

Reading Guide

The Road Goes Ever On—A Christian Journey Through The Lord of the Rings

Secondary

- 1 Tolkien was Catholic, but he never overtly expressed his faith in his writing. How is his personal value system revealed in his writings?
- 2 Catholic virtues and vices are discussed in *The Road Goes Ever On* book. What other virtues and vices could be added to reflect our current society?
- 3 The book reflects on the lives of saints. Is there anyone in your life who exemplifies the virtues of a particular character in Tolkien's work?
- 4 The characters who engage in some form of vice seem to lose whatever virtues they once had. Is that true to life or are real people more complicated than that?
- 5 Who is your favorite character? Who is a character you love to hate? Do they remind you of anyone in your life?

Adult/Book Clubs

- 1 Does focusing on the Christian aspects of Tolkien's work diminish or enhance the power of his story?
- 2 Considering virtues and vices in our modern world seems old-fashioned and out of date, where characters are now seen as "complicated" with mixed personalities. Does reflecting on the extreme nature of some of Tolkien's characters still hold value in a world that often does not acknowledge the existence of evil?
- 3 A few select saints are considered in light of Tolkien's heroic characters. Do you know anyone who could be said to fit the same mold, acting as light in a dark world, fighting modern "Rings of Power?"
- 4 Several modern "Rings of Power" are discussed in the book. What might be some others not mentioned?
- 5 The author attempts to link Tolkien's writing to the modern world; are there other novels that could be considered in a similar fashion, allowing the reader to translate the meaning of the novel experience into personal lives today?

Paperback/Journal Reflections

1 Did the book inspire any resolutions in me? What might I change in my life after reading this book?

2 What “Rings of Power” influence my life? What character would I most like to talk with? Why?

3 Did any of the reflections in the book anger, annoy, or frighten me? Why?

4 Discussing private faith in public can be difficult these days. Does this book help me to reflect on my personal relationship with God in the safety of a private setting? Is there anyone I can safely discuss my thoughts and feelings with?

5 What virtues do I lack in my life? What vices plague me? How can I address my strengths and weaknesses honestly without feeling condemned? Can I envision God as Tolkien did, through the lens of good characters living out their best qualities offered through a hidden strength?