



ECCE MATER TUA

THE DIVINE FEMININE
AND THE APOSTOLIC JOHANNITE CHURCH

IOANNES IV

To the Apostolic Johannite Church,
and all people of good will

1. Behold thy Mother!
2. These are the last words spoken to John by Jesus at his crucifixion when he commended Mary, Theotokos and John into each other's care.
3. As Johannites, these should be should be the first words in our hearts when we approach the Divine through figures of history and myth- when we as an Ecclesia venerate the heroic virtues and wisdom of the holy and saintly women throughout the liturgical year.
4. For all the emphasis that we place on early stories of the Holy Saints John and the Holy Saints Mary, these three words often times go without comment, and yet they stand hand in hand with the stories and origins of our traditions.
5. More than just the telling of a story of cherished friends and family, it is a proclamation and a calling to a recognition of that which participates in our inspiration in a unique and powerful way- not a mere recognition of an event or a retelling of a legend, it is the communication of a spiritual imperative.
6. Without following this imperative, our Statement of Principles is rendered a shadow and the words as empty as our own being will certainly be found to be, when we ignore the presence and inspiration of the Divine Feminine which brings purpose and life to our undertakings and our paths.
7. Neither merely to be found alone in either the veneration of Holy Sophia or in legends and stories of those great figures to which our Church honours, from Holy Mary of Magdala to Esclarmonde de Foix, this presence is also to be seen in the persons of our friends and family in the present day- sisters, mothers, daughters, teachers, guides and our companions.
8. Indeed, we cannot honour the one, without honouring the other- we cannot tell of the stories and virtues of those that have gone before us, without telling the stories and virtues of those that our with us here and now, and yet to come.
9. It is also not enough to simply highlight or draw to attention these things only when our minds call us to it, for no matter how many times that would be, it would not be enough to express it in a manner that does justice to the dignity of the Divine Feminine.

10. Yet in the face of this ultimately ineffable understanding of the Holy Wisdom to which we are not only witnesses but participants, there yet remains still some measure of understanding to communicated through the limited means that we have before us

11. Mindful of this, the Ecclesia turns its heart and mind more fully to the awareness of that to which we all have been entrusted, and that which, through the figures of John and Mary in Gospel, we all have been called to uphold and honour.

12. For a perpetual memorial, and in keeping with my vows to uphold and preserve all that which the Ecclesia honours, I establish for the Apostolic Johannite Church the following:

That the Feast of Holy Mary of Magdala is to be celebrated after the manner of an octave or afterfeast for eight days.

That the Descent of the Holy Sophia is to be celebrated after the manner of an octave or afterfeast for eight days.

That the Sophianic Liturgy of the Apostolic Johannite Church is recommended to be celebrated on all days honouring the Divine Feminine. Other appropriate celebrations of the Divine and Human Feminine principles may be incorporated at the discretion of Rectors and Narthex Leaders with the approval of the Diocesan Bishop.

For which day is set for its implementation, the Feast of Saint Mary Magdalene, July 22nd, the two thousand and eighth year of our Lord and the one hundred and eighteenth year of the era of the Gnosis restored.

Given at the Oratory of St. John on July 22nd, 2008, the Feast of Holy Mary of Magdala and the eve of the fifth year of my patriarchate.