

Entombment of Christ, St. Remi Cathedral

By

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Mysteries surrounding the order of the Knights Templar include John the Baptist and Mary Magdalene. These individuals were patronized by the order during its two hundred year existence.

Of all the New Testament characters, few other than Jesus himself, have exemplified such an enduring fascination as Mary Magdalene. Believed by the Church to have been a reformed prostitute, her presence has a never-ending appeal, which is odd for one who appears so briefly and then so elusively in the *Bible*. The controversies surrounding Mary came to light in more recent years in books that include *Holy Blood*, *Holy Grail*; *Templar Revelation*; and *The Da Vinci Code*.

Centered in the small village of Rennes-la-Chateau in southern France, the French believe that Mary came to that part of the world after the death of Christ. Because of her influence, an order of fighting men was sanctioned by the church in the early 12th century.

One legend persists to this day, known as the "Vine of Mary," that after the crucifixion, Mary Magdalene came to France where she lived for several years and that Mary's offspring became the kings of France known as the Merovingian line. Throughout southern France, one finds shrines or grottos that venerate Mary. As time passed, her presence and memory eventually transformed into the cult of the Black Madonna.

Messages in Hidden View

The Knight Templar order was officially dismantled by the Catholic Church

in 1312 at the Council of Vienne and afterward, in various Bulls from March of 1312 to January of 1313, and subsequently, the order's 23rd and last Grand Master, Jacques De Molay, was executed in 1314. Many of the order's noble knights, non-noble sergeants, and chaplains fled as refugees to Scotland and Switzerland. Others sought safe haven in the Order of Knights Hospitallers of St. John.

In 1531, a stunning life-sized sculpture of the entombment of Christ was commissioned by Francois Jarradin, Commander of the Hospitallers. The sculpture resided at the Knights Templar Commandery in Reims, France until that building was destroyed during the French Revolution in 1792. Obscured from public view for centuries, the sculpture was moved in 1803 and now resides in the nearby St. Remi Cathedral.

This stone carving is compelling. On the tomb's façade is the Templar Cross seen below the reposed figure of Jesus Christ. Grieving family members surround the body of Jesus with tears flowing from their eyes. Mother Mary is next to the body, grieving with her hands clasped. Curiously, blood is still flowing from the spear wound on the right side of Jesus' body, suggesting that he was still alive after the crucifixion. One can find more images on the internet that show the body at different angles for a closer view.

What's most interesting is the distraught and very pregnant looking figure of Mary Magdalene looking down at Jesus. Her arms are raised in a gesture, similar to the position some Freemasons



use at Masonic funerals.

This gesture is also depicted in carvings made by Knights Templar on the walls of the Royston Cave in England. The position of the arms has the left arm bent ninety degrees in a square and the right arm bent at a lesser angle.

If these poses suggest some type of connection to the beginnings of a latent Masonic ritual, the obvious question becomes why? Considering the sculpture as a whole, it contradicts the teachings written in the *Bible*. If a secret society did exist in medieval Europe, it would be much easier to conceal symbolism and allegory in a painting. Tales still exist to this day that the bleeding Jesus is laying on what would become the Shroud of Turin. Others have suggested that the altar with its Templar Cross actually conceals the remnant ashes of Jacques De Molay. Probably, no one knows for sure.

knight templar

We can only encourage those historians with an open mind who approach the relationship between Masonry and Templarism with a conviction that answers must be somewhere and wish them success. As readers, we await documented proof that will solve the great mystery of how it began, and why.

SOURCE

Pages 258-261 of *Akhenaten to the Founding Fathers*, by Scott F. Wolter, North Star Press of St. Cloud, MN.

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