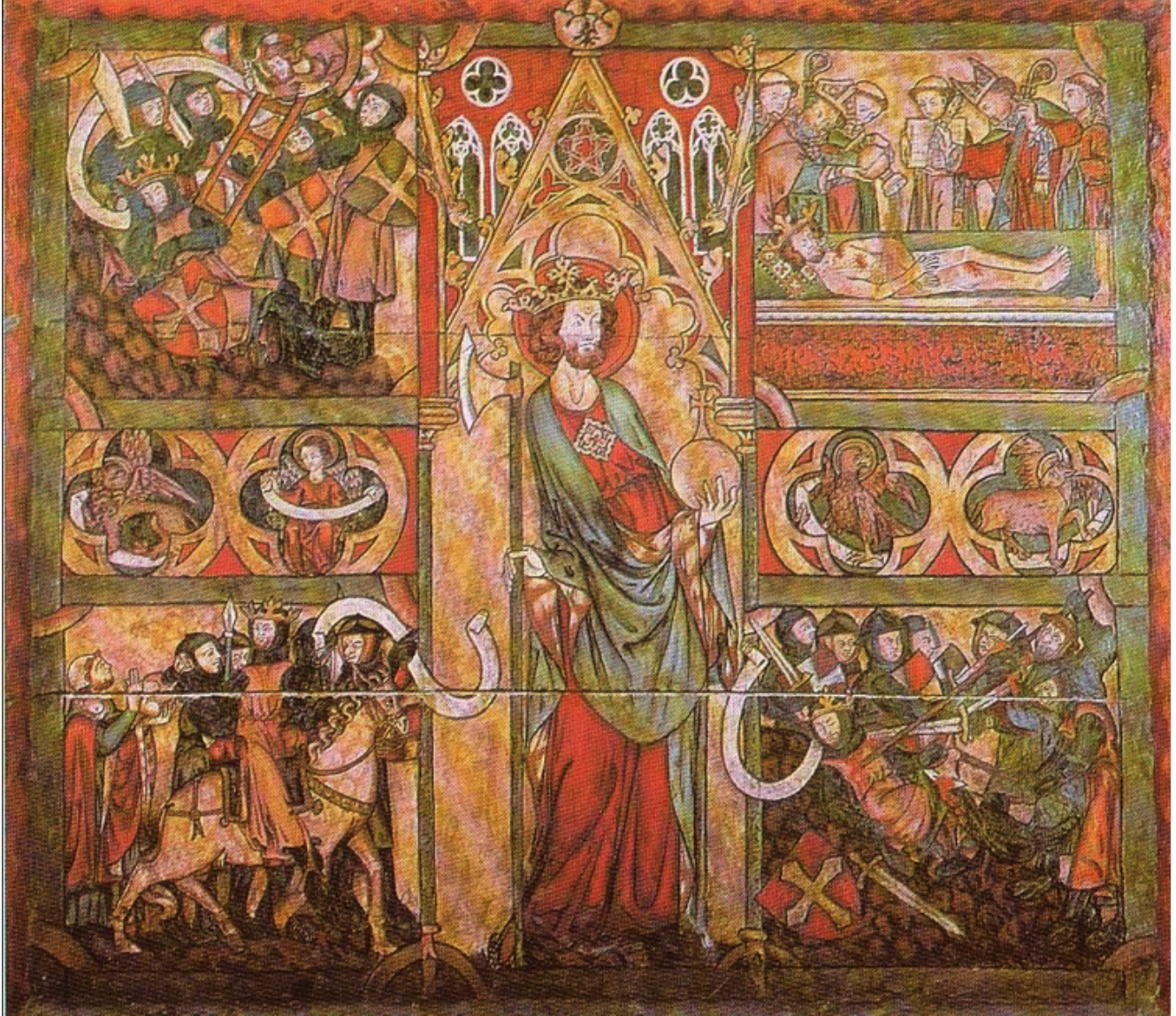


The Martyrdom of St Olav

by [Walt Garlington](#) (February 2021)



14th century altar frontal illustrating scenes from King Olav's life and death.

Over the mountains,
Through forest and fjord,
The betrayer comes,
Wearing a crown,
Wielding a blade.
Faithful to Freja and Odin,

To Balder and Thor;
Now he splinters their shrines
With a stroke of his axe.

In their place he leaves
Painted planks of wood—
Of Jesus Christ,
Called Son of God,
And of Mary,
Virgin-Mother
(So he names her);
Also there a Cross
Instead of Yggdrasil,
Tree of the World.

He has come nigh
To Stiklestad,
Seeking to rule.
We will throttle
This man—his blood will run!
But la! He dies
Peaceful, serene;
Utters no curse
But a blessing on us.

Day follows night;
Day follows night;
Day follows night;
And from all around
Rivers of men
Flow to his grave.
They bow before him,
And kiss his tomb and his axe.
They ask for his prayers
And leave healthy
And unburthened.

The light of his Jesus

Shines brightly from there,
Upon all the land
And the faces of men.
But the shadows grow darker
In our hidden wood.
Ragnarök has come,
But not as foretold.
Our world crumbles and dies,
But Norway reborn
Is alive, and united
As never before
Beneath the banner
Bearing the axe
Of Olav, forever her king!

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Walt Garlington was born and raised in that part of Dixieland called Louisiana. A chemical engineer by training, he has spent the last several years writing full-time. He has written essays and poems for *The Hayride*, *The Tenth Amendment Center*, *The Abbeville Institute*, *Reckonin'*, *Katehon*, *Geopolitica*, and *USA Really*. He writes regularly at his own web site, [Confiteri: A Southern Perspective](#).

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