

The Deeds of Michael:
A Collection of
Tales and Legends
from around the World

The Feast of Saint Michael

from *The Golden Legend*

There followeth the feast of Saint Michael the archangel, and first the exposition of his name.

Michael is expounded sometimes as God. And oft-times, as Saint Gregory saith, when a thing of marvellous virtue is done, Michael is sent forth, so that he, by the deed and the name, be given to understand that none may do that God may do, and therefore be attributed to him many things of marvellous virtue. For like as Daniel witnesseth, he shall arise and address in the time of Antichrist against him, and shall stand as a defender and keeper for them that be chosen. He also fought with the dragon and his angels and, casting them out of heaven, had a great victory. He also had a great plea and altercation with the devil for the body of Moses, because he would not show it; for the children of Israel should have adored and worshipped it. He received the souls of saints and brought them into the paradise of exultation and joy. He was prince of the synagogue of the Jews, but now he is established of our Lord, prince of the church of Jesu Christ. And as it is said, he made the plagues of Egypt, he departed and divided the Red Sea, he led the people of Israel by the desert and set them in the land of promission, he is had among the company of holy angels as bannerer, and, bearing the sign of our Lord, he shall slay by the commandment of God, right puissantly, Antichrist that shall be in the Mount of Olivet. And dead men shall arise at the voice of this same archangel. And he shall show at the day of judgment the cross, the spear, the nails and the crown of thorns of Jesu Christ.

Michael Legends

From a Speech by Pico Della Mirandola

If we be permitted to speak in dark and veiled words, of the Mysteries— insofar as permitted by the weakness of man whose head has been sheathed in darkness since the Fall and whose glance is obscured through passion and death—I exhort you to call unto Raphael, the heavenly physician. He will bestow Health upon you by means of his dialectics, which affect us like a salubrious herb. And then will the Archangel Gabriel endow us with Divine Force, guiding us through the wonders of nature and showing how God’s omnipotence is at work within them. After this pilgrimage through the sphere of philosophy, he hands us to Michael, the highest priest, whose grace will give unto us the priesthood of Theology, like unto a crown fashioned of precious stones.

Gothic Hymn unto the Archangel Michael

Michael! Exalted, powerful Prince of the Heavens!
Who carriest aloft one golden shimmer
Of Christ, the King,
Holy is thy name, O Michael,
Who art like unto God.

As companion of the Thrones
Thou art the foundation stone
Of the Heavenly Firmament.
Thou standest in the castle of the Kyriotetes
And risest high amongst the Dynameis.

Amidst the Exusiai and Archai
As a radiant light thou appearest.
Into the Cherubim’s sacred chorus
The cleansing fire thou carriest.
By thy holy spear supported,
Over the Seraphim thou rulest.
Thou, as the eldest, art the rightful leader
Of all the hosts of Heaven.

Thou appearest gleaming, in the course of the ages,
In the fourfold row of the Elders.
In the fourth globe, thou art the Priest
Of the guiding spirits
Whose number is twice times four.
Thou abidest close to the Creator's Throne,
Where thou rightfully dwellest.

Thou art the countenance
Of the ninefold ordered
Ranks of the angels,
And of the noble structure
Of the myriad heavenly hosts
Ever sounding the praise
Of the thrice holy Trinity.
Eternally thou coverest
The Highest Deity's countenance and feet
And ever inclinest thyself
Before Its three aspects.

Thou art the Companion
Of Uriel and Gabriel and Raphael,
Who cover with six blazing flames
The Deity since the World's beginnings.
Mayest thou remain to the end of time
United with that which is needful.
As the Creator's creature
Thou servest Him faithfully.
Lifted up to the heights,
The lower heaven thou dost not forsake,
While the rebel who fled
In the abyss of hell is chastised.
Thus thou dost harbor the highest of virtues,
And gloriously gleameth thy strength.
Thou rulest the dark hosts of the demons
And shalt be the judge
Of Satan and his angels.
Thou wast sent from Heaven
To save and purify the Hebrew people,
And hast fulfilled in splendor
The exalted Daniel's prophecies:

That thou wouldst fight
At the side of the faithful.

Therefore we pray thee,
Exalted warrior
And glorious victor:
Do unto us who have been reborn through baptism
What thou hast once bestowed
On the Mystery Schools:

Ward thou off the arrows
And the demons' pernicious ire.
Destroy the sores, drive out the plague,
From disaster protect us.
Place in every soul
Salvation, peace, and glowing faith.
For behold! After one year's passing
Until we shall be
To sing Halleluja in praise of thy dignity.

Michael, thou most radiant helper
Of the threefold Sun-Deity!
Thou proven leader!
With the Host of the angels on high
Full of exultation thou singest:
Holy art Thou, O Father,
Holy, thou sacred Logos
Who wast there from the beginning,
And holy the Spirit
In Its might and Its glory,
In Its Divine Being and strength.

Michael, Prince of angels,
Of fire is fashioned thy form,
And wondrous thy beauty.
Without bodily sheaths
Through the expanse of the world thou wanderest
To fulfill the All-Creator's commands.
In thy strength thou showest thyself mighty,
And erectest in thy Temple a source of healing,
Which is honored in the Name of thy Glory.

O Lord! Who, as it is written,
Makest thy angels to winds
And thy servants to flames of fire:
Thou hast appointed as foremost leader
Amidst thy hosts
The Archangel Michael.
He follows thy beckoning, O Logos,
And sounds in reverence
The threefold holy song of praise
Exulting the revelation of Thy glory.
– From the Greek

Michael

Thou art the leader
Of the non-embodied Angels
And beholdest as the bearer of rites
And as Initiate
The divine, gleaming radiance.
Help us, Michael,
Our leader!
Forever and ever we pay homage to thee
And worship the Holy Trinity.
– Greek Hymn from the Middle Ages