian. This emperor, already retired shortly after, was a witness to the peace for the Christians that Constantine granted through the Edict of Milan in the year 313.

This is how things are: Lucia, a simple virgin girl, and Diocletian, an emperor, were contemporaries. Lucia will always be remembered with joy throughout the world and by many people: her name is even included among the saints mentioned in Eucharistic Prayer I (the "Roman Canon") of the mass. On the contrary, the memory of Diocletian does not reach beyond the history books of the Church that recount the persecutions of the Roman Empire against Christians. Sad and poor memory!

—The understanding of faith and the bonds of charity: that is what remains immortalized forever...