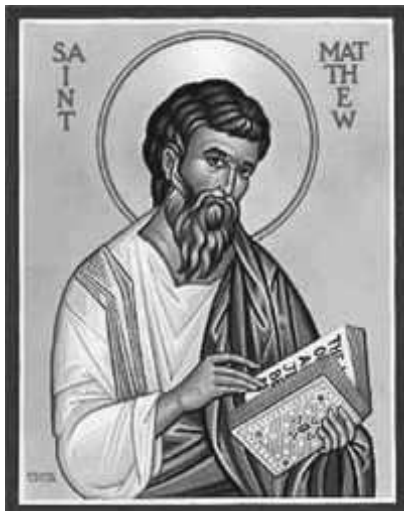


St Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist – 21 September



Matthew was one of 12 apostles. But he began as a publican i.e. a tax collector of Jewish race who worked for the Romans, before he left all at the call of Christ. From earliest times, he was regarded as the author of the first of the four Gospels. The Gospel of Matthew is in correct, concise style, very suitable for public reading.

His usual emblem as an evangelist is a man, because his genealogy emphasised the family ties of Christ.

In art, he has been represented as either an evangelist or as an apostle. As an evangelist, he has been depicted sitting at a desk, writing his gospel with an angel holding the inkwell. In the Middle Ages he was even given a pair of spectacles.

Matthew was martyred by a sword or a spear, some think in Ethiopia.

St Michael and All Angels – 29 September



Michael is an archangel, whose name means 'who is like unto God?' He makes various appearances throughout the Bible, from the book of Daniel to the Book of Revelation. In Daniel, he is 'one of the princes' of the heavenly host, and the special guardian of Israel. In Revelation, he is the principal fighter of the heavenly battle against the devil.

From early times, Michael's cult was strong in the British Isles. Churches at Malmesbury (Wilts.) , Clive (Glos.) and Stanmer (East Sussex) were dedicated to him. Bede mentions him. St Michael's Mount in Cornwall was believed to commemorate a vision there in the 8th century. By the end of the Middle Ages, Michael had 686 English churches dedicated to him.

In art Michael is often depicted as slaying the dragon (pictures of the Martyr George are often similar, but only Michael has wings.), as in the 14th century East Anglican Psalters, or in Epstein's famous sculpture at Coventry cathedral. Or he is found (in medieval art) as weighing souls, as at Chaldon (Surrey), Swalcliffe (Oxon.), Eaton Bishop (Hereford and Worcester), and Martham in Suffolk. Michael's most famous shrine in Western Europe is Mont-Saint-Michel, where a Benedictine abbey was founded in the 10th century.

In England, Michaelmas was one of the four 'quarter days', each falling near the solstices and equinoxes; they were Lady Day, March 25th (the beginning of the new year in England before 1752); Midsummer Day, June 24th; Michaelmas, Sept. 29th, and Christmas, December 25th. Lady Day and Michaelmas were the two most important for setting the terms of leases.

The 'All Angels' bit of this feast-day was added in 1969 when Gabriel and Raphael were included in with Michael.