

The Magdalene and the Madonna: The Restoration of the Divine Feminine

By Laura Dunham

Dan Brown's popular novel, *The DaVinci Code*, touched a deep chord in the human psyche, making a major contribution to the restoration of the story of the Divine Feminine in history and in the human heart. Hidden for millennia, the story of Mary Magdalene as the Bride of Christ and Mother of Jesus' child, her womb the Holy Grail, the sacred vessel for Christ's blood, is now known to millions. Today people are finding the Divine within themselves, choosing spirituality over religion, experience over dogma and doctrine.

In a world where information is instantly and widely available, and intuitive people routinely draw upon the universal field of energy for guidance and healing, our human and spiritual heritage will no longer remain hidden—whether purposely suppressed or lost through time. The Piscean Age of male, hierarchical control is giving way to the Aquarian Age of balance between the masculine and feminine principles. The world awaits a time of harmony, creativity, and peace that comes from this balance.

It is only fitting, then, that Mary Magdalene should become the iconic woman of this emerging age. Labeled a prostitute for centuries by a male hierarchy that denied a sexually active expression of divinity—making Jesus celibate and his mother a perpetual virgin—the Magdalene and her symbolic sister, the Black Madonna, are the first images of the sacred feminine in western culture to be reclaimed with full power given to their roles as wives and mothers.

In Egypt, the world's most influential, advanced ancient culture, the role of the divine feminine was crucial to the primal story of cosmic order and disorder. When the god Osiris, brother-husband of the goddess Isis, was murdered by his brother, Set, the natural order was thrown into turmoil. To restore order, Isis searched for and reassembled Osiris' essential body parts long enough to become pregnant, giving birth to the falcon-god, Horus. The same mythic pattern, restoration of divine order by the male and female principles uniting to create new life, is repeated in the story of Mary Magdalene, Jesus, and their child. The figure of the Black Madonna, found in hundreds of churches and cathedrals in France and elsewhere in Europe, is typically a crowned queen seated on a throne, her child on her lap holding the scepter or globe of royal rule. Most often fashioned of dark wood, this representation is modeled on extant statues of Isis and Horus. While priests claim the Black Madonnas represent Mother Mary and Jesus, in France the legends of the people

claim otherwise. To many it is Mary Magdalene, the Sacred Feminine, who sits on the throne, her child symbolizing the divine order restored.

In recent years I have seen and felt for myself representations of Mary Magdalene as Divine Bride and Mother. Her presence in the south of France is palpable, powerful, and deeply embedded in the culture. In Les Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer, where Mary Magdalene, Jesus' mother, aunt, and a dark child, supposedly an Egyptian servant, allegedly landed and remained for a time, the Black Madonna in the church crypt is named "Sarah," the same name given in Brown's novel and other sources to Jesus' and Mary Magdalene's daughter. I observed two women reverently dressing this Sarah in a new royal blue robe, kissing her cheek and offering prayers of petition to the heart of the feminine divine. While I watched, dozens of people lit candles, kissed the figure, and gazed on her with devotion.

Similar devotion is paid to each Black Madonna. The one in the Lady Chapel in Chartres Cathedral is one of the most beautiful and revered. I felt the strength and power of the loving energy around her, contained within this magnificent monument to Divine Love built by the Knights Templar, guardians for centuries of the Holy Grail, the secret of the Divine Feminine who one day would be restored to her rightful place, the Bride beside the Groom. When restored, the sacred, creative powers continually bless and renew life on Earth and throughout the cosmos. As long as they remain together, balancing their energy and offering it in love to the world, all is well. Rain falls, rivers flow, crops grow, animals and humans give birth—the cycles of creation continue undisturbed. But take away the Divine Mother, and the world becomes a desert wasteland, a violent expression of a domineering male principle. Wholeness and balance can only be restored when she is acknowledged and empowered as Queen and creates with her King new life that re-enchants the world.

As we acknowledge and honor the Divine Feminine, we give power not only to her but also to ourselves, contributing to the restoration of wholeness and well-being on the planet we call home.

Dr. Laura Dunham offers spiritual energy healing for people, places, and the planet. Her website, www.healingandwisdom.com, explains her work. She lives in Chapel Hill, NC.