

Daily Meditation 9-7-2026: Time to Hona' the Black Madonna! Come to Her Feast Day Party Tomorrow!

Good morning.

Today we are meditating on the Black Madonna and inviting you to our event Tuesday evening, where Alessandra Belloni, the author of this book, *Healing Journeys with the Black Madonna: Chants, Music and Sacred Practices of the Great Goddess*, will be teaching along with Christena Cleveland, PhD, a theologian and black woman who herself has traveled to many, many shrines in France.

The subtitle of this new book is "Black Madonna: Icon of Resistance and Nourisher of Souls." So she will be teaching too, and I will be teaching also. And it's sponsored by Convergence and the Good Work Fair, being led by Cameron Trimble.

So it should be a wonderful evening, and it's a special feast day, September 8, which is why we chose this date, especially in Italy, the feast day of the Black Madonna.

So let me share with you a few of the teachings from these two books, Alessandra Belloni's book, which came out in 2019, I believe, and I look forward to it. She does a wonderful job, because it's both very personal and autobiographical, about how she came to the experience of the Black Madonna and how she felt called to be a practitioner and a leader, really, in these shamanistic rituals that she's created, and especially from the Italian tradition.

So let me share with you a few of the titles of her chapters, and get a feeling for what she's about. Now, in my Foreword, I call it "The Return of the Archetype in Times of Need," because that is Carl Jung's thesis, that archetypes return when we need them. And I believe Black Madonna is such an archetype today, and is returning with great strength. Dr. Christena Cleveland has just started a school of the Black Madonna, a school to learn all about her, and it filled up as soon as she opened the doors. That is just one more sign that the Black Madonna is here to speak to us at this particular critical time in history.

And then the preface title by Alessandra Belloni: Four Mystical Experiences that Led Me to the Black Madonna. So she speaks out of her experience again, and this book is both about the experience of her own story, but it's also very much about the traditions of the Black Madonna, as you'll see as we go through the Table of Contents.

Her introduction: Mama Elvira's Miracle. Chapter One: Who is the Black Madonna? Chapter Two: Drumming in Honor of the Black Madonna. This is not book just about ideas, but about practices. Chapter Three: The Prophetess, the Poet, and the Pagan Goddesses. The oldest shrines in Europe are third century, in southern Italy, because that's a hop, skip, and jump from Africa, which includes Egypt, where the goddess Isis is an ancient goddess.

Chapter Four: The Throne of the Madonna in Montevergine and the Legend of the Seven Sisters. By the way, I have this photography on my desk every day of a Black Madonna of Montserrat. Notice the dignity and the inner strength of this person's figure, this icon.

Here she has Chapter Five: Unveiling the Powerful Black Madonna of Freedom and the Egyptian Goddess Isis. Chapter Six: the Devotion to the Black Madonna of the Poor. Chapter Seven: "I am Black,

but Comely"— the African Mother. That is a phrase from the Book of the Song of Songs in the Hebrew Bible.

Then she goes through several other chapters and examples, and then Chapter 11: Rhythm is the Cure, the Shamanic Power of the Tarantella, and the Epilogue: The Black Madonna as Patron of All Humanity. Then there's an Appendix that includes music and lyrics and chants to the Black Madonna.

So this is a very complete book when it comes to practices and history and stories, especially from Italy, which is Alessandra Belloni's birthplace where she grew up.

Now the Black Madonna story was told by Christena Cleveland. Now, this is a new book that just came out this year, a couple months ago: *Icon of Resistance and Nourisher of Souls*.

So let me share with you some of her teachings about the Black Madonna, and let me make a point about the shaman dimension to Alessandra and her book. The late Thomas Barry used to say, "Today we need fewer professors, fewer priests, and more shamans." And Alessandra is one of those shamans, but so too is the entire Black Madonna tradition, especially in Italy, where it's been kept alive in southern Italy; special places, special mountains, special feast days, special stories. And Alessandra will be leading us in some dances or chants and so forth that are endemic to that tradition from Italy.

Now, there's so much that's rich in this wonderful book by Christena. I so honor it and am excited about it. But again, I think the Table of Contents says a whole lot. So let me share that with you. Chapter One: She Sparks Our Liberation: Following Black Madonna into Deeper Freedom. So Black Madonna is very much a symbol of liberation. She is on the side of the poor and the oppressed, which includes, certainly in the Italian tradition, trans people and homosexual people.

Chapter Two. She Has Loved Us Since the Beginning of Time: Awakening to Black Madonna as the World's Oldest Deity...the world's oldest deity. Remember that the Goddess religions preceded the God religions. The feminine divinity preceded, in terms of human evolution, the father as a divinity. So I think that's part of what she's getting to in that chapter.

Chapter Three: She Crosses Oceans for Us: Receiving Black Madonna's Limitless Embrace. One application that Christena makes to the Black Madonna is that she accompanied the slave voyages, and therefore she crossed oceans, and she brought her presence into the Americas and other places.

Chapter Four: She Mothers Us into Abundance: Encountering Ease Along Black Madonna's Life-Giving Labyrinth. You can see how each of these chapters is so very rich and full of meaning.

Chapter Five: She Fiercely Defends us: Finding Refuge in Black Madonna's Cosmic Breast Milk. Of course, she's alluding often in this book to the oppression of Black people, the enslavement of the Blacks, and that's how she is part of this: figures as a defender and a place of refuge as well.

Chapter Six: She Soothes Our Deepest Wounds: Transforming Pain into Power in Black Madonna's Ominously Dark Forest.

Chapter Seven: She Fortifies Our Hope: Cloaking Ourselves in Black Madonna's Miraculous Armor of Adoration.

And the final Chapter Eight: She Anoints Us to Embody Her in the World: Empowered by Black Madonna, Who Leaves Absolutely No One Behind.

So each of these books is really powerful and rich in their own way.

And the return of the archetype, the icon of the Black Madonna, is so timely at this critical moment in Earth history and human history, and I think our celebration tomorrow is especially timely too, for so many reasons.

Thank you. We look forward to seeing you there tomorrow.