

## Michaelmass

The Archangel Michael appears four times in Holy Scripture. In the Book of Daniel he is “one of the chief princes”, identified by the Lord in a theophany as “one who upholds me” and the “great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people” (10:13, 21). In the Book of Jude it is the Archangel Michael who disputes with the devil over the body of Moses (9). In the Book of Revelation it is Michael and his angels that war against the dragon and prevail (12:7).

The name Michael in Hebrew means “Who is like unto God?”, which, together with his victory over the devil in Revelation, led many ancient theologians to identify Michael as the Lord Christ. The liturgical observance of Michael originated in Phrygia, soon spreading to the west. As early as the Leonine Sacramentary (c. 461 A. ✠ D.), the Feast of Michael, Archangel is celebrated on September 30, which the western church moved to September 29. Tradition holds that in the time of St. Gelasius (492-496 A. ✠ D.) Michael appeared on Mount Garganus in southeastern Italy. The observance of Michaelmass marks an important period in the liturgical year, the third major division of the Trinity season, in which the readings point us to the coming in glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the final judgment.

### **Cover Art** – *The Archangel Michael Slays the Dragon*

Master of Saint Verdiana, c. 1380-1389 A. ✠ D. The Master of Saint Verdiana is an unidentified Italian painter of the medieval period. In the collection of the Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, Maryland.

---

# The Feast of



# Michaelmass