

Daily Meditation 02/12/22

Alessandra Belloni: Champion of the Black Madonna

Good Morning.

It is our pleasure to continue to meditate on this archetype of the Black Madonna, that is coming back so strongly today. Over the years, I've listened to so many people tell me they've had important dreams about the Black Madonna. Some of them are Christian, some Catholic Christian, some not Christian, and not Catholic, a very diverse group of people indeed.

And I want to share with you another book about the Black Madonna that I really strongly encourage you to read. It's called *Healing Journeys with the Black Madonna*, by Alessandra Belloni.

And, of course, I'm talking about her in the essay today. She and I've done some workshops together on the Black Madonna, both in New York City where she dwells as an artist in residence at St. John Cathedral, but also in the Bay Area, where I work. And she is a wonderful practitioner.

She's not a theoretician. She's certainly not a theologian. And I think she would be happy with my saying that. But she's very much a ritual leader. And she leads workshops to the parts of southern Italy and Sicily, where these ancient traditions are alive and well about the Black Madonna.

And there've been many healings in her experiences there, especially healings of transgender people and gay people who have suffered a lot. And also, people who are victims of sexual abuse and so forth.

Remember, the Black Madonna is a fierce force. And she deals with those who've suffered deeply, who have been through deep, deep wounds. And it's one of the reasons she is so relevant today.

But Alessandra Belloni tells her personal story, as well as the story of the Black Madonna, in this book, as she begins, interestingly enough, with Rome's bombing in 1943, because her family was under stress and was bombed. They were living in that area of Rome that was bombed by the Americans July 18, 1943.

But the night before Rome was bombed, her mother had a premonition that her area would be attacked, and it came in the form of a powerful dream: she saw bombs dropping from the sky. The building she lived in exploded and was buried in ruins. And she had an intense vision of the Madonna hovering above her, pulling her free, rescuing her. So when her mother heard the warning sirens before the bombs were dropped, she took this painting that she had of the Madonna della Strada, the Madonna of the street. And the Madonna of the street in the painting looked like the Madonna in her dream.

Just as in the dream, the house exploded; my grandmother, mother, and her two younger sisters were violently hurled down three stories. By some miracle my mother phoned herself alive, and on her knees clutching the portrait of the Madonna della Strada with her sisters grabbing onto her.

And they couldn't find her grandmother. So they were digging and they did find her grandmother and they were able to dig her grandmother out.

So not only did the Madonna lead my mother to find my grandmother, she also gave my mother the might to singlehandedly rescue my grandmother from being buried alive. My mother was so touched by divine intervention that she didn't even realize that she was hurt and bleeding from the head. Without thinking of her own safety, my mother mustered all of her strength and compassion in an act of true unconditional love, which saved my grandmother's life.

So this too, like the book I recommended yesterday, begins with adventure, real adventure. Like I said yesterday, the Black Madonna is about adventure and that especially as we journey, our times are calling for courage, and calling for big hearts, and calling for strength, inner strength.

And this is where the Black Madonna and the Green Man come together too, the spiritual warrior energy of the best of the masculine and the best of the feminine come together at this important time, when all of us are called to stand up to the assault on Mother Earth that is happening and the assault on other creatures and of course, of humans toward humans.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.