

St Ansgar in the Prairies and the Frost



Winter 1946 by Andrew Wyeth

by [Walt Garlington](#) (March 2022)

Draw up the dividing line,
North to south in the middle
Of the stormy sea, a mirror
Image on each side: To the east
Germany and Scandinavia;
To the west, the Great Plains
Of North America,

From Kansas to North Dakota,
Over to Wisconsin,
And later into Manitoba,
Fanning out through Canada:
Germans, Swedes, Danes, and Norse
Living their ancient life
On both sides of the Atlantic –
‘Ope’ spoken by the tongue
And lutefisk ready on the plate;
Hamburgs, Bremens, and Malmos
Spread across the Midwest,
Home to Meyerses, Nelsons,
Schmitzes, Schneiders –
One body united across the ocean,
Sharing a common father
In the ever young and ancient
Orthodox Church,
Saint Ansgar the Enlightener,
Apostle of the northern lands,
Overthrower of idols,
Powerful preacher,
Worker of wonders.

Through baptism, he made you
One in Christ, destroying
The enmities of yore.
Follow him still; do not run back
To Loki, Odin,
To the gods of elder days,
But gather round mighty Ansgar,
Standing in his sturdy ship,
Wielding the weapon
Of the Holy Cross of Christ,
That you may reach
The true Valhalla,
Safe forever from the devouring jaws
Of the Nidhogg snake.
Then the stories that will be told
Of all the glories of the Christians
Of Europe's snowy marches
And North America's prairie lands
Will be greater than the heroes'
Of the sagas you have heard!

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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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