

How this novel series came to be written

By: Richard B. Sorensen, PhD Psychology

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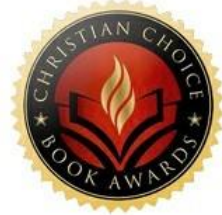
richardbsorensen@gmail.com

www.richardsorensen.com

www.unholygrail.net



Unholy Grail



Have you ever wanted to write a novel? Here is how I came to write this one...

I grew up as the son of mom who was an instructor in early childhood education at the University of Minnesota. We had many “kitchen-table” discussions about a plethora of subjects, and as a kid I read hundreds of books. She also liked to see me write, but writing was more of a pain than a pleasure at that point in my life, and I didn’t take too well to her (constructive?) criticism. So it wasn’t until many years later and a career in software development that I began to develop any writing skills, and more importantly, a desire to write.

However, I continued my passion for reading, and also for understanding the nature of things – how things really worked, and why things are the way they are. Gaining any degree of understanding of such a broad subject requires a multidisciplinary approach – theology, politics, economics, history, psychology, sociology, biology, physics, chemistry, art, music, etc. etc., and my modest goal is to understand everything about everything. I hasten to add that I am light years away from even reaching a reasonable thoroughness about any of the above areas but press on nevertheless as time permits. Just as the nuclear physicist attempts to construct a “unified field theory” that explains the basis of physical reality, this novel series is a partial realization of my desire for historical and theological synthesis. However, it didn’t exactly start that way. I had written stuff – mostly software documentation and had a vague desire to write something more significant, at some point in the far distant future.

During the winter of 1997 I was on a ski trip with my kids in Vermont and happened to bring along with me the book *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*, (HBHG). This was one of the first books to popularize the notion that the Biblical Mary Magdalene had been the wife or consort of Jesus, and supposedly had a sexual relationship with him, resulting in one or more children.

After Jesus’ death and resurrection, and during the persecution that subsequently arose, Mary was said to have sailed away from Israel with her daughter and a number of other followers of Jesus. They eventually landed in Marseilles, France (at that time the city was known as Massilia in the land of Gaul) and Mary supposedly became the patron saint of southern Gaul. The story goes on to tell that her daughter Sarah married into the leading family of the Salic Franks, a people that migrated into Gaul and eventually took over the country. The Merovingian dynasty of Frankish kings began in the

late 300's AD, and through royal marriage agreements they established relationships with other ruling families in Europe. Their successor dynasties (the Carolingians, the Capetians, the Valois, and the Bourbons) ruled France for the next 1,400 years until the French Revolution of 1789. The conclusion of HBHG is that the royalty of Europe were the progeny of Jesus Christ and Mary Magdalene. She was therefore said to have been the "true Holy Grail," the "chalice" or "vessel" from which the bloodline of Jesus supposedly descended. Dan Brown picked up this idea and further popularized it in his novel *The DaVinci Code*.



View of Marseilles, France – picture taken by the author



The Baume Mountains from Marseilles – picture taken by the author

This conclusion based on a sexual union between Jesus and Mary is, of course, preposterous, with no evidence supporting it, as the Bible and other historical sources, as well as the character of Jesus will attest to. Jesus Christ did not have any descending bloodline, and there is no hint of any such thing in the Gospels or writings from the times of his followers. There is one curious statement from the so-called *Gospel of Philip* that is more fully covered in my article on [Mary Magdalene](#). That writing was one of the Gnostic Gospels which also included the *Gospel of Judas Iscariot* and the *Gospel of Mary*, which some allege to provide “new insight” on Jesus and his life. However, these were written anywhere from 100 to 200 years after his death, by groups with a completely different theology, and with their own religious agenda. Therefore, they do not provide any real evidence concerning the life of Christ or his disciples. There are books and resources from many authors that have debunked these ideas, such as the following article from Skeptic magazine: [The DaVinci Code Cult](#)



The Basilica of St Maximins – picture taken by the author

However, the story of Mary's voyage to Marseilles and her life with the Franks has a lot of cachet, as well as some degree of historical backing. There are many churches dedicated to her throughout France and England, and what is said to be her skull is kept in the crypt of a church in the town of St. Maximins, some 35 miles north-east of Marseilles. There is also a grotto in the mountains above the town where she was said to have spent much time in prayer. I visited this town on a research trip to France in 2005 (all of the pictures in this article were taken on that trip), and there are brochures in the church which tell the story of her voyage from Israel as if it were fact.

LA CRYPTÉ DE MARIE – MADELEINE

Cette crypte est devenue souterraine au long des siècles de construction de la Basilique de 1295 à 1532. Elle a été modifiée en 1404 par le Maréchal Boucicaut, pour devenir la crypte actuelle.

Selon la Tradition, il s'agit d'un des plus anciens monuments chrétiens de la Provence et connu comme étant l'oratoire de Saint Maximin, premier évêque d'Aix-en-Provence et compagnon d'exil et d'apostolat de Marie-Madeleine. Selon les historiens, il est reconnu comme étant un monument funéraire d'époque gallo-romaine.

La Tradition situe dans cette crypte l'ensevelissement de Marie-Madeleine, après avoir reçu la communion de l'évêque Maximin. Elle aurait été enterrée avec lui dans le sol de cet oratoire.

Elle contient quatre sarcophages de la fin du 4^{ème} siècle, ceux de Marie-Madeleine, Maximin, Sidoine, et celui dit "des Saints Innocents".

Cet oratoire – ou hypogée gallo-romain – se situait à côté de l'église primitive et du baptistère du 6^{ème} siècle, découverts en 1994 le long du flanc sud de la Basilique.

THE CRYPT OF MARY – MAGDALENE

During the long process of building the Basilica, which lasted from 1295 to 1532, the crypt ended up being underground. It was modified in 1404 by Maréchal Boucicaut, to become the actual crypt.

According to tradition, it is believed to be the oldest Christian monument from Provence, known as being the oratory from Saint Maximin, first Bishop of Aix en Provence, apostolate and companion in exile of Mary Magdalene.

According to historians, it is a monument from Gallo-Roman period. Still according to Tradition, Mary Magdalene was buried in the crypt, just after having received the communion by the Bishop Maximin. She was buried in the soil of the crypt, besides him, in the oratory.

The crypt contains four sarcophagus dated from end of 4th Century ; Mary Magdalene, Maximin, Sidoine, and « Saints Innocents ».

The oratory – or Gallo-Roman monument – was located next to the primitive church and the baptistry from 6th century, discovered in 1994 on the south side of the Basilica.

Inside the Basilica of St. Maximins – picture taken by the author

DESCRIPTION

The Basilica was built on a religious Merovingian site.

From 1295 to 1316 the choir and the five first cross sections of the nave were arched. The construction started again in 1404, then 1508 to 1532. The Basilica got at that time its present appearance without central front nor lateral belfry. With a length of 73 m, a width of 37 m and a height of 28 m, the Basilica is the only beautiful example of Gothic Style in Provence.

On both sides of the nave with nine cross sections there are eight side chapels.

As an historical monument since 1840, the Basilica is a property of the town of Saint Maximin.

The visit of the basilica should be followed by that of the Royal Convent and of the grotto in the Sainte Baume mountains.

Help us preserve our cultural heritage by becoming a member of our association. Your financial support and the number of subscribers will make our task to reach our goals much easier.

ASSOCIATION DES AMIS DE LA BASILIQUE SAINTE MARIE MADELEINE 25, Avenue Maréchal Foch 83470 SAINT-MAXIMIN

BULLETTIN D'ADHÉSION (à renvoyer à l'adresse ci-dessus)

Nom :

Prénom :

Adresse :

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Tél. :

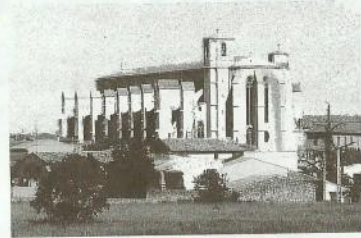
Cotisation

Membre actif : 18 euros

Membre bienfaiteur : 50 euros (minimum)

Site internet : www.lesamisdelabasilique.com

BASILICA SAINTE MARIE MADELEINE



HISTORY

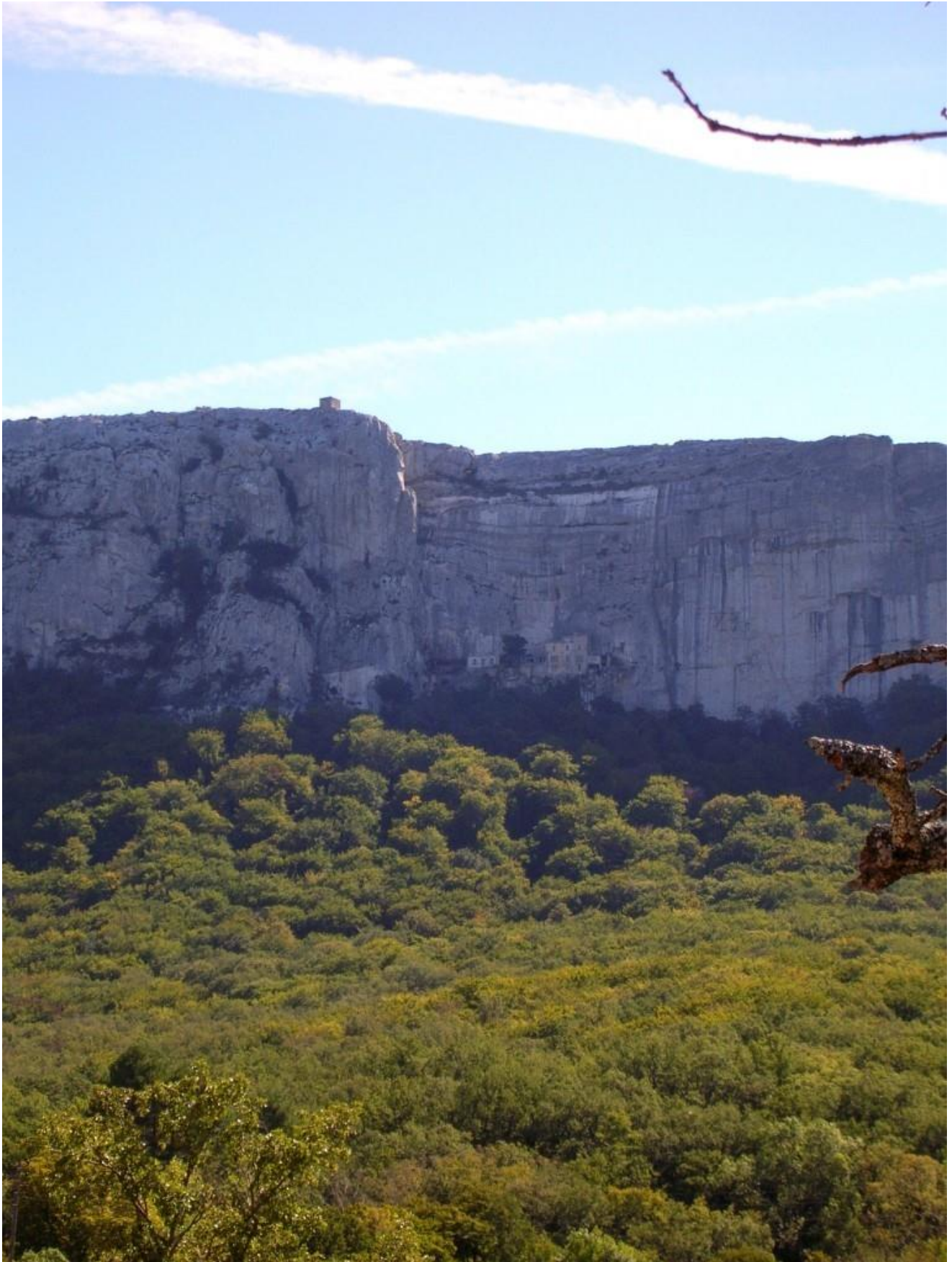
Driven away from Jerusalem by persecution with her brother Lazarus, her sister Martha and her companions, Marie Madeleine participated in the evangelisation of the Provence and retired in a grotto of the Sainte Baume mountains.

She died in Saint Maximin's arms, bishop of Aix, in the village to which he gave his name.

The relics of Sainte Marie Madeleine were kept in a sarcophagus and then buried in 710 in order to avoid looting by the Sarrasins. These relics remained lost until 1279 when Charles II of Anjou, Duc de Provence, later king of Sicily, discovered them. The Pope Bonifacius VIII and Charles II decided to construct a Basilica worthy of being a reliquary for Sainte Marie Madeleine. The construction was started in 1295 together with that of the convent next to the Basilica : the custody of the relics was entrusted to the Dominicans, Preaching Brothers, who settled in the convent until 1957.



The Grotto of Mary Magdalene – picture taken by the author



The Grotto of Mary Magdalene – picture taken by the author

If the Merovingians were Christ's kids, they certainly did not act like him. Their kings were occultists ruling by fear and awe – glass balls and other objects of divination were found in their tombs. Like Sampson in the Bible, they believed that there was power in long hair; they wore their hair very long, and all other men in the kingdom were required to keep their hair short. Furthermore, the ruling families of Europe contained some of the worst and most rapacious scoundrels of history. As I contemplated this, my thought was that these were not the children of Jesus. So, whose were they?

It is at this point that I had an inspiration – the Merovingians seemed to have been much more like the children of Satan. But how could that be? Then I remembered the story in the Gospel of John; when Mary Magdalene anointed the feet of Jesus, one of his twelve closest disciples had a serious objection. That man was Judas Iscariot, the same one who was later possessed by Satan, and who betrayed Jesus to his enemies for thirty pieces of silver.

In his Gospel John indicates that the reason for the objection was that Judas was an embezzler – as he was the treasurer of the group, he had access to their funds. But what was the real motive for Judas' surprising outburst in the middle of a large dinner party, that included all of the other disciples of Christ and many others as well? Perhaps Judas' real obsession was that he desired Mary Magdalene for himself, and he therefore became extremely angry when he saw Mary throwing herself on Jesus and not on him. Many scholars have felt that money alone was not an adequate explanation for Judas' betrayal of Christ. But if Judas' real motive was to somehow get cash in order to leave the ministry and elope with Mary Magdalene, then the story makes much more sense – lust is typically much more powerful than mere greed, especially for the relatively paltry sum of thirty silver shekels.

The more I considered this story, the more sense it made. It also helps to explain the extremely harsh statements that Jesus made about Judas. In Jesus' prayer in the garden of Gethsemane he said, "I guarded them and not one of them perished except the son of perdition, so that the Scripture would be fulfilled," and at the Last Supper he said, "For the Son of Man will go just as it is written of him, but woe to that man by who the Son of Man is betrayed! It would better for him if he had never been born!"

For the first time in contemporary literature, which has typically gone to the opposite side in attempting to depict Judas as a "good guy," this story unveils the dark and demonic side of Judas' character which the Gospels do not cover, but which are much more in keeping with what we know about Judas.

As I considered this, further connections fell into place: Satan, the great enemy, uses two of the people closest to Jesus in order to bring about the latter's betrayal and death, as well as to establish a Satanically inspired bloodline. In despair and tormented by demons, Judas dies his violent death, but Mary Magdalene, who earlier had had seven demons cast out of her by Jesus, becomes the "Unholy Grail made Holy" – a paradigm of all who follow Christ.



Statue of Mary Magdalene – picture taken by the author

The bloodline of Judas and Mary eventually includes the Merovingian kings and other rulers of Europe. Many of these had the same lust for power as Satan, their “father.” In the future, this bloodline would ultimately produce a counterfeit messiah (a pseudo world savior) who would become the anti-Christ of Revelation. This concept effectively unifies history.

After thinking all of this through, I said, “Wow! This is one of the broadest and most compelling themes I have ever heard of! I have to write this!” And so began the effort to write a novel and publish it. I began to research and write, gathering hundreds of sources on a very diverse set of topics – Biblical studies, archaeology, French history, German history, English history, Irish history, Muhammad and Islam, the Crusades, the Holy Grail, King Arthur, the Knights Templar, the Shroud of Turin, the Ark of the Covenant,

Freemasonry, Rosicruianism, the Druids, Demonology, Gnosticism, Ancient Goddesses, Islam, Jewish History, Oil history and policies, the European Union, etc. Here is a partial bibliography. The novels took over ten years to research and write, with a lot of other things going on at the same time. Along the way I went down various other related trails, and developed a keen interest in the Shroud of Turin. I wrote and published several papers on the largest shroud-related site on the internet – Shroud.com, including an article I wrote and published there summarizing all of the challenges that have ever been made to the authenticity of the Shroud.

Public displays of the Shroud of Turin are rare – limited to intervals of 10 to 25 years. But it was available for public viewing in the spring of 2010, and we went to Turin to see it in May of that year. I have also written a piece on what I consider to be the actual grail object – the “True Holy Grail.” I finally finished Book One of the series – *The Story of Judas Iscariot & Mary Magdalene* – and published the first edition in 2007. Book Two – *The Heir of Judas Iscariot & Mary Magdalene* was published in August, 2011.