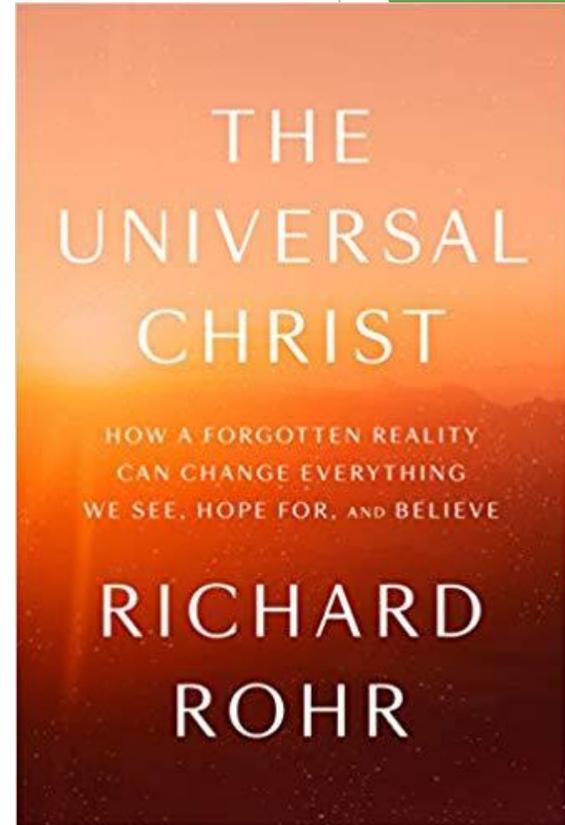


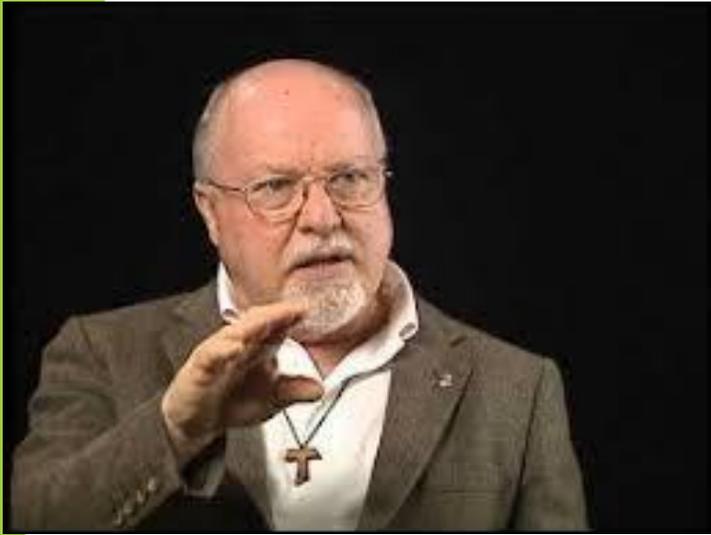
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Chapter 10

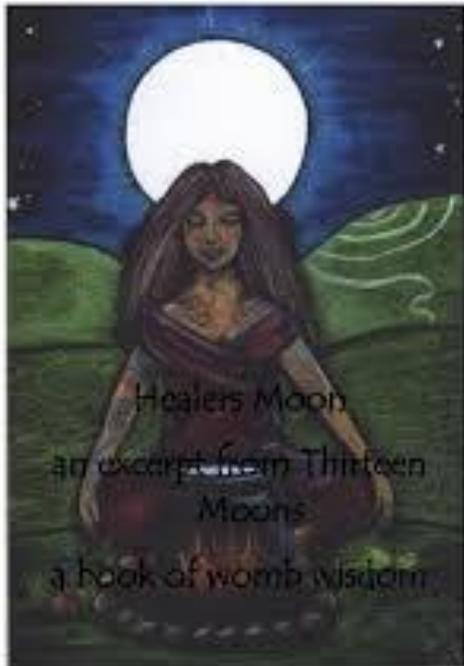
The Feminine Incarnation

From now on, all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. Lk 1:48-49





Richard says he's taking a risk...
limited perspective (he's a man)
draws on experiences with his mother,
sisters, many women friends and colleagues.
Some of his God encounters



Trust your own experiences with the divine
feminine.
New for many... assume God is somehow
masculine

Female wisdom is often qualitatively
different from male wisdom

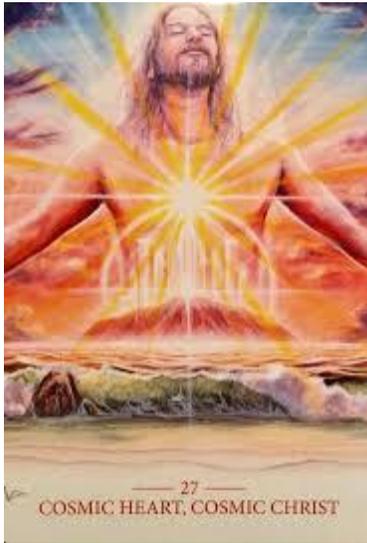


Jesus was clearly of the masculine gender.
Christ is beyond gender

The Big Tradition found feminine ways to symbolize the full Divine Incarnation and give God a more feminine character... Bible

Churches bear the name of Mary... “Notre Dame of something”

New Testament speaks little of Mary
Reformation strongly reacted



Theotokos, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven, Notre Dame, *La Virgen*

Not just a single woman but a foundational symbol (archetype)³



In the mythic imagination: Mary intuitively symbolizes the first Incarnation or Mother Earth

Not saying Mary is the first incarnation, only that she became the natural archetype and symbol for it (in art, the Madonna)



Mary is the major feminine archetype for the Christ Mystery.

Sophia or Holy Wisdom (Proverbs 8:1, Wisdom 7:7, Revelation 12:1-17)

“a Woman clothed with the sun and standing on the moon.”

not precisely Mary of Nazareth... both broaden our understanding of the Divine Feminine



Jung: humans produce in art the inner images the soul needs in order to see itself and to allow its own transformation.

The first incarnation (creation) is symbolized by Sophia-Incarnate, a beautiful, feminine, multicolored, graceful Mary.

... invariably offering us Jesus, God incarnated into vulnerability and nakedness.

Mary is all of us both receiving and handing on the gift. We liked her precisely because she was one of us- and not God!

Christians of the first thousand years understood this on an intuitive and allegorical level



By the time of the Protestant Reformation, all we could see was “but she is not God.”

(Much of the human race can more easily imagine unconditional love coming from the feminine)



In the many images of Mary, humans see our own feminine soul... “God has looked upon me in my lowliness...”

Many Catholics divinized Mary (many Catholics have a poor theology of Mary but an excellent psychology)



Our Lady... dealing with a Corporate Personality (one who stands for the whole)

male gods tend to come from the heavens...feminine gods tend to come out of the earth or the sea...

Mary's body was taken up to heaven (1950); Carl Jung "the most significant theological development of the twentieth century."

...human bodies, not just souls or spirits, could share in the process of divinization.



Many humans can identify with Mary more than with Jesus precisely because she was *not* God, but the archetype for our yes to God!



Not one heroic action: *Pure being and not doing*. (angel Gabriel, birth, last yes at the foot of the cross, full presence at Pentecost)

Paul McCartney, “Let It Be”



Christ and Jesus archetypes of what God is doing, Mary is the archetype of how to receive what God is doing and hand it on to others.



Too often the feminine has had to work in secret, behind the scenes, indirectly.

We see *Mary's* subtlety of grace, patience and humility when she quietly says at the wedding feast of Cana, "They have no wine," and then seems totally assured that Jesus will take it from there. And he does!



Feminine power is deeply relational and symbolic - and thus transformative - in ways that men cannot control or even understand. (that is why we fear it so much)