

[Cecilia]

Martyr at Rome, c. 280

- I Most gracious God, whose blessed martyr Cecilia didst sing in her heart to strengthen her witness to thee: We thank thee for the makers of music whom thou hast gifted with Pentecostal fire; and we pray that we may join with them in creation's song of praise until at the last, with Cecelia and all thy saints, we come to share in the song of those redeemed by our Savior Jesus Christ; who with thee and the Holy Spirit liveth and reigneth, one God, in glory everlasting. *Amen.*
- II Most gracious God, whose blessed martyr Cecilia sang in her heart to strengthen her witness to you: We give you thanks for the makers of music whom you have gifted with Pentecostal fire; and we pray that we may join with them in creation's song of praise until at the last, with Cecelia and all your saints, we come to share in the song of those redeemed by our Savior Jesus Christ; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. *Amen.*

Psalm

150

Lessons

Azariah 1:28-34, 52-59, 68
Revelation 15:1-4
Luke 10:38-42

Preface of All Saints

“You must make your choice,” C. S. Lewis wrote in *Mere Christianity*. “Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up as a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon, or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God.”

Lewis did not always believe this. Born in Belfast on November 29, 1898, Lewis was raised as an Anglican but rejected Christianity during his adolescent years. After serving in World War I, he started a long academic career as a scholar in medieval and renaissance literature at both Oxford and Cambridge. He also began an inner journey that led him from atheism to agnosticism to theism and finally to faith in Jesus Christ.

“Really, a young Atheist cannot guard his faith too carefully,” he later wrote of his conversion to theism in *Surprised by Joy*. “Dangers lie in wait for him on every side ... Amiable agnostics will talk cheerfully about ‘man’s search for God’. To me, as I then was, they might as well have talked about the mouse’s search for the cat. You must picture me all alone in that room at Magdalen, night after night, feeling, whenever my mind lifted even for a second from my work, the steady, unrelenting approach of Him whom I so earnestly desired not to meet. That which I greatly feared had at last come upon me. In the Trinity Term of 1929 I gave in, and admitted that God was God, and knelt and prayed: perhaps, that night, the most dejected and reluctant convert in all England.” Two years later, his conversion was completed: “I know very well when, but hardly how, the final step was taken. I was driven to Whipsnade one sunny morning. When we set out, I did not believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and when we reached the zoo, I did.”

Lewis’s conversion inaugurated a wonderful outpouring of Christian apologetics in media as varied as popular theology, children’s literature, fantasy and science fiction, and correspondence on spiritual matters with friends and strangers alike.

In 1956 Lewis married Joy Davidman, a recent convert to Christianity. Her death four years later led him to a transforming encounter with the Mystery of which he had written so eloquently before. Lewis died at his home in Oxford on November 22, 1963. The inscription on his grave reads: “Men must endure their going hence”.