



We have already stated that Tolkien disliked allegory and simply to write an engaging story. Yet his story is decidedly Christian and Catholic because his mind is so close to the Mind that authored the Christian story (Cf. Kreeft, *The Philosophy of Tolkien*). Indeed, C.S. Lewis says that this story will make you *cry*. Please hear Lewis' declaration with the words of Gandalf in mind: "I will not say: do not weep; for not all tears are an evil."¹

Yet there is a very down-to-earth, close-to-home reason why J.R.R. Tolkien became – by the grace of God – a good Catholic. After the death of her husband, Mabel Tolkien became very serious about Christianity and, in June of 1900, she was received into the Catholic Church. Thus she and her sons converted from Anglicanism to Catholicism.² "So it was that J.R.R. Tolkien, at the age of eight, became a child convert. Thereafter, he always remained a resolute Catholic, a fact which influenced profoundly the direction of his life."³

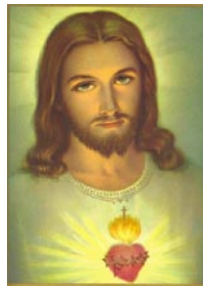


J.R.R. Tolkien's mother underwent much persecution and suffering in order to become Catholic, stay Catholic, and raise her children in the one true Faith.

"Tolkien always considered his mother a martyr for the faith."⁴ Yet like all martyrs and like Christ, her death meant life for the Church. Indeed, her martyrdom was a seed that died and went into the ground soon to rise as blossom in the life and writings of her son John Ronald Reuel Tolkien. It is no wonder that Joseph Pearce can make the following observation:



What an extraordinary thought; though much as a glancing reference to Jesus Christ in a single paragraph of thick volumes, *His face is glimpsed on virtually every page.*⁵



extraordinary thing, I Tolkien makes never so reference to Jesus Christ in all *The Lord of the Rings'* face is glimpsed on

¹ J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Return of the King* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1994) 339.

² Cf. Joseph Pearce, *Tolkien: Man and Myth* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1998) 15-16.

³ Joseph Pearce, *Tolkien: Man and Myth* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1998). 17.

⁴ *Ibid.* 21.

⁵ *Ibid.* 82. *Emphasis mine.*