

**2017 Virgo Full Moon;
Mother and Child, Creator and Created**

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A warm welcome to everyone here tonight, and to those of you listening to the broadcast. Tonight we meet within the sphere of the full moon of Virgo. The exact time of the alignment between the Sun, Earth and Moon occurs early tomorrow morning at 3:02 AM EST. At the exact moment, a unique approach to Hierarchy can be made. The alignment of what is called the full moon is more appropriately thought of as the full sun; a time when the moon is opposite the sun allowing for direct relation between the earth and sun, which in turn allows the moon to reflect this alignment. Pondering upon this simple monthly reality provides nourishing insight.

In the dark, early hours of tomorrow morning as these heavenly bodies enact this alignment in the sky above, we too can align in the cosmic dance of time and space. In effect, we can replicate this alignment subjectively, imaginatively seeing the “center where the Will of God is known” pouring through Hierarchy and Humanity. We can image world servers all around the globe working in group formation as a unified center to direct the spiritual inflow and reflect this illumined will and intent in all aspects of life. So tonight, as we gather amid the influence and attributes of Virgo, we find renewed inspiration to work toward what Teilhard de Chardin calls the *divinisation* of human life. Let’s open together with the Mantram:

We know, oh Lord of Life and Love, about the need.
Touch our hearts anew with Love,
That we too, may love and give.
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In this talk we’ll explore how the rich, nourishing energies of Virgo express across a spectrum of attributes. We’ll work from an expanded esoteric vision of space to a particular exoteric image of Mother and Child, using the keynote of Virgo as our guide. The image we’ll consider is the painting of the *Sistine Madonna* by Raphael as an example of an image that transports the viewer through the earthly representation of Mother and Child, to the “Super-Earthly” realms of creation. Finally, we’ll see how our hero Hercules works with the inflowing energies of Virgo to fulfill his present labor.

The keynote of this constellation is “I am the Mother and the Child. I, God, I, matter am.” The keynote to each constellation is meant to launch our awareness like a springboard, working almost like a zen koan, to halt the pattern of thinking in its deeply rutted tracks. Once the lower mind pauses for reflection, the keynote serves like a wedge to hold open the door for higher impressions to pour into the receptive mind. This dynamic stillness, like the eye of a storm, has incredible power to generate higher impressions. When applied in practice to the keynote of

Virgo, a field of purity is generated upon which something greater can be conceived and made manifest. The relationship between soul and form is highlighted, for here we awaken in ourselves the power of the Virgin Mother, the pure, creative, organizing force which cultivates and serves the manifesting Christ within and without, delivering renewed revelation and right action in the world.

The Ancient Wisdom teaches that Space is an entity. In a vast ocean of energies and forces, Space moves onward according to a Plan; so too does humanity. Though our capacity to grasp the fullness of this divine vision is limited, our direct line of sight is forged through contact with the higher planes of mind. The extent of our intimacy with the universe is determined by our willingness to work intelligently with our divine heritage. Though the human kingdom is awash in powerful currents as the birth pangs of a new age are delivered by Shamballa, humanity is well equipped to take a stand in its divinity as Mother and Child to deliver this divine order into manifestation, in fact it is our sacred duty and daily responsibility. In an earlier iteration of our solar system humanity learned to feel with God. Now in this manifesting solar system, humanity is learning to walk with God. Perhaps as a whole humanity is taking those first wobbly, precarious steps onward. Maybe there will even be a stumble here and there, but the fact that we will learn to walk with an illumined mind alongside the Lord of the World is assured.

In Virgo we see a broad spectrum of wisdom and we can tap any point on the continuum to receive inspiration. On one side we see the demonstration of a mother's instinctive love and care for the child. This is the natural intelligence in the mother instinct that recognizes no detail as too large or small, but each as necessary for the holistic health of the child. A mother loses sight of herself in the incessant need of the child, developing the seedlings for the highest virtue of self forgetfulness. The same could be said of any worker or creative thinker who applies themselves fully to the work at hand, giving without hesitation to a creative endeavor all that is required to nurture it into manifestation. On the other side of the spectrum in Virgo, we see the conception and revelation of the Christ, wherein the aspirant expresses an intensity of selflessness in relation to the demands of spiritual life and service. The attention of the mother to her infant gives way to the attunement of the aspirant to the sacred intricacies of daily spiritual living. In the minutia of each day lies endless opportunity to infuse love and order, attuning the micro and macrocosmic life. For the aspirant, *mother* is both noun and verb, it is a state of being and a constant action to "shield, nurture and finally reveal the hidden spiritual reality".

The synthesizing keynote of Virgo, or an even higher octave to consider is, "Christ in you, the hope of glory". Here the mind is sprung to the recognition of the Christ principle which resides in all matter. The Gospel of Thomas echos this reality when Christ said, "Split a piece of wood and I am there; lift up a rock, you will find Me there." Looking outward through this lens, the world is the indivisible playground of divinity and matter. The role of humanity highlighted in

Virgo is to conceive and nourish the indwelling divinity, to meet the challenge of manifesting this reality, and to serve life with the selflessness of the ideal mother.

Perhaps one of the most perfected images of Mother and Child that we can ponder upon is the *Sistine Madonna* by Raphael. In this painting, we see a representation of Mother Mary, cloaked in red, blue and gold garments, standing softly upon the clouds as she tenderly holds the Christ child near her heart. The faces of mother and child are distinctly solemn, particularly as compared with the figures who stand on either side of them. On the left side of the painting we see St. Sixtus, pointing outward from the painting supposedly toward what would have been an image of the crucifixion hanging on a choir screen nearby. On the right of the painting stands St. Barbara, gazing peacefully downward toward the two sweet faced cherubs below the scene.

This image of the Sistine Madonna enshrines an ideal of the Mother and Child that can deeply impact the sensitive viewer. We see the protective mother shielding her infant in tender embrace, her ethereal loveliness poised between heaven and earth; perhaps she is aware of the demands of both which require her ultimate selfless service in thought and deed. Her solemn expression hints that she knows the magnitude of trials that lie ahead, even as her angelic presence seems to radiate a commanding love. Her cheeks are flushed, eyes piercing straight ahead, and she exudes a spiritual magnetism of one who has attained a degree of purity and power befitting the Mother of Christ.

In describing the *Sistine Madonna*, Rudolf Steiner said, “[G]azing at the Sun-illuminated clouds there may dawn on us a realization that the picture of the Madonna and Child is a sense picture of the eternal Super-Earthly element in man that is wafted to Earth from Super-Earthly realms themselves and meets, in the clouds, those elements that can only proceed from the Earthly. Our perception may feel itself raised to the loftiest spiritual heights if we can give ourselves up — not theoretically, or in an abstract sense, but with the whole soul — to what works upon us in [all of] Raphael's Madonnas.”

“What works upon us” in Raphael’s Madonna is worth pausing to consider. Behind images like this one and deep within ideals, there resides an elixir of spiritual nourishment. These living wells of paintings, poems, cathedrals and art planted all throughout society, are brought forth from those who have walked before us--perhaps our previous selves! When we lift ourselves up with our whole soul to receive the illumination of such creations, we mirror the alignment of the full moon standing behind the earth, reflecting a supernal light far greater than ourselves. We learn to see with the lower mind aligned behind the metaphorical earth, and light shines upon the way. Perhaps this is part of the mystery of the seed thought we work with tonight, for surely the recitation of, “I am the Mother and the Child. I, God, I, matter am”, requires the highest light of illumination to shine unimpeded through to the lowest.

Striving to embody this process, we turn now to the Labors of Hercules to see what this hero has to teach us in relation to Virgo. Hercules travels around the zodiac, meeting each challenge upon the spiritual path. In this 6th labor, we encounter the story of “Seizing the girdle of Hippolyte”. In this parable Hercules enters the land of the Amazons to retrieve Hippolyte’s girdle. The girdle had been a gift from Venus and signified unity achieved through struggle, conflict and strife, a symbol of motherhood and of the sacred Child. When the word had gone forth that Hercules was coming for this girdle, Hippolyte stood before the Amazons and asked, “Shall we obey the word, O Amazons, or shall we fight the word of God?” After consideration, Hippolyte rides out on her horse to meet Hercules. In the story we’re told, “He wrenched the girdle from her, only to find her hands held out and offering him the gift, offering the symbol of unity and love, of sacrifice and faith. Yet, grasping it, he slaughtered her”.

The story seems to reveal that this girdle cannot simply be given or received; the girdle itself is a symbol of a transformative process cloaked in Virgo. Virgo may hold out her hands to offer her gifts, but in accepting them the process of divinisation begins. As we’ve been exploring, the energies in this constellation inform the process of creation and birth, but this is indivisible from the process of death. As Hercules tries to take the girdle, he kills Hippolyte and unwittingly enters the real struggle, the conflict and strife that the girdle represents. Then he must fulfill the challenge of Virgo related to selfless service, and in the story he redeems himself by saving another. Perhaps part of the lesson in this 6th labor is that there are no girdles to steal, no stealthy shortcuts or sidesteps to seize along the Path. As Hercules works in Virgo, we witness the energies of death, redemption, and life that propel the Plan onward; in other words, Hercules is giving birth to something greater within himself through himself. “For such is life: an act of death, a deed of life, and thus the sons of men, who are the sons of God, learn wisdom, balance and the way to walk with God” (*Labors of Hercules*, p 114). Each aspirant willing to work with the influences of Virgo will cultivate the skillful willingness to remain in the fire until this creative labor is complete. So we *ponder anew upon the ways of life, reflecting on the ways of death* as the energies of Virgo assist in the evolving understanding of the conception of Christ Consciousness.

Learning to walk with God requires both the application of and acquiescence to the force of will. Learning to live and wield this will also means learning receive its blows. The creative act of living entails countless repetition of willing births and willing deaths; this is true for all forms. Outdated thoughtforms and waning structures give way to the forces of growth, pushing beyond existing limitations to construct more fitting forms for the evolving consciousness within. In the Labor of Hercules, the Queen of the Amazons decides to abide by the will of God, and her surrender brings her death, perhaps symbolic on many levels including the fact that she had been the leader of the women who worshipped the moon. The death of Hippolyte gives way to the rescue of new woman in the parable, a rescue that redeems Hercules and fulfills the 6th Labor in

Virgo. So we see clearly *an act of death, a deed of life, and thus the sons of men, who are the sons of God, learn wisdom, balance and the way to walk with God.*

In the image of the Sistine Madonna, on one level we can see the wise mother looking warily upon the scene of the crucifixion, knowing the birth of the child also fulfills the process of his death; on another level perhaps *Mother*, as a state of being and an act of doing, recognizes the birth of the Child enables the process of Life, and here the terrific power of Mother and Child are revealed as Creator and Created, working progressively and obediently through matter to fulfill the Will of God.

Before we move into our work together in meditation with the keynote, “I am the Mother and the Child. I, God, I, matter am”, we turn to the words of The Tibetan as he urges us to, “Ponder upon the beauty of this synthesis and teachingThe time has now come when you can, if you so choose, proclaim your identity with both divine aspects, matter and spirit, the mother and the child”.