

Pax vobiscum. Peace be with you all. Michael Valadez' presentation has inspired me to resume my reading of Tolkien's *The Two Towers*.¹ Way to go, Michael!

Tonight, I read the next chapter of *The Two Towers*, "The Voice of Saruman." Wow! It was excellent reading.

In his presentation, Michael spoke of the "Christology" of Tolkien's trilogy: Gandalf as prophet, Frodo as priest, and Aragorn² as king. Gandalf the White is the star of this chapter.

Gandalf and company find Saruman in the Tower of Orthanc. (He is held up there because his forces have just been defeated by King Theoden and the Ents, with Gandalf and company to guide them.) Gandalf the White offers Saruman the opportunity to convert, to turn from his evil ways, and to give his valuable assistance to the good forces of Middle Earth. Saruman refuses and so Gandalf the White strips him of his color-ranking and casts him "from the order and from the Council."

Gandalf then speculates that Sauron might conquer Isengard and destroy Saruman. This prompts Pippin to ask, "And what if Sauron does not conquer? What will you do to [Saruman]?"

"I? Nothing!" said Gandalf. "I will do nothing to him. I do not wish for mastery. What will become of him? I cannot say. I grieve so much that what was good now festers in the tower."³

This is a very striking passage. It is especially so because Gandalf says, "I grieve so much that what was good now festers in the tower." Gandalf is a Christ-figure; he makes us think of how our Lord grieves over sinners. He is very sad that what was good now festers. Every sinner – and all of us have sinned to one degree or other – was once good. Jesus grieves profoundly over the loss of any soul. What should give us hope is that if – by mortal sin – we ever stray to the edge of the abyss, then Jesus is profoundly saddened, but – without forcing one's will – makes a supernatural effort to bring back the sinner. He died for our salvation. By prayer and good example and evangelization, let us be the "hobbits" that can be His instruments to bring back our prodigal brethren and ourselves. Praised by Jesus Christ, now and forever!

¹ Michael a seminarian at Holy Apostles Seminary studying for the Diocese of Kalamazoo, Michigan. He gave a presentation on the Theology of the *Lord of the Rings* in our class on Sacred Art and Music.

² This publication, *The Dunadin*, is named after Aragorn. He is my favorite character.

³ J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Two Towers* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1966) 210.