



# Leonardo da Vinci

(1452 – 1519)

## Exploring Theological Insights Revealed in *The Virgin of the Rocks*

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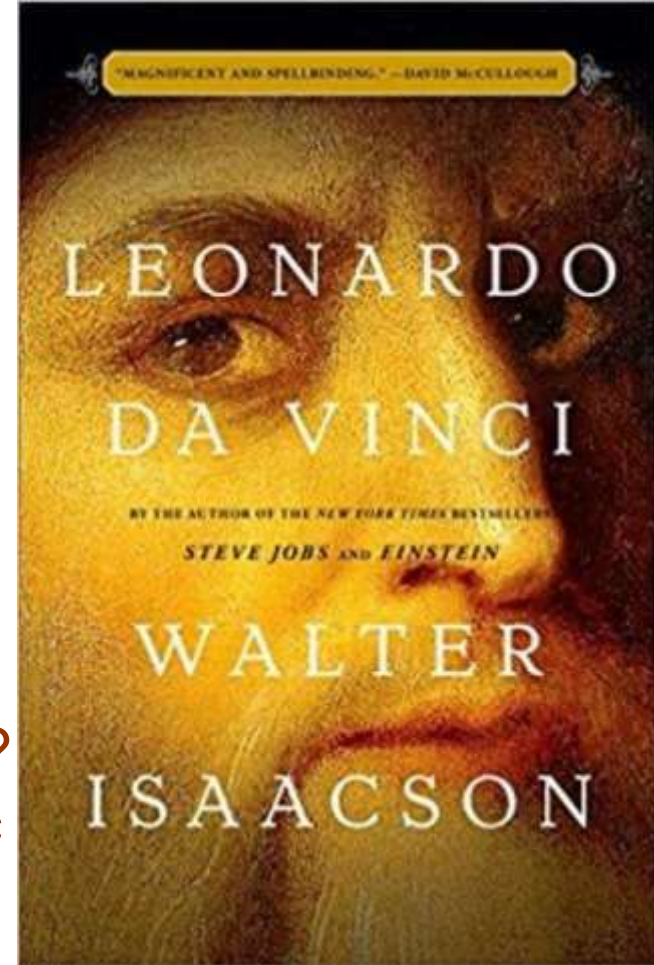
# Brief Bio on Leonardo da Vinci, Renaissance Man



- **b.1452 – d.1519**
- **Artist:** paintings, sculpture
- **Scientist:** greatly advanced the state of knowledge in the fields of optics, anatomy, civil engineering, and hydrodynamics
- **Inventions:** helicopter, a tank, concentrated solar power, a calculator, automated bobbin winder, a machine for testing the tensile strength of wire, the double hull ships, and outlining a rudimentary theory of plate tectonics
- **How did he know what he knew?**
  - Kept his private life private
  - **Theology? Mysticism?**

# Leonardo In The News

- Walter Isaacson's book, talk shows
- Scientist & Artist
- *Vitruvian Man* “classic representation of the Renaissance spirit”
- Notebooks as written record
- Private life kept private: was LdV gay? LdV created arguably the two most iconic works of art in Western history:
  1. *Last Supper*
  2. *Mona Lisa*
  3. ***Virgin of the Rocks*** – *courageous work*  
*Not just another Christian painting*



# In the News

- Salvador Mundi
  - Savior of the World
- Auctioned in NYC on Nov 15 at Christie's
  - **\$450M!**



# Exhibit at The Met, NYC:

## Leonardo da Vinci, Master Draftsman

- Organized by Carmen C. Bambach, world famous curator
  - January 22 – March 30, 2003
- Survey of Leonardo's staggering contribution as artist, scientist, theorist, and teacher.
- Gathered from private and public collections in Europe and North America — with unprecedented loans coming from Windsor Castle, the Louvre, and the Galleria dell'Accademia in Venice
- Brought together nearly 120 works
- [*current exhibit: Michelangelo* also by Carmen]

# Lecture Outline

- What is this painting, *Virgin of the Rocks*, all about?
- What is the historical context?
- What do we know about the painting's history?
- What Leonardo was portraying
- Why it was dangerous



# Virgin (or Madonna) of the Rocks

***There two paintings!***

***Why?***



Where are they?



2/23/2019

National Gallery, London

Virgin of the Rocks

Louvre, Paris

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# National Gallery VOR

- As it was displayed until 2010
- Then, after cleaning ...

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Virgin of the



# National Gallery VOR



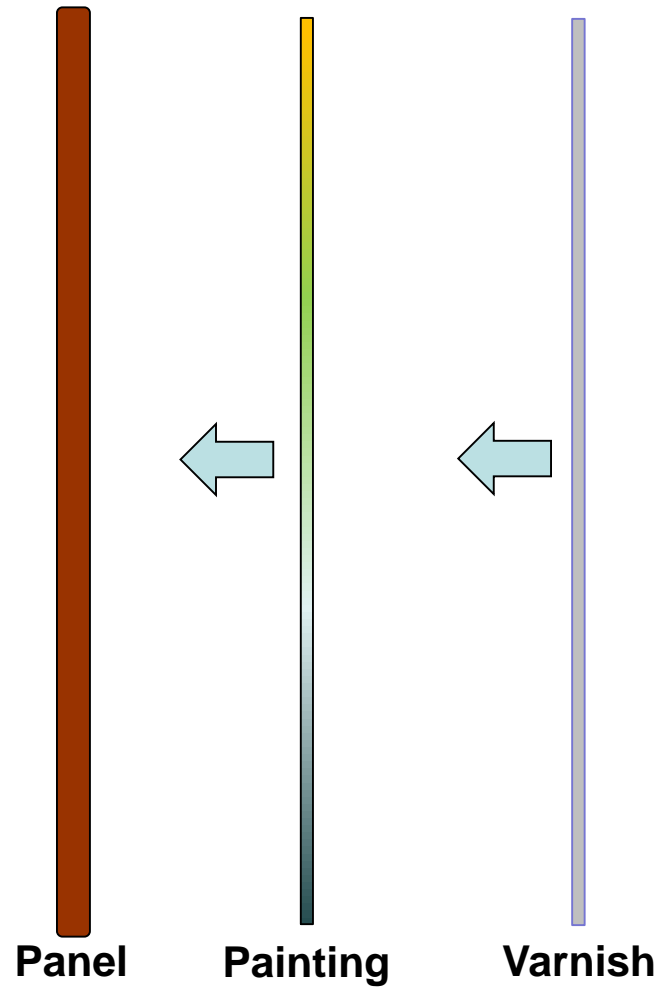
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Virgin of the Rocks

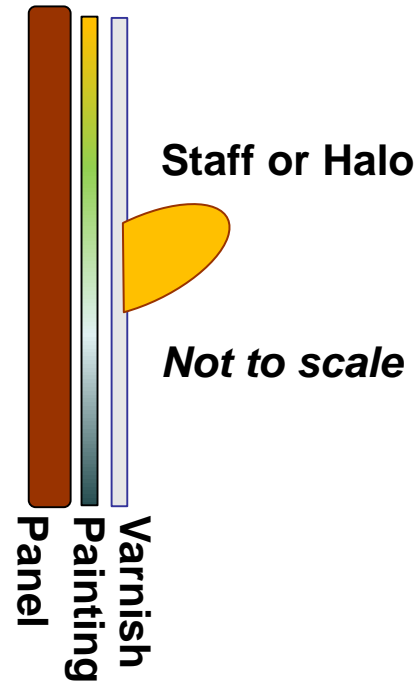
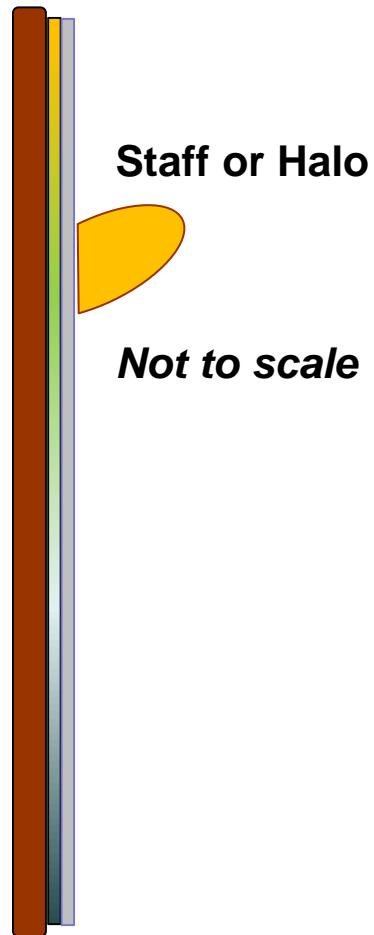


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# Side View



# Finished Painting, side view





# Art Historians Say,

- “The paintings are both nearly 2 meters (over 6 feet) high and are painted in oils. Both were painted on wooden panel; the Louvre’s has been transferred to canvas
- Both paintings show the **Madonna and Child Jesus with the infant John the Baptist and an angel**, in a rocky setting which gives the paintings their usual name
- The version generally considered **the earlier of the two, hangs in The Louvre in Paris** and the other in the National Gallery, London
- The complete histories of the two paintings are **unknown, and lead to speculation about which of the two is earlier**” --

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virgin\\_of\\_the\\_Rocks](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virgin_of_the_Rocks)

# What the Louvre Says ...



- The most convincing **hypothesis** is that original picture, painted [perhaps] between 1483 and 1486, did not meet with Leonardo's clients' full satisfaction.
  - Louis XII **may** have acquired it around 1500–1503.
- The second, replacement picture, now in London, may have been painted by **Ambrogio de Predis** under Leonardo's supervision **between 1495 and 1508.**"
- “[2<sup>nd</sup>] version, now in the National Gallery in London was known to have formerly been in this **chapel**, and several archive documents indicate that the Louvre painting was never installed there.
  - Its presence in the French royal collection is attested from 1625.

<http://www.louvre.fr/en/oeuvre-notices/virgin-rocks>

# In What Chapel Was It Installed?

- Late 1482: Da Vinci arrives in Milan
  - Reputation as a Master Florentine painter
  - Sets up painting studio and school in Milan
- Early 1483: he responds to bid by **Confraternity of the Immaculate Conception** for their *chapel*
  - 1480: Giacomo del Maino commissioned for three paintings: a central Virgin and Child with angels and two side panels also with musical angels
  - Work was to be completed by the Feast of the Conception 12/8/83
    - Early 1483: Giacomo withdraws – unable to complete in time
  - Opens the door for Leonardo

# History of *The Virgin of the Rocks*

- Many historical assumptions exist
- Andrew Linnell's historical version
  - Leonardo offered VoR, the original that was begun in Florence
  - Apparently it was “accepted” but only after changes made → new version
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> version painted mostly by his students: de Predis brothers
- As claimed by [James Kettlewell](#):
  - 1485: Painting may have been finished and installed
  - Final payment made on 28Dec1484 [cited Marani, p. 125]
  - Kettlewell claims that Leonardo felt he should have been paid more and sued
  - In 1503, when King of France ruled Milan, Leonardo appealed to him
  - Original likely removed by the King requiring Leonardo to paint another
  - Second painting finished after 1506, installed 1508

# History of *The Virgin of the Rocks*

- Carmen Bambach accepts that Leonardo completed his first version that is now in the Louvre of *The Virgin of the Rocks* while in Milan [but began while in Florence].
- VoR has “stylistic similarities with works painted towards the end of his stay in Florence such as *The Adoration of the Magi*” – Louvre
- Giorgio Vasari, in his *Life of Leonardo*, describes a version done by Leonardo during his time in Florence!
- “A common opinion is that the *Virgin of the Rocks* was never installed in the altarpiece” [James Kettlewell]

# Later History of *The Virgin of the Rocks*

- 1499: 2nd Italian War breaks out; Leonardo flees Milan
- 1499: Legal dispute (after 16 years): Ambrogio de Predis claimed to have completed the work, wanted payment
- **1506**: April 27: Dispute settled with the requirement that LvD return to Milan within two years “to complete” the painting
- 1507: Artists paid (for completing the **finishing touches**)
- 1508: Installed in the Confraternity
- 1625: Original spotted by Italian art connoisseur Cassiano del Pozzo along with the *Mona Lisa* in the French Royal collection

# Why and How Are These Paintings Different?

Let's investigate  
and look for clues!















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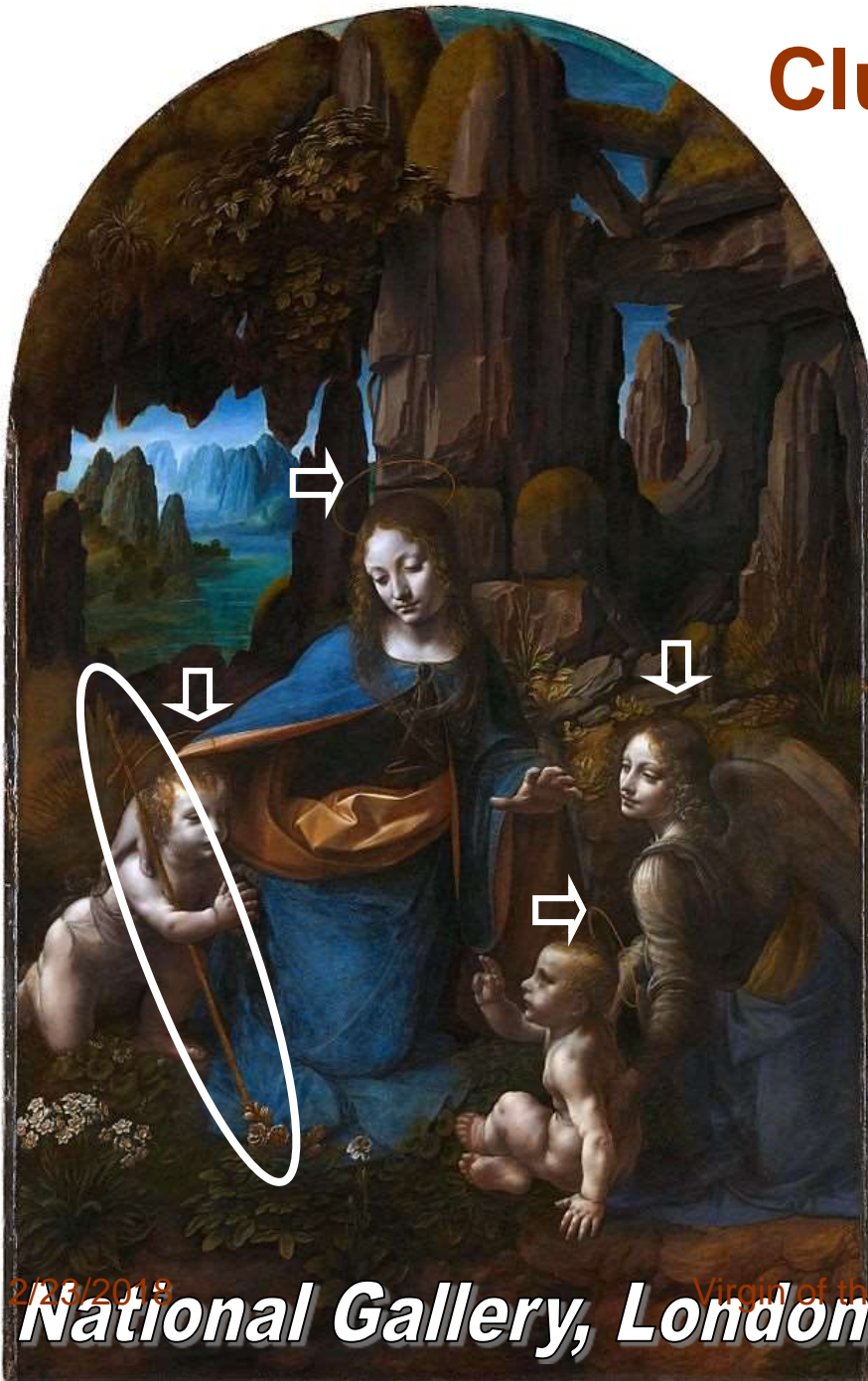
Virgin of the Rocks

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## Clues



# Known History of Leonardo and of his Paintings

Let's investigate  
the theological -  
historical situation!



# Historical Situation: Up to 1400 CE

- The Ancient Mysteries had vanished – remnants underground
  - Aristotle & Alexander (323 BCE) – 72 Alexandrias with libraries!
  - 330 CE: Founding of Constantinople, Latin and Greek Christianities
  - Theodosius (379-395 CE) & Justinian (527-565 CE)
    - Teachers flee Europe → east (Baghdad)
    - Helped to ignite the cultural supremacy of the Islamic states in 10<sup>th</sup> C
  - 14<sup>th</sup> century: Greek philosophers and culture reentered Europe
- Rome imported but had long since faded away
  - Even the barbarians had become civilized since Charlemagne
- By end 1300s, *gone*: School at Chartres, Cathars, & Templars
  - Crusade followed by Inquisition wiped out the “heretics”
- Period of Pilgrimages (10<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> C): over
- Bubonic plague: 60-70% of the population of Europe removed

# Situation Within the RC Church

- 1054: Churches of Rome & Constantinople split (already 400 years)
- Black Death Plague in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 14<sup>th</sup> century
  - Relevance of Church damaged (why would God allow so many to die?)
  - Church receives blame for torture and extermination of Knights Templar 1314
  - Rise of Humanism versus blind faith – undermined Church authority
- Papacy in crisis, theology under attack, internal discontent
  - At the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century: rival Popes!
    - Great Western Schism (1378–1417): French (Avignon) vs Italian (Rome) Pope
    - Each had different political allies
  - 1409: a third Pope installed
  - 1417: Finally one Pope, Martin V. Papacy restored to the “Papal States”
- However, being declared a heretic still meant death
  - Giordano Bruno: Dominican friar, philosopher, mathematician, poet, astrologer and astronomer burned at the stake 17Feb1600
    - Proposed the Sun was just another star moving in space; universe contains an infinite number of inhabited worlds populated by other intelligent beings
- All tithing flowed to the Papal bankers in **Florence**

# Eastern Christian Church

- Nestorius (386–451)
  - Thomas, Mani, Arius, Montanus, Gnostics, Others
- 424–427: broke w/church of the Roman Empire
  - Different from Greek Orthodox Church
- Liturgically, adhered to the East Syrian Rite
  - Rejected the Council of Ephesus in 431
- Theologically: dyophysite doctrine
  - Separateness of the **divine and human** natures: Christ and Jesus
  - **Roman Catholicism: Jesus as Man, Eastern: Cosmic Christ**
- Between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries, at its height, the Church of the East represented the world's largest Christian church stretching from the Mediterranean Sea to Mongolia, India , and China
- Enjoyed co-existence with Islam till Hulagu destroyed Baghdad 1258



# Manuel Chrysolorus (1355-1415)



- 1391: envoy to West from Constantinople
  - Sought Western military help
- Gave lectures on Greek philosophers
  - Taught Roberto de' Rossi, Cosimo de' Medici's tutor
- 1396: Invited to teach at Univ. of Florence
  - **Preparer of the Renaissance**
- 1400: Goes on to teach at Bologna, Venice, and Rome
- **Inspires Florentine missions to save ancient texts in the East**
  - 1258: Destruction of Gondhishapur and other centers of learning
  - 1423: Giovanni Aurispa returns with 238 texts
    - Plato, Plotinus, Proclus, Sophocles, Aeschylus, and more
  - 1469: Basilios Bessarion brought to the Library of San Marcos in Venice more than 800 volumes from the East
    - Sources: D'Eprio, Peter, *The Book of Firsts*, pg 337-338
      - And Liebrechts, Peter, *Ezra Pound and Neoplatonism*,

# G. Gemistus Plethon

For more see [paper](#)  
by Shawn Gray



- b. Constantinople **1355**, d. Mistra (near Sparta) **1452**
- 1428: Byzntn Emperor John VIII asks Gemistus
  - How can the split churches be unified?
- **1438 - 39 Council of Florence**
  - Attempt to reconcile the East-West schism
  - Accompanies John VIII because of his renowned wisdom and morality
  - Byzantine Empire was asking for European help against the Ottomans
- Becomes the **Catalyst for the Renaissance**
  - Invited to set up a school in Florence
    - Lectures on the differences between Plato and Aristotle
  - Cosimo de' Medici attended these lectures – very excited
    - Inspired, he founds the Accademia Platonica with Ficino as its head
    - Students of Plethon continued to teach well after the council ended
  - Lectures summarized in book *On the Differences of Aristotle from Plato*
  - Inspired Renaissance paintings on Greek mythology

# Who Was Plethon?

- A “Prince Among the Philosophers”
- Marsilio Ficino called him **'the second Plato'**
- Cardinal Bessarion: Is Plato's soul in this body?
- Well versed in **Plato, Aristotle, Zoroaster / Zarathustra and the *ancient mysteries***
- Plethon's books included **Hermes Trismegistus**
  - Likely source for Ficino's Orphic system of natural magic
  - Believed West was influenced by Arabic (materialistic) interpretations of Plato & Aristotle (*via Haroun al Rashiid's gift to Charlemagne*)
  - Practiced ancient Greek paganism as prelude to Christianity
- Trunk full of books – allowed de' Medici team to translate
  - Doctrines of Zoroaster, Plato, Plotinus, Hermes Trismegistus and others
  - Byzantines had wisdom and many documents the West had not seen
- 1440: Returned to Greece to found a **mystery center** in Mistra



**Siena Cathedral**

# Leonardo da Vinci and Ancient Wisdom

*“He alone uses each thing well who has learned of his own power and that of others, from wisdom” -- Ficino*

- Born 15 April **1452** near Florence, Italy, illegitimate son of a notary
- Education (*lucky for us, Leonardo was an illegitimate son*)
  - Age of 8, father takes him to Florence to commence his studies
  - Age of 12, Leonardo is enrolled in Florence's best artistic workshop: Andrea del Verrocchio
    - Other apprentices include Botticelli, Ghirlandaio, Perugino, Lorenzo di Credi
    - Michaelangelo and Raphael in the next generation
  - Age of 28, part of de Medici (Lorenzo the Magnificent) household
    - Member of the Garden of San Marcos [*what is this?*]
    - “The Medici made me and the Medici destroyed me” – journal entry
  - Marsilio Ficino, **Plato** Academy, 1462
  - John Argyropoulos, **Aristotelian** from *Constantinople*
  - Pico della Mirandola, C. Landino, Angelo Poliziano
  - **Secret schools** – Leonardo kept his private life secret

What did young Leonardo learn from these men? Ancient Mysteries?

Why does Leonardo establish an Academy in Milan?

Leonardo knew Ficino well – he painted him!



# Renaissance: Rebirth of Greek Philosophy

- Why would Leonardo be so secret about this? Some: b/c he was gay
  - Death to Heretics, Hounds of God (Inquisitors)
  - Ancient Mysteries, even Platonism, were considered heresies
  - Divulging Mystery Center's secrets meant death
- Groups that carried Greek (and Mystery) knowledge to Europe
  - Charlemagne from Harun al-Rashid (*via Gondhishapur*)
  - Kabbalists (*Jewish esotericism*)
  - Cathars (*genocide via Albigensian Crusade and Inquisition 1244*)
  - Knights Templars (*exterminated 1314 → Freemasonry*)
  - Rosicrucians (*wisely chose to be very secretive*)
  - Alchemists and Hermeticists
- Florentine art revives neo-platonism: Christian + Greek
  - Greek statues excavated from underground
  - Leonardo knew a lot about Plato, Aristotle, and other Greek philosophers
    - did he also learn about the Ancient Mysteries and Gnosticism?



# Resistance to the Renaissance

- **1452**-1498: Girolamo Savonarola, Dominican friar and preacher
- 1482: At 30, called for **Christian renewal** denouncing clerical corruption, despotic rule, and the exploitation of the poor
  - Inspired the Florentines to expel the ruling Medici and establish a popular republic, declaring **Florence as the New Jerusalem**
  - Instituted a puritanical campaign, enlisting the active help of Florentine youth to destroy art “intended for the vain”
  - Leonardo leaves for Milan
- **1492: Lorenzo di Medici dies (Moors out of Spain, Columbus to America), “plundering” of Florentine artists → High Renaissance**
- 1495: the Pope excommunicated Savonarola
  - Refused to have Florence join a war against France
  - Popular opinion turned against him
  - Under torture, Savonarola confessed that he had invented his visions and prophecies – in 1498 he was **burned** in Florence
  - The Medici, restored to power with the help of the papacy and eventually broke the movement



# After Florence

- 1482: not surprisingly, Leonardo da Vinci left Florence
  - Accepted post as court artist for Duke of Milan
  - Traveled with his paintings (*Savonarola mobs*)
  - 1476: arrested for sodomy – death sentence if guilty
- 1485: Established Academy for art, design, science, & philosophy
  - Was this similar to the Plato Academy of Florence?
  - 1492: Luca Pacioli invited to teach “Let no one enter who is lacking in geometry”
- 1499: Fled Milan at the start of the Second Italian War
  - French troops used his Horse for target practice (and ‘fun’)
- **1506: Returned to Milan from Florence** (*to finish that painting!*)
- 1515: Moved to Rome
- 1516: Accepted a commission from the King Francois I of France
  - Chief painter, engineer, and architect to the King
  - Died at Clos Lucé, France, on May 2, 1519 at age 67



# Could there be a “heretical” Mystery portrayed?

Plethon inspired  
mystery?

If so, then it could

- explain secrecy &
- explain its rejection  
by Confraternity



# Pistis Sophia (Gnostic) Chapter 59

- Gnostic text [*supposedly*] **not discovered until 1773**
- Refers to **Twin Messiahs and two families!**
- And Jesus answered and said: "Thou also, Mary, hast received form which is in Barbēlō, according to matter, and hast received likeness which is in the Virgin of Light, according to light, **thou and the other Mary**, the blessed one; and on thy account the darkness hath arisen, and moreover out of thee did come forth the **material body** in which I am, **which I have purified and refined**,--now, therefore, I bid thee proclaim the solution of the words which Pistis Sophia hath uttered."
- <http://gnosis.org/library/pistis-sophia/ps063.htm>

# Pistis Sophia Chapter 62

- The **other Mary** came forward and said: "My Lord, bear with me and be not wroth with me. Yea, from the moment when **thy mother** spake with thee concerning the solution of these words, my power disquieted me to come forward and like-wise to speak the solution of these words."

# Pistis Sophia: Jesus “Twins” Chapter 61

“When thou wast small, before the Spirit came upon thee, while thou wast in a vineyard with Joseph, the Spirit came forth from the height, he came to me into my house, he resembled thee. And I did not recognize him and I thought that he was thou. And the Spirit said to me : 'Where is Jesus, my brother, that I meet him ?' And when he said these things to me, I was confused and I thought that he was a phantom to tempt me. But I took him, I bound him to the leg of the bed in my house, until I came out to you in the field, thou and Joseph, and I found you in the vineyard, as Joseph was hedging the vineyard with reeds.

Now it happened, when thou didst hear me speaking the word to Joseph, thou didst understand the word and thou didst rejoice. And thou didst say : 'Where is he that I may see him? Or else I await him in this place'. But it happened when Joseph heard thee saying these words, he was agitated and we came up at the same time, we went into the house. We found the Spirit bound to the bed. And we looked at thee with him, we found thee like him. And he that was bound to the bed was released, he embraced thee, **he kissed thee. And thou also, thou didst kiss him and you became one.**”

[http://www.pseudepigrapha.com/PistisSophia/pistisSophia\\_Book1.html](http://www.pseudepigrapha.com/PistisSophia/pistisSophia_Book1.html)

# Kissing Babes

- From Pistis Sophia?



Leonardo da Vinci (1452 – 1519)



Joos van Cleve (1485-1540)  
He “appropriated themes and techniques  
of Leonardo da Vinci” - [Wikipedia](#)

# Bernardino Luini

- 1480 - 1532
- *Holy Family*
- Pupil of Ambrogio Bergognone
- Also student of Leonardo
- Note female's hand gestures





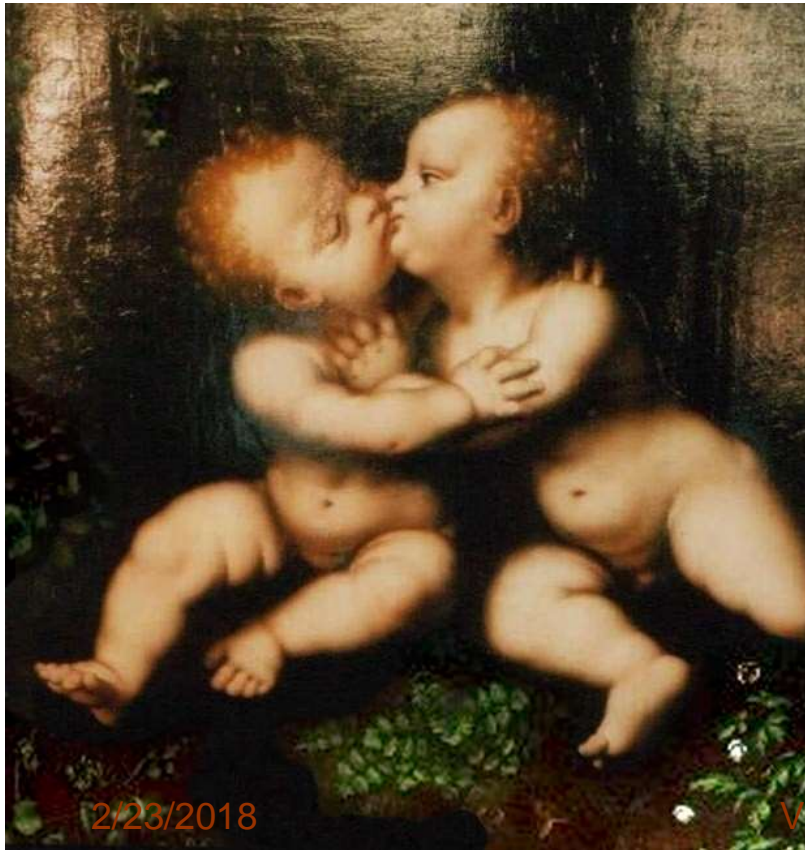
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Virgin of the Rocks

# The Holy Infants

- Kissing Babes
- Over 30 versions  
Attributed to LdV



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Virgin of the Rocks

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# Bernardino de Conti

- Student of Zenale and LdV
  - Friend and associate of Ambrogio di Predis
- Just another *Kissing Babes*?
  - Madonna's hands reversed, foot
  - What is meant by the book?
    - To whom is its wisdom granted?
- Halos!
  - Which Jesus crucified?
  - Children also reversed
- Note the same background!
  - Aware of *Virgin of the Rocks*
- What is de Conti trying to say?
  - Child on the left not J the Baptist!
- Archangel 'missing'





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Virgin of the Rocks

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# Nag Hammadi & Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS)

- Nag Hammadi, Egypt in the 1945 **Gnostic texts** inside earthen jar
- DSS discovered 1947, more found through 1979 in eleven caves
  - Essene settlement called Qumran
  - 872 scrolls were written in Hebrew and Aramaic by their initiates
  - Written from 150 BCE until 70 CE when Roman army dispersed Jews
  - Herod's Great Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed by the Roman army in 70 CE and the Jews, including Essenes, scattered
- The DSSs reveal that **two messiahs** were expected
  - “the Qumranites expected the coming of not one, but **two Messiahs**”
    - One of a **priestly** lineage [Aaron] and one **kingly** [Israel]
    - “Its members [Essenes of Qumran] were looking forward to a '**Messiah of Israel**' and a '**Messiah of David**' who resemble the **priestly** and **kingly** descendants.” [http://www.livius.org/men-mh/messiah/messiah\\_14.html](http://www.livius.org/men-mh/messiah/messiah_14.html)
  - Damascus Document: “The Messiah, which is the Son of Joseph **will be made one** with the Son of David, but he will be killed...”
  - **Testaments of the twelve patriarchs** (version translated 13<sup>th</sup> C by Robert Grosseteste)
    - “For the Lord will raise up from Levi someone as a high-priest and from Judah someone as king. He will save all the gentiles and the tribe of Israel.” *Testament of Simeon 7.1-2*

# Other Expectations of 2 Anointed Ones

- Kabbalistic Roots: Zohar

*"Another Messiah, the son of Joseph, will **unite** himself with the Messiah, the son of David. But the son of Joseph will not remain in life, he will be killed and will become alive again, when the little hill receives life upon the great hill."*

- "Old Testament": **Zechariah 4:14, Numbers 24:17, Ezekiel 37:15-17,**

1. *"These are the **two** anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth"*
2. *"There shall come a star out of **Jacob**, and a scepter shall rise out of **Israel**"*
3. *"They [sticks of Judah and Joseph] **shall become one** in thine hand"*

- **Summary:** Expected **two births** (messiahs), a later **merging**, and a baptism where Holy Spirit *settles* upon the body

# 6<sup>th</sup> Century Byzantine Art – Why Two?



The Bohdan And Varvara Khanenko Museum Of Arts, Kiev

# Clues in Christian Theology?



Do Each of the  
Gospels Describe  
the Same Birth?



# Two Christmas Stories: Luke & Matthew

- Many have written about the historical inaccuracies:
  - Historians place King Herod's death between 4 – 1 BC
  - **Matthew** story: slaughter of the innocents carried out by Herod
    - Thus Jesus born in 1BC (or back to 4BC)
  - **Luke** story: no slaughter of innocents
    - No mention of Herod
    - Thus it must take place after Herod's death
    - Jesus Christ died in April 33 CE at the age of 33,
    - Luke-Jesus must have been born in year 0 (and after Matthew Jesus in ~1BC)
- Could there have been Two Messiahs?
  - Same first names but different families, different stories?

# Mysteries of Christmas *Mark & John start at **Baptism***

## Matthew 1:1-25

- From Abraham,..., David, **King Solomon** (father ...)
- Angel to Joseph
- Middle-aged, royal lineage
- Live in Bethlehem
- Comfortable setting
- Magi from the East
- *Kingly and wise*
- Family flees to Egypt – returns to Nazareth after Herod dies
- Brothers and sisters
- Begins “The book of the **genealogy** of Jesus-Christ

## Luke 3:23-38 (at baptism)

- **Priest Nathan** (son of ...), David ,..., Abraham,..., Adam
- Angel to Mary
- Young and poor
- Live in Nazareth
- In a stable in Bethlehem
- Shepherds
- *Pure and loving*
- No threat. Jesus grows up in Nazareth
- Only child
- Genealogy described at baptism “as was supposed” of Joseph

# Associations Made by E. R. Smith

## Kingly

- Solomon / Hiram Abiff
- **Cain** stream
- Perfection of “the 3 loaves” from Abraham\* (14x3)
  1. Physical
  2. Etheric (life)
  3. Astral (emotions/sensations)
- **Tree of Knowledge**
- Magi imply Zoroaster aka Zarathustra stream

## Priestly

- Nathan (Aaron)
- **Abel** stream
- No karma
- Redemption is to find way back to **Tree of Life**
- Heavenly hosts surrounding

*\* For more see E. R. Smith's The Burning Bush, pg. 411*

# Where Any of Leonardo's Students Aware?

If so, do they participate in this?

- Bernardino de' Conti



# Bernardino de' Conti

- 1470-1523, Milan
- student of Zenale and then Leonardo
- Friend and associate of Ambrogio di Predis



# *Three Children* by Bernardino de' Conti

- **Who are these three?**
- Note: exact VoR poses
  - Boys not reversed
- Note: the 'halo'
- Note: the hands
- **Why John? Baptism!**
- Note the “*transfer*”
- [https://elpais.com/diario/2005/10/09/cultura/1128808804\\_740215.html](https://elpais.com/diario/2005/10/09/cultura/1128808804_740215.html)



# *Three Children* by Bernardino de' Conti



# Problem with Our Conclusion

If it is two Jesus children

1. Luke: Priest
  2. Matthew: King
- then why is there just one Jesus later in life?



# Merging of the Two Messiahs

- If the Dead Sea Scrolls were right, then we must find the point where these **two Jesus children are united**
- Luke: story of Jesus at age 12 in the Temple
  - Not mentioned in Matthew (*its Jesus is 13 or 14*)
- Within the Holy of the Holies in Jerusalem Temple
  - According to hand gestures, Luke-Jesus receives 3 “members” from Matthew-Jesus

For more, see R. Steiner:

- *According to Luke*
- *According to Matthew*

# Perhaps Answers the Gnostic Question?

- How could a God become Man?
  - Spirit is immortal, non-physical
  - Flesh is “fallen”: impossible for a God to be born into flesh
- Could a God take the place of a Man’s spirit?
  - Man would need to sacrifice the three bodily sheaths
- A Great Christian Mystery is Revealed in the VoR
  - Merging of streams: Cain & Abel
    - King: Solomon (Matthew) & Priest: Nathan (Luke)
      - Three Magi & Simple Shepherds
    - Two Jesus children later “combine” at age 12 (Temple in Jerusalem)
      - **Human act precedes Cosmic act**
  - Jesus of Nazareth sacrifices prepared body to Christ/Logos at baptism
    - First Adam and Second Adam (St. Paul)

# Do His Pupils Further Corroborate This Story?

Let's investigate!

Did these artists  
participate in this?

- Ambrogio Bergognone
- Bernardino di Betto
- Bernardino Luini
- Defendente Ferrari



# Ambrogio da Fossano Bergognone

- b 1452? – d 1524
- Student of Leonardo and Zenale in Milan
- His brother, Bernardino, also was a painter
- Alterpiece at Milan's St. Ambrogio Basilica, 1509 fresco
- Leonardo returned to Milan in 1506 to complete 2<sup>nd</sup> version of *Virgin of the Rocks*
  - Bergognone is with Leonardo, studying under him
  - Rudolf Steiner points to this painting as a depiction of the two Jesus children right after their merger

# Christ Among the Doctors

"And Jesus grew  
in wisdom, age  
and grace before  
God and men"  
[Luke 2:52]



# Christ Among the Doctors

- Bernardino di Betto (Pinturicchio)
- c. 1452-1513
- Studied under Bergognone and LdV
- Painted this 1501
- Fresco, Bagloioni Chapel, Santa Maria Maggiore, Spello, Italy



# Christ Among the Doctors

- Pinturicchio
  - little painter
- Notice hands
- <http://encyclopedia.farlex.com/Bernardino+Luini>



# Christ Among the Doctors

- Colors, socks, clothes



Virgin of the Rocks



# Christ Among the Doctors

- Colors, socks, clothes



Virgin of the Rocks

Raphael, Tobias



# Bernardino Luini

- Student of both Leonardo and Bergognone
- *Christ Among the Doctors*, painted 1515
- Leonardo's signature appears 3 times on the back



# Defendente Ferrari (1490 – 1540)



1526,  
Staatsgalerie  
Stuttgart

Apprentice to  
Giovanni  
Martino  
Spanzotti

# Can Greek Philosophy (Theology) Help Us Understand?



Soma  
Psyche  
Pneuma



# Greek Concept of the Human

**Spirit**

- Atman
- Buddhi *(Sanskrit terms)*
- Manas

**Soul**

- Consciousness – Dianoetikon
- Intellectual – Kinetikon
- Sentient – Orektikon

**Ego**

fire/warmth

**Body**

- |                        |          |            |
|------------------------|----------|------------|
| • Astral – Aisthetikon | wisdom   | air/light  |
| • Etheric – Threptikon | beauty   | water/chem |
| • Physical – Gaia      | strength | earth/life |

**Reflects the 9 (3x3) Hierarchies**

# *Sacred Geometry*



2/23/2018

*Reproduction*

Virgin of the Rocks



*Original*

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# *Sacred Geometry*



2/23/2018

*Reproduction*

Virgin of the Rocks



*Original*

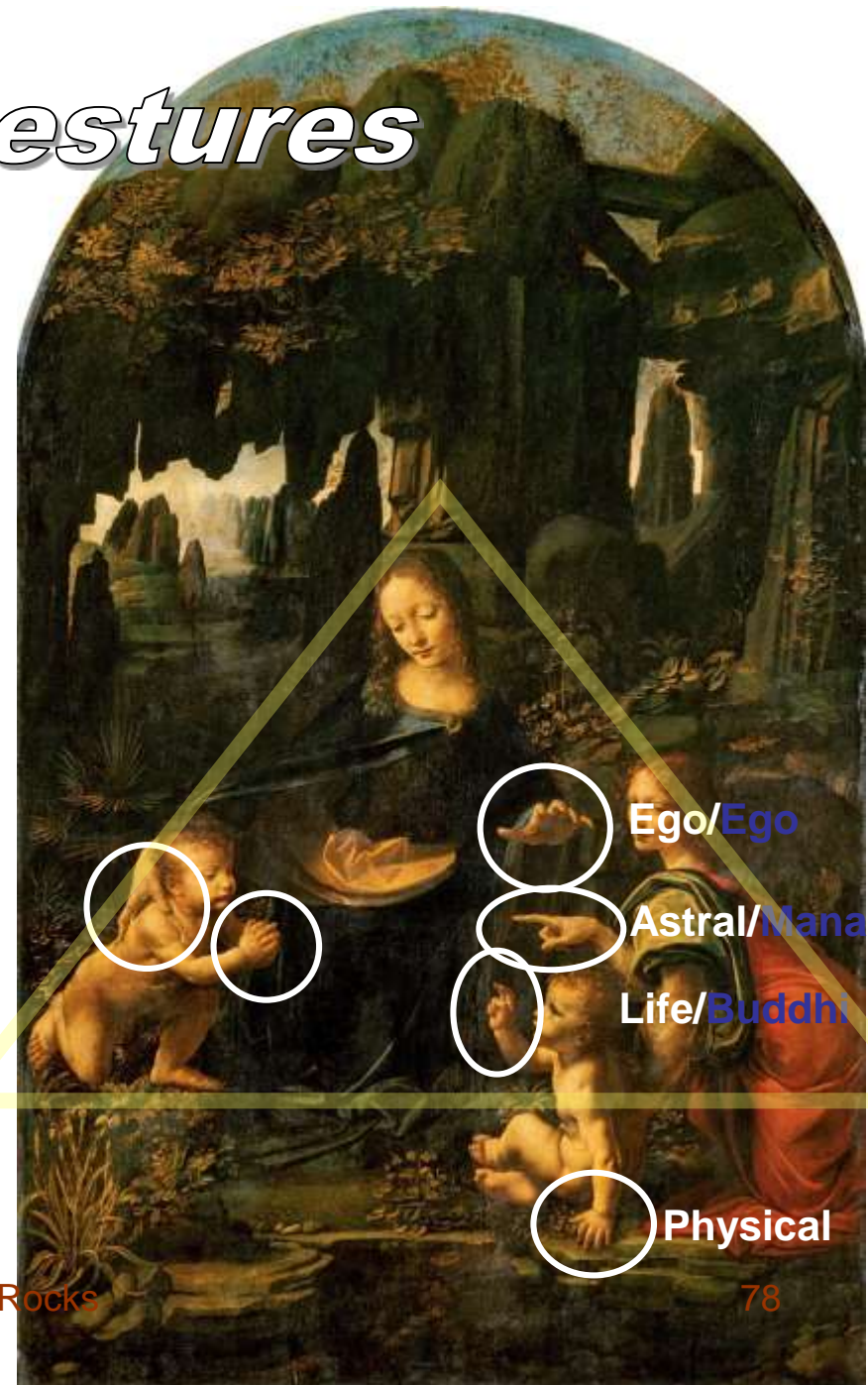
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# *Hand Gestures*



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Virgin of the Rocks

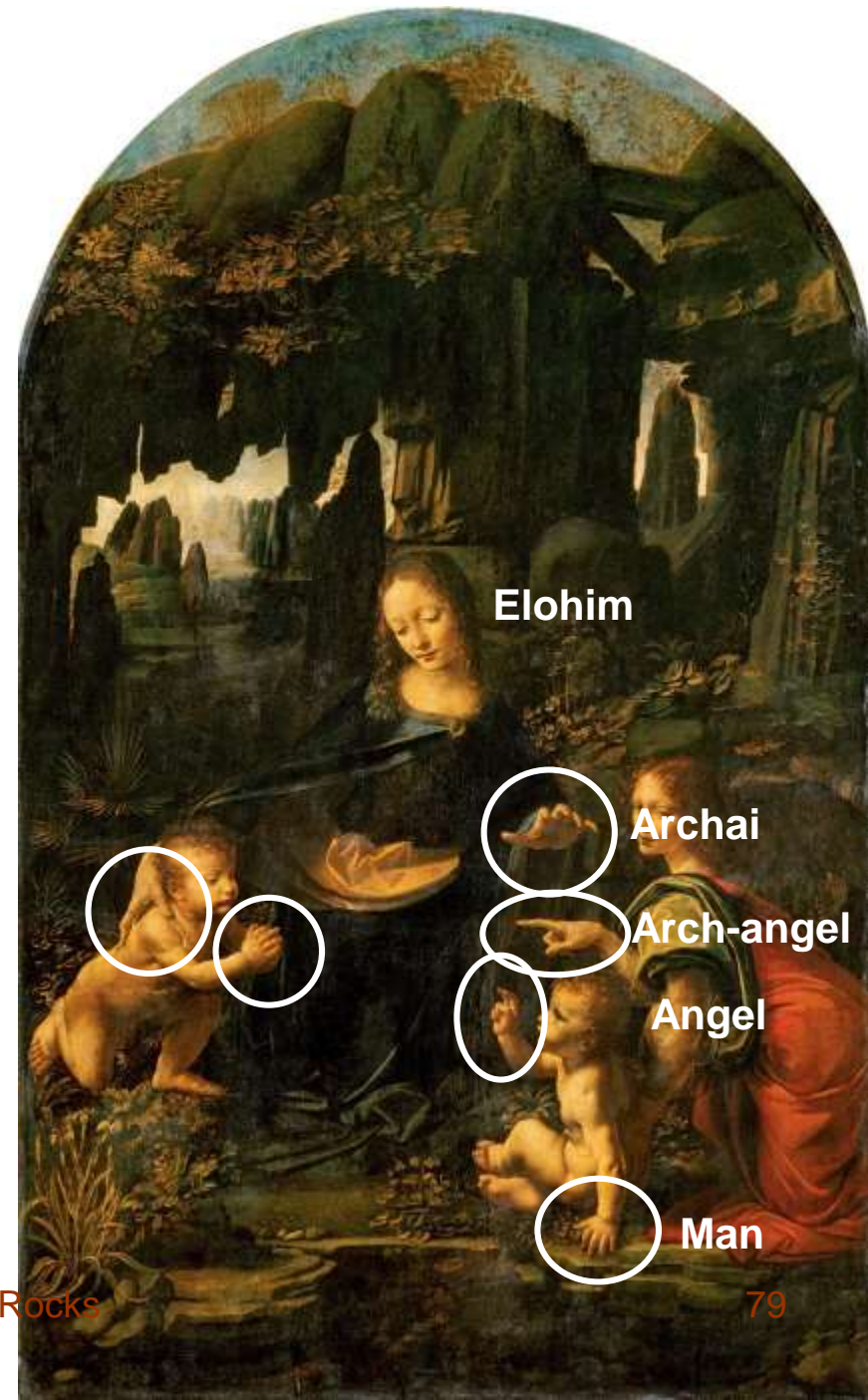


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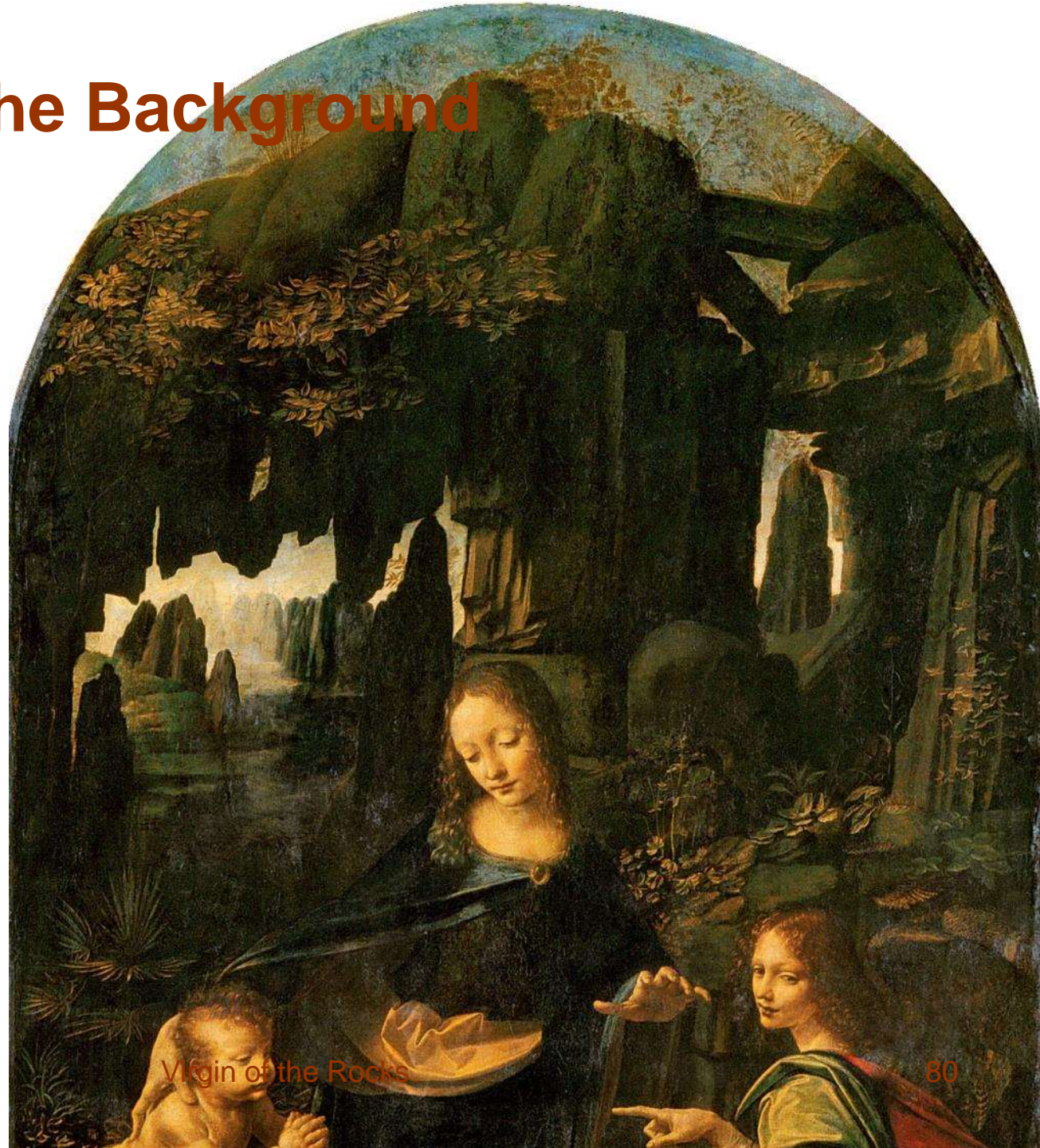
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Virgin of the Rocks

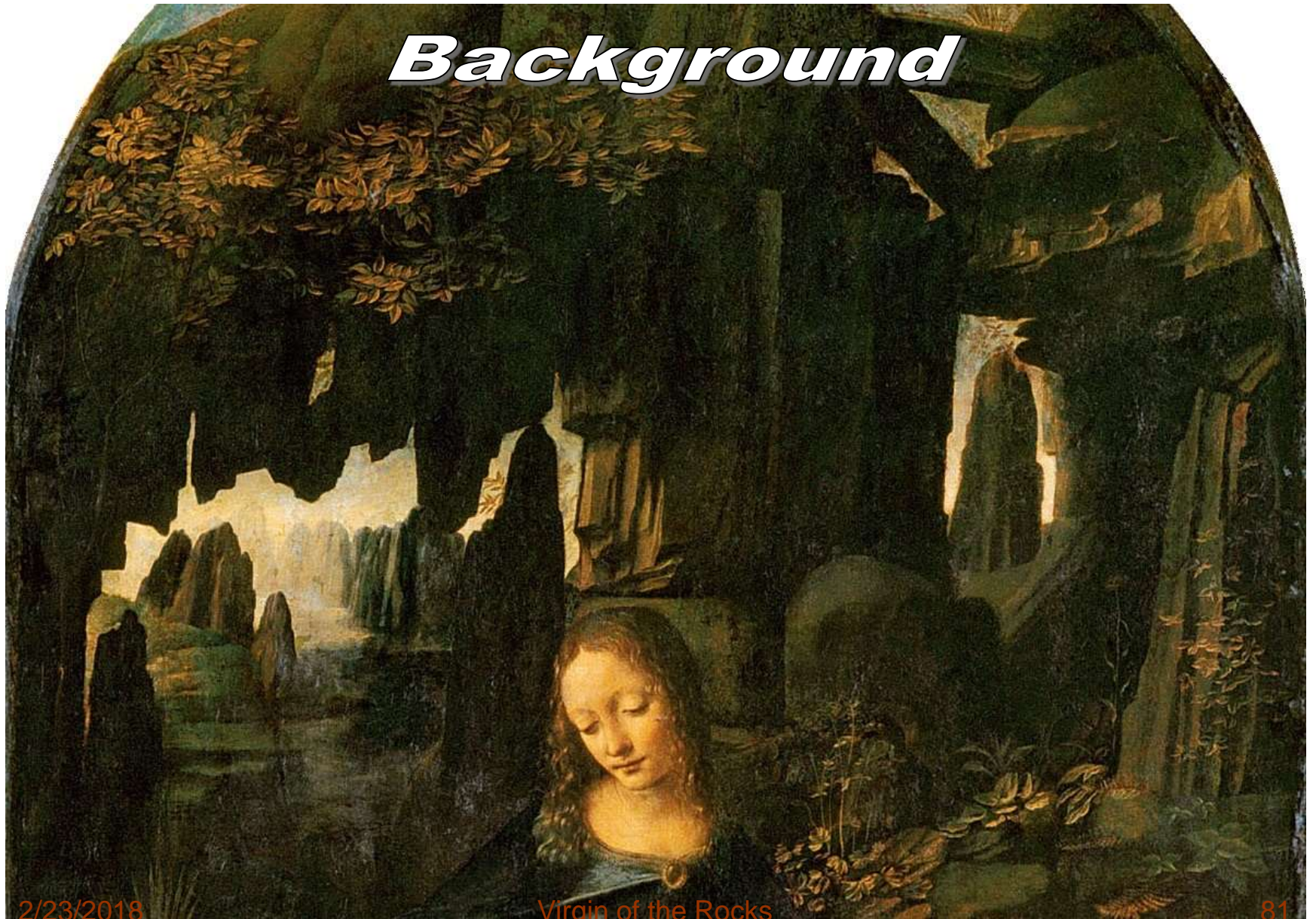


# Secrets of the Background

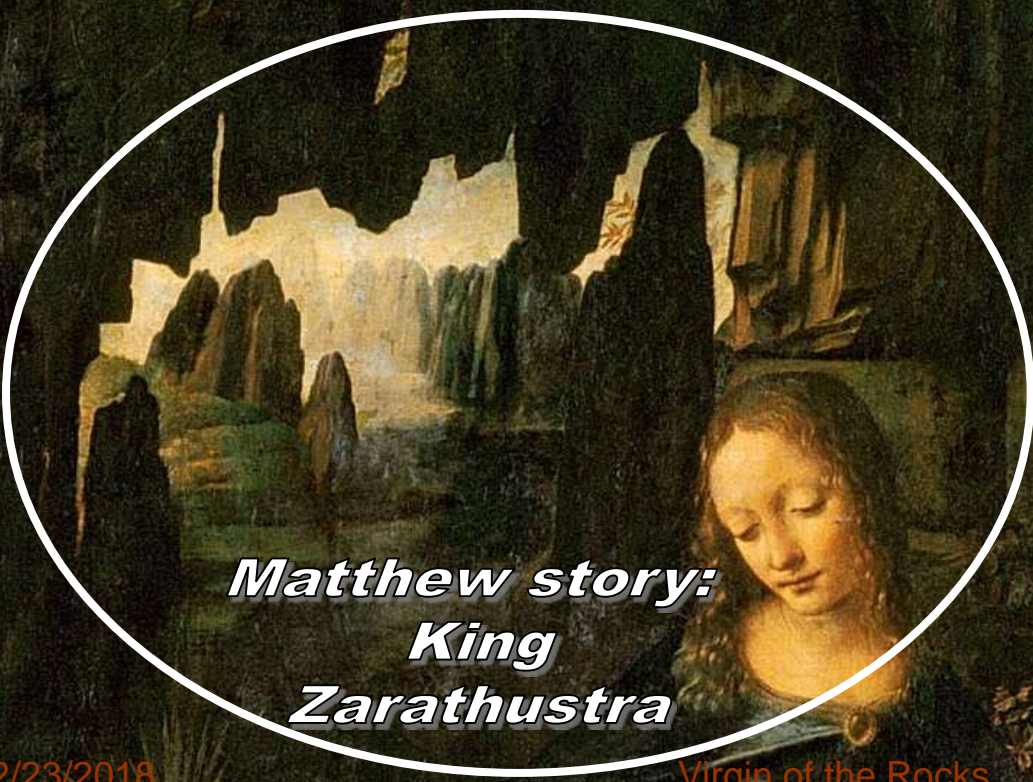
- Window through the rocks (earth)
- Each child has their own – their past lives!
- Left child has had many
- Right child only one → Adam!
  - Adam Kadmon



# ***Background***



# ***Background***



***Matthew story:  
King  
Zarathustra***



***Luke story:  
Priest  
Adam-Kadmon  
Krishna***

# Tying Things Up

## Remaining Questions

Arch-angel?  
Or merely  
An angel?



# Comparing DaVinci's Archangels

Arch-angel Gabriel

is this Arch-angel Uriel?



Note kneeling posture, hand gestures, gaze, and what left hand does  
Note similar colors & wings.

Role here was annunciation

What role here?

# Comparing DaVinci's Archangels

Gabriel



Who?



Unanswered mystery: What relationship does she have to the child on the right to be supporting him from behind?

Note she gazes into the reflecting pool and not into the physical.

# Conclusion: An Ancient Mystery Revealed!



# 2 Messiahs

## Kingly Jesus:

- I honor you as our archetype

## Center figure:

- I will draw with my right hand and bestow with my loving left

## Arch-angel:

- 3 members of him shall be replanted in you

## Priestly Jesus:

- Your wisdom, my purity, God's will be done



# Violated 15<sup>th</sup> Century Theology

- Early Christianity was about Easter and the Mystery of Golgotha – not Christmas
- Most “heretics” held belief that Christ did not enter the body of Jesus *until the baptism*
  - “Mine hour has not yet come” referred to the process of becoming fully Man
  - Once this had been accomplished, then Christ could go through the experience of death and become united with the Earth
  - Knowledge of the Mystery of Golgotha lost with the loss of knowledge of the human spirit, soul, and body (pnuema, psyche, and soma) – loss also of transmigration of soul, of spirit
- Today, association of reality only with body, most believe birth of Jesus = birth of Christ but not so before 333 CE

# Arian Baptistry in Ravenna, Italy 5<sup>th</sup> Century



Right to left:

- John the Baptist
- Jesus receiving the Spirit (Dove)
- God of the Jordan River
- = Man + God

Circled by 12 Apostles

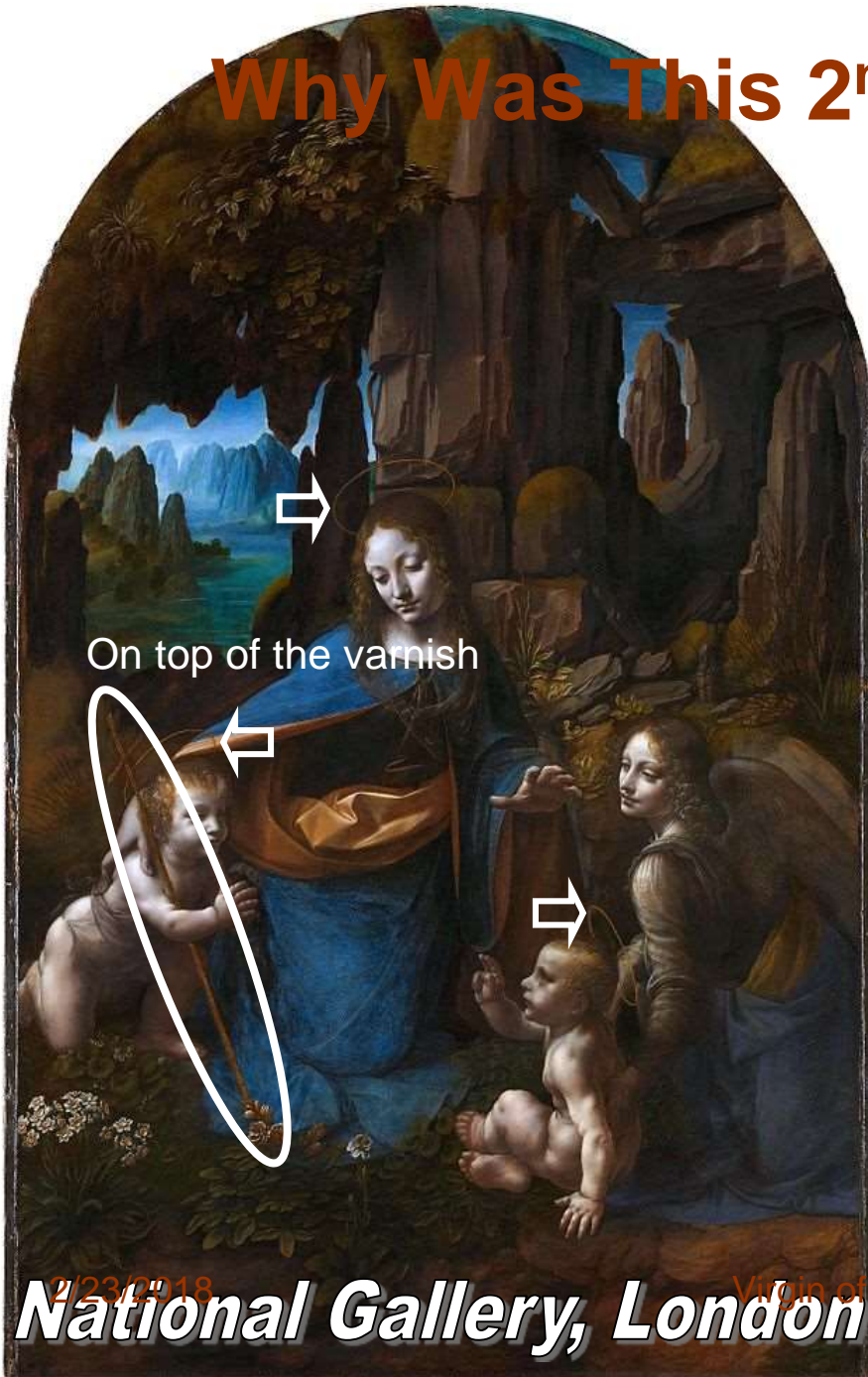
Built by Ostrogoth King Theodoric the Great, Arian Christian

# Why Was This 2<sup>nd</sup> Painting Made?



- Confraternity rejected the original painting but accepted Leonardo to make a new similar copy
- February 1485 payments for a painting had reached the agreed 800 lire, but work continued
- In 1490, Ambrogio and Leonardo wrote to the brethren asking for 1,200 more Lire
- The Confraternity, with a painting, offered only 100 Lire more
- Leonardo and Ambrogio then requested Duke Sforza to intervene

# Why Was This 2<sup>nd</sup> Painting Made?



- March 9, 1503, Louis XII of France, who had invaded Lombardy in 1499, intervened
- June 23, 1503, the Confraternity contested the request for 'expert evaluation or return of the painting'
- April 27, 1506 judge ruled the work was still incomplete and Leonardo was obliged to complete it
- Leonardo came and performed some 'touch-ups'
- August 18, 1508, the painting was delivered and put into place

# Why his Paintings Are at Louvre?

- DaVinci carried with him major works
  - Virgin of the Rocks
  - Mona Lisa
- French King had intervened
- 1516: was given use of the manor house Clos Lucé near the king's residence at the royal Château d'Amboise
- Here he spent the last 3 years of his life, accompanied by his pupil Francesco Melzi
- After Leonardo died, his paintings became the property of the royal house
- Eventually the his works are donated to the Louvre



# Summary

## Why are there two paintings?

- The ‘heresy’ in the first one was rejected by the confraternity
- A copy was made for their commission
- Copy deemed theologically in error till touch-ups over varnish

## Christmas “mystery” revealed in first VoR

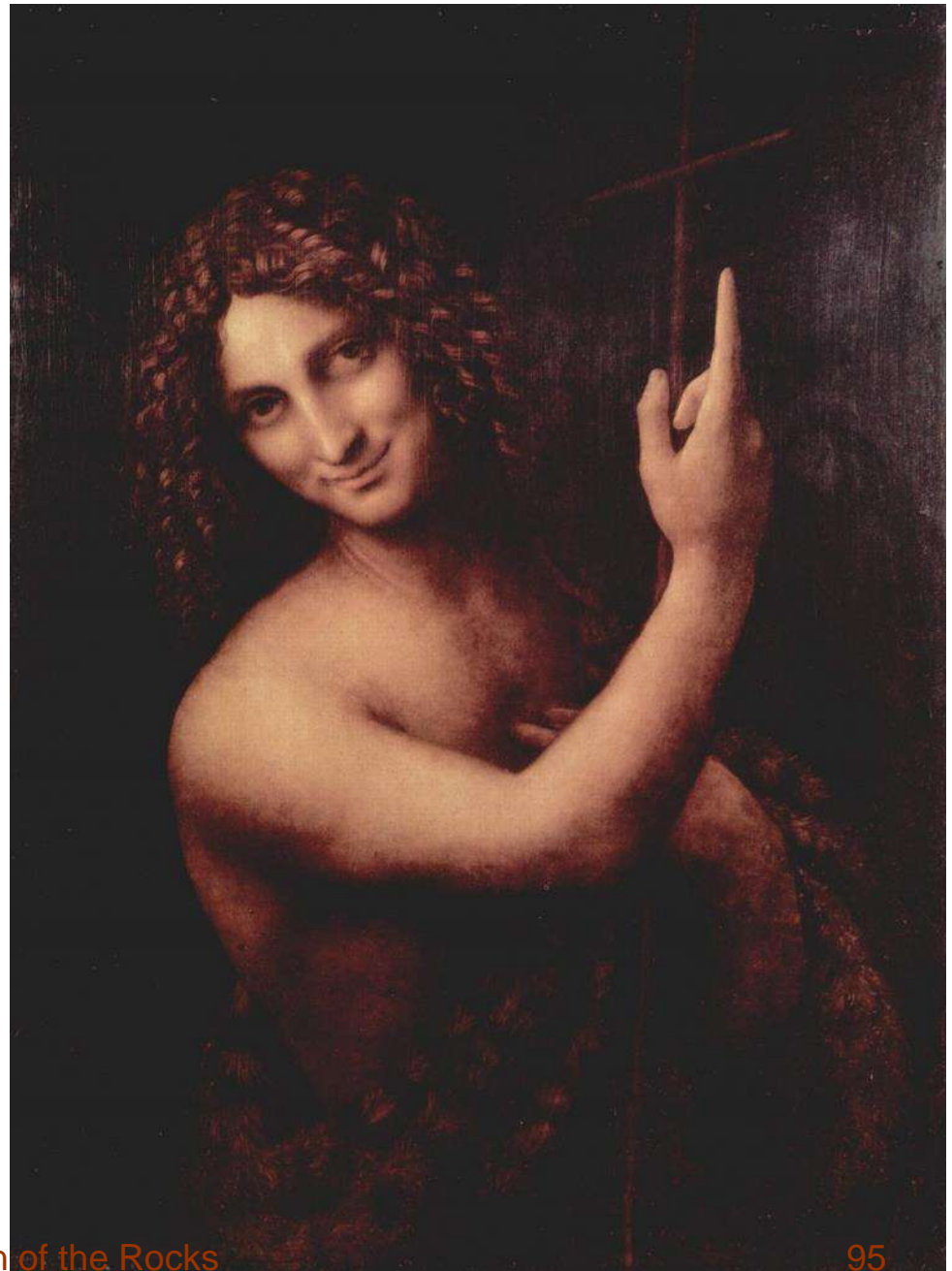
- DaVinci was portraying the Mystery of the Two Messiahs
- Where is there theological proof of Two Messiahs?
  - Old Testament (Kingly and Priestly lineages predicted)
  - New Testament (Matthew and Luke)
  - Kabbalistic traditions
  - Dead Sea scrolls
- How did Leonardo da Vinci know about this?
  - Various schools in Florence, Plethon
  - Heretics, Grail knights, Templar knights, Rosicrucians, Freemasons
- Did Leonardo offer elaboration? Yes, via his own students!

# The Two Christmas Stories Summary

	Matthew	Luke
Theme	Kings, Magi - Star	Poor Shepherds, Heavenly hosts
Lineage	Through King Solomon	Through Priest Nathan
Generations	42 (14x3) from Abraham	77 (7x11) from Adam
Angel speaks to	Joseph	Mary
Original home	Bethlehem	Nazareth
Slaughter of the innocents	Yes	Not mentioned
Escape to Egypt	Yes	No
John the Baptist's birth	Not mentioned	Mary visits Elizabeth
History at birth	Many lives, wisdom - Zarathustra	Purity, no karma – Adam Kadmon

# John the Baptist

- Gospels of Mark and John begin with baptism
  - Jesus of Nazareth becomes Jesus-Christ
- Notice finger gestures
  - Right hand
  - Left hand
- Notice staff and fingers
- Notice smirk
  - Was DaVinci mocking the Church?
  - Did he understand how Christianity fulfilled the Mysteries?



# Tech & Renaissance 2.0 Lecture

Feb. 27, 2018 7:30 – 9 pm at the  
Old Meeting House, Burlington



## Discussion Time

What Questions Arise for You?  
Why might Leonardo risk this?

Slides are available at [www.thechristianmysteries.org](http://www.thechristianmysteries.org)

# Closing Verse

- *“If ever thy soul is weak, if ever thou believest that the goals of earth-existence are beyond thy reach, think of man's divine origin and become aware of those forces within thee which are also the forces of supreme Love.*
- *Become inwardly conscious of the forces which give thee confidence and certainty in all thy works, through all thy life, now and in all ages of time to come.”*
- Rudolf Steiner, *The Birth of the Sun-Spirit as the Spirit of the Earth* lecture in *The Festivals and Their Meanings*, page 54

# VOR Side Panels (enlarged, not to scale)



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2. Pietro C. Marini, *Leonardo da Vinci: the Complete Paintings*, New York, 2003
3. James Kettlewell, *Leonardo da Vinci's 'Virgin Of The Rocks': The Subject Matter Explained*, <http://www.jameskettlewell.com/virgin.html>
4. Ernst Ullman, *A Rediscovered Leonardo da Vinci: The Concetto of the Virgin of the Rocks*, Karolinger Verlag 2010
5. Martin Kemp, *Leonardo: Revised Edition*, Oxford University Press, 2011
6. Frank Zollner, *Leonardo*, Taschen, 2000
7. <https://www.dartmouth.edu/~matc/math5.geometry/unit14/unit14.html>

# What Did We Cover?

- What is this painting, *Virgin of the Rocks* about?
  - The story of the two Jesus boys
- What is the historical context?
  1. Early Roman Christianity sought to free itself of the Ancient Mysteries
  2. Mysteries continue, underground, rising up from time to time – flowerings, but brutally crushed each time
  3. Western Christian Church was in a moral crisis entering 15<sup>th</sup> Century
- What do we know about the painting's history?
  - Painted while Leonardo exposed to Florentine Flowering
  - Louvre painting done first but not accepted by confraternity
  - National Gallery painting accepted by confraternity after touchup
  - Like the Mona Lisa, VoR ends up in the French Royal collection

# More on Theme of Two Jesus Children in Florentine Art

Gratitude to David Ovason from *The Two Children*

Did other painters reveal this?

If so, were they connected with Leonardo?

With Florentine Art/Philosophy Schools?

Slides are available at [www.thechristianmysteries.org](http://www.thechristianmysteries.org)

# Madonna Terranuova c.1505

- Raphael
- 1483-1520



# Martino Piazza

- Kissing babes
- Note
  - Hands
  - Background



# Leda and the Swan

- Cesare da Sesto
- 1515-1520



# Ukrainian Icon



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Virgin of the Rocks

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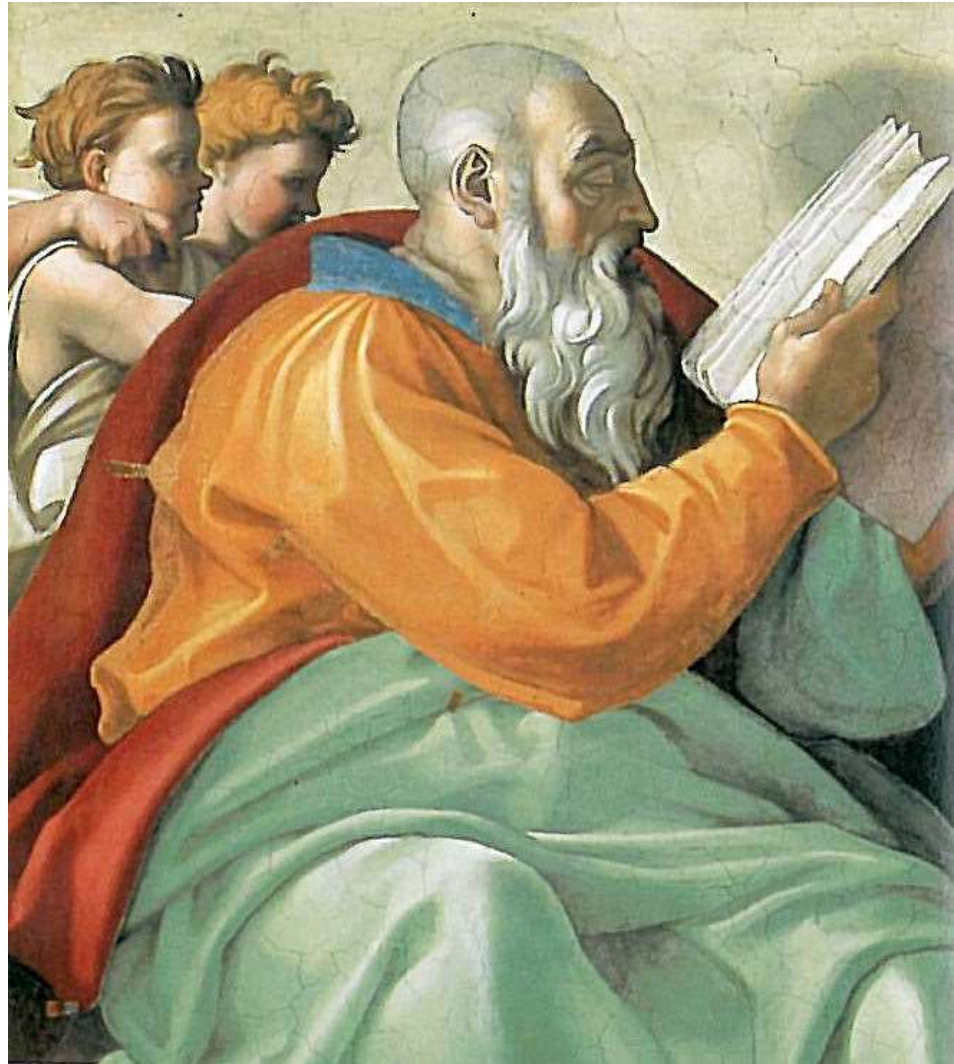
# Serbian Icon



# Michaelangelo, Sistine Chapel

*Zechariah (Zacharias)*

Note Two Anointed Ones  
foretold



# Riemenschneider

14xx – 15xx

## *Rosenkranz Madonna*

Painting ~15xx

- Note Sun rays behind
- Matthew story on left
  - Matthew bottom left
  - Magi
- Luke story on right
  - Luke bottom right
  - Shepherds

Photo from [http://konservierung-restaurierung.de/html/body\\_skulpturen\\_riemenschneider.html](http://konservierung-restaurierung.de/html/body_skulpturen_riemenschneider.html)



# Cain & Abel Mysteries from Freemasonry

## Kingly Lineage

- Cain
- Masculine
- Transform (spiritualize) the Earth

Abraham  
&  
Melchizedek

## Priestly Lineage

- Abel (then Seth)
  - 3 seeds from Eden
- Feminine
- Live contentedly within the abundance God has given us



# Bramantino (aka Bartolomeo Suardi)

*(Not about two children  
rather the Mystery of  
Golgotha)*

## *Crucifixion*

Painting ~1510

- Note Sun and Moon
- Note arch-angels
- Note Adam's skull
- Note inscription
- Note who is present

Bramantino: 1455–1536



# More on Dead Sea Scrolls

- In these scrolls, the term “Messiah” can change from plural to singular further suggesting that two will be united into one
- List of where in these scrolls **two messiahs** (Messiahs of Aaron and Israel) are mentioned:
  - Rules of Community 9:11-14 p.13
  - Damascus 19:11 p.45
  - Damascus 22:1 p.46
  - Q266 frag. 18 col.13 line 12
- Importance of the Baptism
  - We also find in Manuscript A, Fragment 3: “the Holy Spirit *settling upon* His Messiah”
  - This passage compares itself to Isaiah 11:2 “The Spirit of the Lord would **settle on** Him”
  - Penetration by the Holy Spirit *commences*

# Two Messiahs in the Old Testament

- **Ezekiel 37:15-17:** “The word of the Lord came again unto me, saying, moreover, thou Son of Man, take thee **one stick**, and write upon it, for Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions. Then take **another stick**, and write upon it, for Joseph, the stick of Ephraim and for all the house of Israel his companions. **And join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand.**”
  - This passage implies that two bodies (sticks) will become one in the Messiah
- **Numbers 24:17:** Balaam’s prophecy: "I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near. There shall come **a star** out of Jacob, and **a scepter** shall rise out of Israel“
  - Many interpret as indicating **Two Messiahs**, one as a star, that is of the heavens, and one as a scepter, that is of the earth.
  - This passage suggests that the Messiah would have sources from the pure beginnings of Man (the star out of Jacob) and from the heights of what Man had accomplished, that is, from the kingly side (the scepter out of Israel)
  - Jacob changes his name after struggling with his spiritual being. This name change is suggestive of the name change after initiation which was performed by the Hierophant or high priest within the Holy of the Holies in the Temple.

# Kabbalistic Roots: The Zohar Books

- The Zohar books first appeared in Spain in the 13th century and within fifty years it was being quoted by many Kabbalists, including the early 14th Century Italian writer Menahem Recanati whose mystical work includes Perush 'Al ha-Torah (published Venice 1523)
  - “**Another Messiah**, the son of Joseph, will **unite** himself with the Messiah, the son of David.
  - But the son of Joseph will not remain in life, **he will be killed and will become alive again**, when the little hill receives life upon the great hill.”

# Implications from This Lecture

- **Key Historical Points:**

1. Early Spread of Christianity via Mystery Centers
2. Early Roman Christianity sought to free itself of this past
  - By 6<sup>th</sup> Century the Mystery Centers were destroyed
3. Mysteries continue, underground, rising up from time to time – flowerings, but brutally crushed each time
  - Florentine Art School permeated by the Mysteries
  - Leonardo (and others) depicted Mystery knowledge in paintings

- **New Mysteries**

1. Human act: joining of two allows for Christ's entry at the baptism
2. Christ Impulse asks for human fusion – community building

- **Leading Questions**

1. Where today is the temple?
2. Can/should the Mysteries be renewed?

# Hand Gestures

In Other da Vinci Works

# Virgin and Child with St Anne and St John the Baptist (1510)

- [http://www.artchive.com/artchive/leonardo/leonardo\\_stanne\\_cartoon.jpg](http://www.artchive.com/artchive/leonardo/leonardo_stanne_cartoon.jpg)
- National Gallery, London
- Anne is an elderly woman when she has Mary
- Elizabeth, cousin to Mary is also elderly when she has John





# The Colors

- Gold skin tones
- Central figure is cosmic blue with gold middle
  - Sophia
  - More than Mary
  - Blue—Cosmos
  - Gold—Sun
- Arch-angel is red and green
  - Psyche / Astral (her right hand signifies) is red
  - Portrays role 3<sup>rd</sup> hierarchy plays
- Life / Etheric is green (child's place w/ plants)

2/23/2018



Virgin of the Rocks

# **Additional Material**

# Historical Perspective: Dangerous Times

- 752: Lombards conquer Ravenna, Pope requests aid from Pepin using a forgery: *The Donation of Constantine*
- 800: Charlemagne becomes Augustus of Holy Roman Empire
  - Envoys visit Harun al Rashid near Baghdad
- 869: 8<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Council labels spirit-in-human a heresy
- 1054: Final split between Rome and Constantinople
- **1096-1314: Crusades, Templars, and Cathars**
  - 1182-1226: St. Francis attempts to rebuild the Church
  - Shame of 1204: Sack of Constantinople and Hagia Sophia
  - 1208 – 1244 Genocide of Cathars in France/Italy
  - 1314: Extermination of the Knights Templars (**700 years ago!**)
- 1314-1317: Great Famine of Europe
- 1347-1351: Black Plague ~70% of Europe dies
- 1413: Sun moves from Aries to Pisces
- 1434: Rise of Florence as birthplace of the Renaissance
- 1438: Pico della Mirandola arrives in Florence, Plato Academy begins
- 1452: Leonardo da Vinci born
- 1492: Moors pushed out of Spain, Columbus sails to America
- 1600: Giordano Bruno burned at the stake for “heretical” science

# Mark's Secret Gospel



- “As for Mark, then, during Peter's stay in Rome he wrote an account of the Lord's doings, not, however, declaring all of them, nor yet **hinting at the secret ones**, but selecting what he thought most useful for increasing the faith of those who were being instructed. But when Peter died a martyr, Mark came over to Alexandria, bringing both his own notes and those of Peter, from which he transferred to his former book the things suitable to whatever makes for progress toward knowledge.
- Thus he ***composed a more spiritual Gospel*** for the use of those ***who were being perfected***. Nevertheless, he yet did not divulge the things not to be uttered, nor did he write down the ***hierophantic teaching*** of the Lord, but to the stories already written he added yet others and, moreover, brought in certain sayings of which he knew the interpretation would, as a mystagogue, lead the hearers into the innermost sanctuary of that ***Truth hidden by seven veils***.
- Thus, in sum, he prepared matters, neither grudgingly nor incautiously, in my opinion, and, dying, he left his composition to the church in Alexandria, where it even yet is most carefully guarded, being read ***only to those who are being initiated into the great mysteries***.”

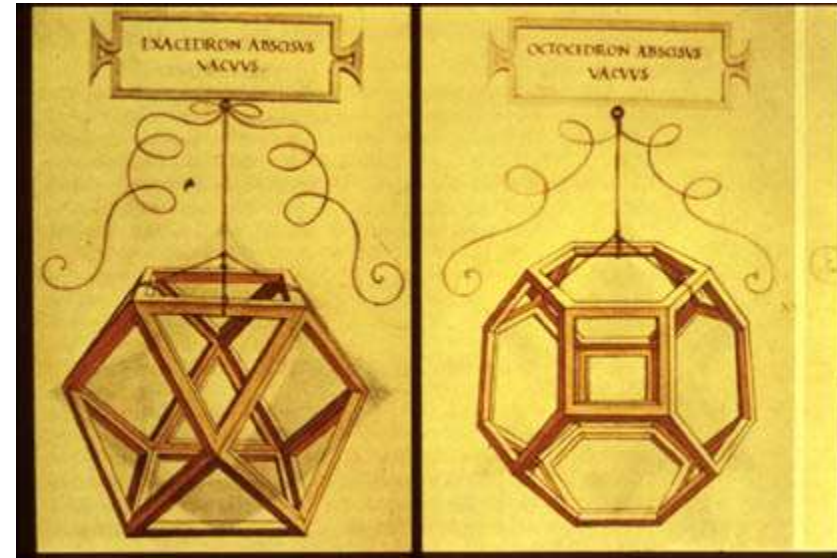
— Clement of Alexandria

# Leonardo and Geometry

<http://www.dartmouth.edu/~matc/math5.geometry/unit14/unit14.html>

## “Let no one enter who is lacking in geometry”

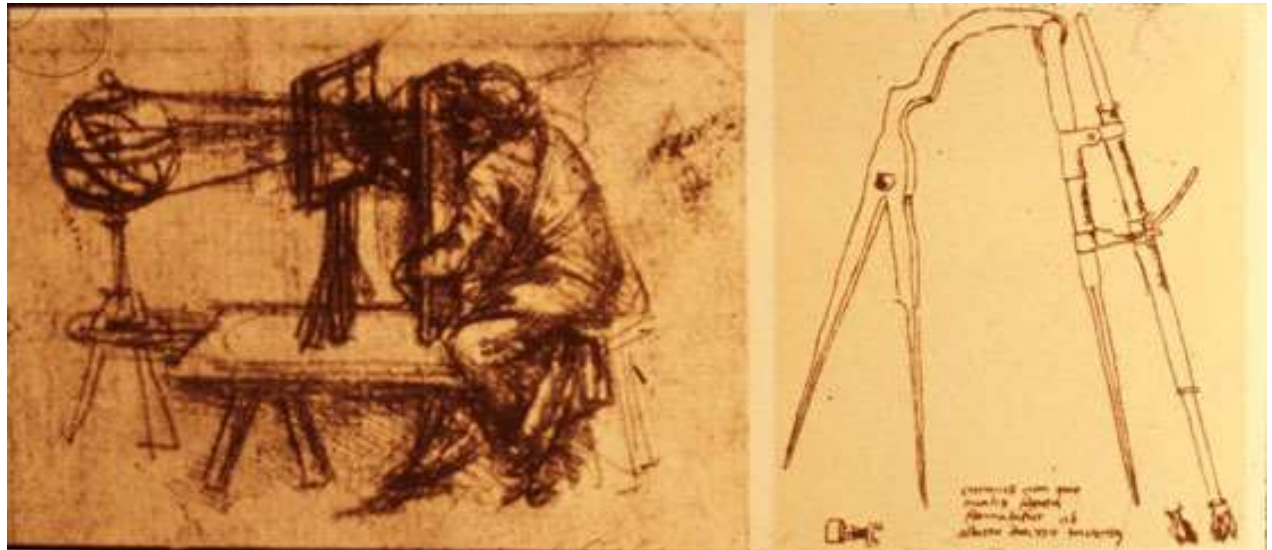
- Leonardo studied Luca Pacioli's Summa especially its tables of proportions
  - 1496: Luca comes to Milan where they collaborated on Pacioli's Divina Proportione (1509)
- Pacioli devoted the entire second part of Divina Proportione to the Platonic solids, relating the Platonic solids to the golden ratio like this:
  - "As God brought into being the celestial virtue, the fifth essence, and through it created the four solids ... earth, air, water, and fire ... so our sacred proportion gave shape to heaven itself, in assigning to it the dodecahedron ... the solid of twelve pentagons, which cannot be constructed without our sacred proportion. As the aged Plato described in his Timaeus"
  - This section of the book has little relation to the earlier part and apparently was plagiarized from Piero and tacked on, without credit giving Vasari (1550) rights for harsh criticism of the good friar



# Leonardo and Geometry

## "Let no one read me who is not a mathematician"

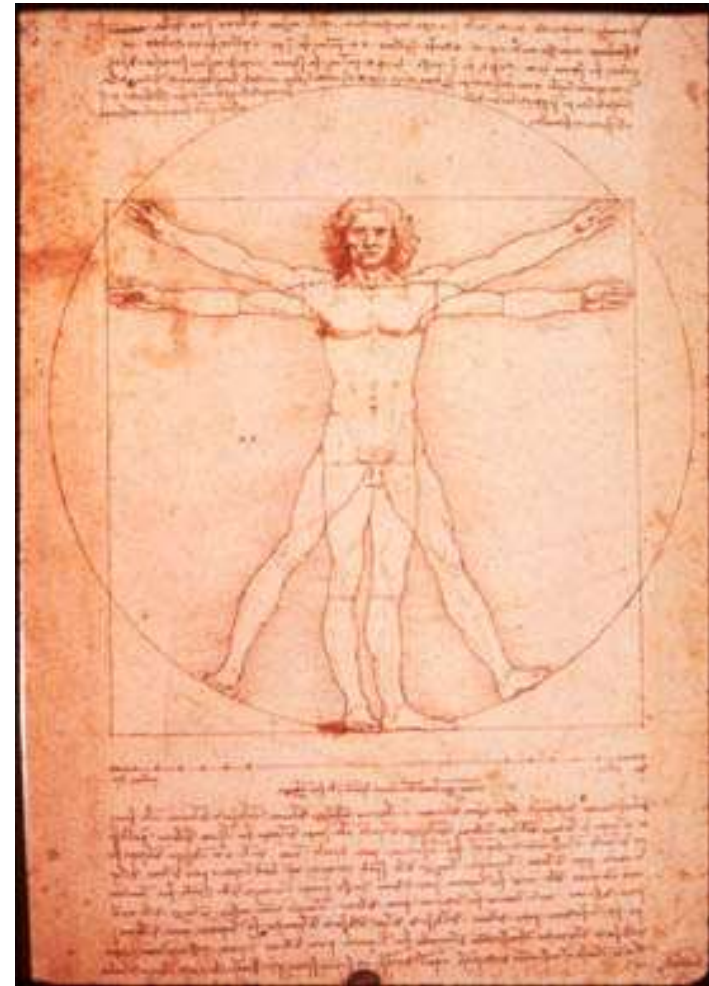
- "the most excellent painter in perspective, architect, musician, and man de tutte vertu doctato, Leonardo da Vinci, who deduced and elaborated a series of diagrams of regular solids ... ."
- Leonardo had an ongoing program of self-study in language and mathematics, studying Pacioli's Summa, and Euclid as well
- He designed a proportional compass that would form a figure similar to, and in a given proportion to another figure



- <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~matc/math5.geometry/unit14/unit14.html>

# Vitruvian Man

- Vitruvius wrote:
- "...in the human body the central point is naturally the navel. For if a man be placed flat on his back, with his hands and feet extended, and a pair of compasses centered at his navel, the fingers and toes of his two hands and feet will touch the circumference of a circle described therefrom. And just as the human body yields a circular outline, so too a square figure may be found from it. For if we measure the distance from the soles of the feet to the top of the head, and then apply that measure to the outstretched arms, the breadth will be found to be the same as the height ..."



# Mystery Streams in Northern Italy

- **Cathars** <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monts%C3%A9gur>
  - Existed France & Italy from 11th C up to 200 years before Da Vinci's birth
  - Because their views, such as reincarnation, were deemed to be heretical
  - “Be Perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect” – Matthew 5:48
- **Knights Templar**
  - Founder, Hugues de Payens, had been sent by Pope Urban II to find the Ark of the Covenant, in 12 years they begin to transform Europe
  - Sudden ability to locate site, architect, and build 150 Gothic Cathedrals
  - Initiations thought to elevate individual to knowledge of the spirit
  - Was their mysticism abruptly lost when Jacques de Molay and other Knights were burned at the stake? Did the schools of Florence retain some of it?
  - **Scottish Masonic Order** may have roots with Knights Templar
- **Rosicrucians:** knowledge kept secret!

# Was Leonardo A Mystic?

“Little is known about his personal life and he appears to have been **secretive** about his most intimate relationships. However, much research and speculation has been invested in these aspects of his life, because of the fascination exerted by his artistic and scientific genius, and his apparent personal magnetism”

<http://www.answers.com/topic/leonardo-da-vinci-s-personal-life>

The Renaissance Man: how did he practice

- Science?
- Art?
- Religion?

# Immaculate Conception

- [RSArchive.org](https://www.rsaarchive.org), Steiner, Gospel of Matthew, GA123, 4Sept1909
- Genesis: B'raschit bara Elohim eth haschamajim v'eth h'areths
  - “In everything that came over from the Saturn, Sun and Moon evolutions, the thought of the Elohim brooded in cosmic activity; in all that manifested outwardly, as in all that stirred inwardly. Darkness reigned over all this. But permeating it and brooding over it, filling it with warmth, as a hen broods over its eggs, was the Creative Spirit of the Elohim, Ruach.”
- ‘The Conception out of the Holy Spirit of the Universe’
  - It lies at the root of the saying, ‘She who gave birth to this Being was filled with the power of the Spirit of the Universe!’
  - We need but sense the full greatness of such Mystery to know that the fact presents something infinitely higher than the exoteric idea of the ‘immaculate conception’
- Matthew: blood of Abraham is passed down to Joseph
  - What sense would there be in saying that this blood had no connection with the blood of Jesus of Nazareth?
- ‘Ruach-Elohim,’ who, in the Bible, is called the ‘Holy Spirit’ is of the feminine gender in the Hebrew language

# Important Christology References:

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- Welburn, Andrew, *The Beginnings of Christianity*
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- Steiner, Rudolf, *According to Matthew*
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- Doresse, Jean, *The Secret Books of the Egyptian Gnostics*

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- Head and Cranston, *Reincarnation: The Phoenix Fire Mystery*
- Cranston and Williams, *Reincarnation, A New Horizon in Science, Religion, and Society*
- MacGregor, *Reincarnation in Christianity and Reincarnation as a Christian Hope*
- Welburn, Andrew, *The Book with Fourteen Seals*
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