

In our imaginal working for this section we find a threefold "sisterhood" arising. These are: the young virgin, the matron watcher, and the scarlet woman. All are Christianized forms of ancient goddess figures.

The virgin and the matron, as the child Madonna and her mother, Saint Anne, are figures from the apocryphal gospels of James and Thomas, not recognized by the Church as part of the accepted canon, but miraculous accounts popular in early Christian times. These deal with wondrous events surrounding the childhood of the human mother of the new savior god. And this includes her very conception, for her mother, Saint Anne, had been past child-bearing age and conceived only by divine intervention. (This became known in medieval theology as the Immaculate Conception, which is often confused in modern popular belief with the virgin birth).

Mary Magdalene, the regenerate prostitute, makes tantalizing and fleeting appearances in the Gospels, but comes very much into her own in the Gnostic texts, most of which have been suppressed. Here she was either the initiatrix to high mysteries of the resurrection, or she was credited with being the bride of Christ in more than a figurative way, a tradition that has come down in certain Holy Grail legends.

In the threefold imagery before us we therefore have the divine feminine principle represented as bride, mother, and grandmother of the incarnate god. Unorthodox though this might seem, it is capable of carrying a fair head of spiritual power, as any who care to work with these dynamics may discover.

In terms of objective work with the Planetary Being, it is the next stage on from her rescue (as Andromeda), and her betrothal (as Psyche), whereby it is now possible for the feminine principle to bring through cosmic spiritual dynamics into the physical levels of form expression. In the familiar Christian story this is represented by the Incarnation, observed at least commercially and sentimentally every Christmas, illustrating the power of the imagery even in a secular society.

In the forms that we are going to use, the heavenly or cosmic dimension is represented by the dual images, first of great light emanating from the temple (itself a feminine image), and then a gushing forth of the waters of life from the further feminine imagery of well and tree.

### JOURNEY 3: THE VIRGIN AT THE WELL

We are standing in a town square. It is hot and dusty, but before us rise the cool pillars of the portico of a temple. Before the broad steps that lead