

SAINT MARTHA



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Who is Saint Martha?



Saint Martha lived at the same time as Jesus and appears in the gospels of John and Luke as well as in French folk-tales. According to the Catholic Church, she is the sister of Mary

Magdalene and St. Lazarus. She lived in Bethany near Jerusalem, and later in her life – after the death of Jesus – she is described in folklore as travelling west from the holy land to live in the Provence area of France, where she lived until 84 AD. Her remains are housed in the town of Tarascon and her feast day is celebrated on July 29th.

Areas of Influence

In the gospels, St. Martha is depicted in the traditional role of the woman of the house, cooking for and tending to guests, and as such St. Martha has become the patron of housekeepers, cooks, butlers, maids and waiters.

Within the hoodoo system St. Martha is known as The Dominator – she is called upon for acts of domination over an individual – specifically bosses and lovers. She can be called on in “aggressive” love magic, where a little extra persuasion is needed, as well as in commanding and compelling work.

In life, Saint Martha never married and she is seen as a strongly independent woman. She is willing to assist men that petition her, but their intentions towards women must be honourable. That said, she seems to have no qualms with helping women influence men for their own ends.

Symbols associated with Saint Martha

Saint Martha, as with all the saints, is depicted in art with specific objects to make it easy to identify her. For the magician wishing to work with Martha, these can provide inspiration for shrine building and offerings. Below is a list of said symbols:

- Cooking implements – spoons and other cutlery, cauldrons and cooking pots

- The dragon – shown docile, at the feet of the Saint
- Holy water and vessel – used to subdue the dragon, Martha is often depicted with a holy water vessel and sprinkler
- A torch – in certain images, Martha is depicted holding a flaming torch
- Keys – as the

housekeeper, Martha
sometimes has keys
around her waist.

- The cross – sign of the Christian faith.

In art, St Martha is often indistinguishable from St Margaret who was another dragon related saint, unlike Martha she is not depicted with the objects denoting housekeeping.

Other Representations of Saint Martha



Figure 1 – The Tarasque

Apart from the traditional images or Martha available, many Botanicas stock a range of Saint Martha products bearing the image of an African woman holding snakes in her hands. Often called Santa Marta La Dominadora (Saint Martha the Dominator) this is an image used to represent various spirits found in the African Traditional

Religions, including the well-known Mami Wata. I would suggest using more traditional images of Saint Martha when working with her as a saint, to stop confusion between Martha and spirits which use her image as a mask.

Saint Martha and the Dragon

Many of the images and statues of Saint Martha feature a subdued dragon sat at the saint's feet. This is because of a story which is part of The Golden Legend that tells the tale of Saint Martha's life in France.

There was that time upon the river of Rhone, in a certain wood between Arles and Avignon, a great dragon, half beast and half fish, greater than an ox, longer than an horse, having teeth sharp as a sword, and horned on either side, head like a lion, tail like a serpent, and defended him with two wings on either side, and could not be beaten with cast of stones ne with other armour, and was as strong as twelve lions or bears; which dragon lay hiding and lurking in the river, and perished them that passed by and drowned ships. He came thither by sea from Galicia, and was engendered of Leviathan, which is a serpent of the water and is much wood, and of a beast called

Bonacho, that is engendered in Galicia. And when he is pursued he casts out of his belly behind, his ordure, the space of an acre of land on them that follow him, and it is bright as glass, and what it toucheth it burneth as fire. To whom Martha, at the prayer of the people, came into the wood, and found him eating a man. And she cast on him holy water, and showed to him the cross, which anon was overcome, and standing still as a sheep, she bound him with her own girdle, and then was slain with spears and glaives of the people. The dragon was called of them that dwelled in the country Tarasconus, whereof, in remembrance of him that place is called Tarasconus, which

tofore was called Nerluc, and the Black Lake, because there be woods shadowous and black. And there the blessed Martha, by licence of Maximin her master, and of her sister, dwelled and abode in the same place after, and daily occupied in prayers and in fastings, and thereafter assembled and were gathered together a great convent of sisters, and builded a fair church at the honour of the blessed Mary virgin, where she led a hard and a sharp life. She eschewed flesh and all fat meat, eggs, cheese and wine; she ate but once a day. An hundred times a day and an hundred times a night she kneeled down and bowed her knees.

—From The Golden Legend: The

Life of Saint Martha

This story helps explain the “dominator” aspect of St Martha and her ability to subdue a creature as powerful as “La Tarasque” with no physical force, and is a perfect example of how Martha works for those who petition her – rather than blunt force, she uses subtle methods to bring about major changes.

Saint Martha and the Tarragon Plant



Figure 2 - Artemisia Dracunculus, French Tarragon

Several of the recipes used in this pamphlet contain the herb Tarragon. There are two reasons for this; the first being that the plant grows prolifically in the area of France which the saint was said to inhabit, the second is due to its Latin name – *Artemisia dracunculoides* – which means Little Dragon. For this

reason it is included in several of our recipes for preparations dedicated to Saint Martha.

Shrines for Saint Martha

Saint Martha is most often associated with the colours red and green and therefore her shrines should be decorated with these colours. As with all the human saints, there should be a plate for food and a glass for beverages. You might want to include a censer or another suitable holder for incense, along with a vase for flowers. An image of the saint should be central on the shrine; this can be a statue,

printed image or even a simple prayer card.

If the shrine is going to be a permanent fixture, make sure you leave space for your shrine to grow – gifts and offerings of thanks will cause your shrine to expand over time, so bear this in mind when setting up your space.

Before you start to build up your shrine, make sure to cleanse the shelf, table or area upon which it will be placed. Wash the area down with holy water or floral cologne such as Florida Water – allow this to dry before you begin.

Offerings

The following is a list of suitable offerings to Saint Martha; whilst it is not a definitive list, it is a good guideline for you to start with. As your relationship with this saint develops, you will undoubtedly find other items which she enjoys as gifts.

- Red or Green Candles – all the saints appreciate light, and considering St. Martha is thought of by many as a “fiery” spirit,

candles are a very adequate offering. Oil lamps in these colours are also appropriate.

- Water, Coffee and Strong Spirits – all the saints can be given something to drink as a thank you after they have interceded on your behalf or just as a general act of praise. Martha enjoys strong black coffee mixed with

cinnamon. Small amounts of red wine and spirits such as coffee liquor are also appropriate.

- Cigarettes and Cigars – Many people will offer St. Martha tobacco, these are lit and the smoke blown over the altar, before being placed in an ashtray and allowed to burn.
- Dark Chocolate and Chocolate Liqueurs –

Dark, bitter chocolate, and chocolate containing chilli or liqueurs can be offered to St. Martha.

- Flowers – St. Martha appreciates red flowers – we have found that red roses and red carnations last a very long time when placed on her shrine.
- Food – as patron of hosts and hostesses, home-baked foods are a perfect

gift for Saint Martha.

- Incense – Any good quality church style incense can be burnt as an offering of thanks to Saint Martha. Incense burnt on charcoal is best, but sticks, powders or cones are also acceptable – many magical supply stores stock incense made for particular saints.
- Ribbons or Cords– In the

story of Martha and the dragon, the saint binds the beast with her girdle. People use green ribbons or cords to represent this girdle, which, once imbued with her blessing, can be used in binding and controlling magic.

Devotions to Saint Martha

NOVENA #1 – FOR A SPECIFIC SITUATION

This Novena is prayed on nine consecutive Tuesdays – every Tuesday light a candle set aside for this specific purpose.

“O admirable Saint Martha, I have recourse to thee and I depend entirely on thy intercession in my trials. In thanksgiving, I promise to spread this devotion everywhere. I humbly beg thee

to console me in all my difficulties. By the immense joy that filled thy soul when thou didst receive the Redeemer of the world at thy home in Bethany, be pleased to intercede for me and my family, in order that we may keep God in our hearts and therefore, deserve to obtain the remedy to our necessities, especially the present situation that overwhelms me.”

(Mention your intentions here)

“I implore thee, O Auxiliatrice in all needs; help us to overcome our difficulties, thou who so victoriously fought the devil. Amen.”

Recite three times one Our Father,

one Hail Mary, one Glory Be, and the invocation “Saint Martha, pray for us”.

NOVENA #2 – FOR GENERAL PRAYER

This Novena is prayed on nine consecutive Tuesdays – every Tuesday light a candle set aside for this specific purpose.

“Saint Martha, I resort to thy aid and protection. As proof of my affection and faith, I offer thee this light, which I shall burn every Tuesday. Comfort me in all my difficulties and through the great favors thou didst enjoy when the Savior was lodged in thy house,

intercede for my family, that we be provided for in our neccessities. I ask of thee, Saint Martha, to overcome all difficulties as thou didst overcome the dragon which thou hadst at thy feet. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

Recite the Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be.

Hoodoo and Magic with Saint Martha

SAINT MARTHA OIL

This oil can be used to anoint candles dedicated to the saint, used to perfume shrines and dress statues. The ingredients used all reflect aspects of Saint Martha's character, stories or areas of influence.

Add the following ingredients to your base oil:

- 2 part Cinnamon Essential Oil
- 2 part Myrrh Essential Oil
- 1 part Tarragon Essential Oil
- ½ part Labdanum resinoid (liquid)
- ½ part Dragon's blood resin (powdered)

Allow the resins to infuse in the oil for about a week before use, shaking well every day.

SAINT MARTHA INCENSE

This incense can be burnt as an offering to Saint Martha or burnt during magical workings which invoke her intercession. This is a loose grain, resin-based incense, designed to be burnt on charcoal disks.

- 20g Frankincense resin
- 10g Myrrh resin
- 5g Dragon's Blood resin
- 5g Red Rose Petals
- A pinch of Tarragon Herb

Add all the resinous ingredients and loosely grind them to a coarse powder. Make sure the rose petals and tarragon are finely chopped or ground to a powder before they are added. The resultant incense should not be too fine a powder; otherwise it will not burn correctly.

PEACEFUL HOME FLOORWASH

As patron of housekeepers, Saint Martha is the perfect saint to invoke to help make your floor washes. Inspired by her role as host of Jesus Christ, this is a floorwash designed to spread harmony throughout your home. You

will need:

- 25g Lavender
- 25g Basil
- 25g Salt
- 25g Marjoram
- 10g Tarragon
- Pinch of sandalwood chips

To a large saucepan of water add all the dry herbs, salt and sandalwood. Bring to the boil and simmer for 15 minutes. Strain the liquid and discard the herbs. Add the resultant liquid to a bucket of warm water with which you can proceed to mop your floors. As you

mop, repeat the 97th psalm, which is recommended for maintaining a peaceful home.

Psalm 97

*“The LORD reigns, let the earth be
glad;*

let the distant shores rejoice.

*Clouds and thick darkness surround
him;*

*righteousness and justice are the
foundation of his throne.*

*Fire goes before him and consumes his
foes on every side.*

*His lightning lights up the world; the
earth sees and trembles.*

*The mountains melt like wax before the
LORD,*

before the Lord of all the earth.

*The heavens proclaim his
righteousness,*

and all peoples see his glory.

*All who worship images are put to
shame,*

*those who boast in idols – worship him,
all you gods!*

*Zion hears and rejoices and the
villages of Judah*

*are glad because of your judgments,
LORD.*

*For you, LORD, are the Most High
over all the earth;*

you are exalted far above all gods.

*Let those who love the LORD hate evil,
for he guards the lives of his faithful
ones*

and delivers them from the hand of the wicked.

Light shines on the righteous and joy on the upright in heart.

*Rejoice in the LORD, you who are righteous,
and praise his holy name.”*

SAINT MARTHA DOMINATION SPELL

This spell is designed to help dominate a specific person and place them under your control. It combines a traditional honey-jar spell with a 9 day novena in honour of the saint. Make sure you begin this spell on a Tuesday. You will need:

- 1 Cigarillo
- 1 Handful of calamus root
- 1 Handful of powdered liquorice root
- 1 Jar of honey
- 1 Tablespoon of molasses
- 9 Drops of bergamot oil
- Half a teaspoon of chilli powder
- 1 Meter of green ribbon
- 1 Red pillar candle
- Personal effects of the

person you want to control

- 1 Saint Martha medal
- 1 Saint Martha prayer card

Add the honey and molasses into a pan, warm on a low heat. Stir in the calamus, liquorice and chilli powder. Place the medal in the empty honey jar along with the personal effects, and pour the honey infusion into the jar. Add the bergamot oil and the whole cigarillo. Put the lid on the jar, and tie the prayer card to it using the ribbon. Place the candle on top of the jar and light it, saying the following prayer:

*“In the name of the father son and holy
ghost,
I call upon you, o glorious saint
Martha,
That you may dominate X as you did
dominate the dragon
Lend me the power to stand upon them
and to control them.
I offer you this light, every Tuesday for
9 weeks.
Amen”*

Follow this prayer with Psalm 114:

*“When Israel went out of Egypt, the
house of Jacob
from a people of strange language;
Judah was his sanctuary, and Israel his*

dominion.

*The sea saw it, and fled: Jordan was
driven back.*

*The mountains skipped like rams,
and the little hills like lambs.*

*What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou
fleddest?*

*thou Jordan, that thou wast driven
back?*

*Ye mountains, that ye skipped like
rams;*

and ye little hills, like lambs?

*Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of
the Lord,*

*at the presence of the God of Jacob;
Which turned the rock into a standing
water,*

the flint into a fountain of waters.”

Blow out the candle, and relight the candle every Tuesday for nine Tuesdays, repeating the prayer and psalm each time.

ST MARTHA'S BROOM

This broom can be used to clear negativity out of a house or any place. Any household broom can be used, though ideally it should have natural bristles. This broom should not be used for mundane sweeping after it has been prepared. You will need:

- A new broom
- 3 White carnations
- 4 Camphor tablets
- A bottle of uncrossing oil
- A bucket of hot water
- A bunch of basil
- A bunch of sage
- A handful of salt
- Florida Water
- Holy Water
- Several meters of green ribbon

Crush the camphor tablets and put it

in the hot water, along with the basil, sage and salt. Mix the water whilst saying Psalm 12:

*“Help, LORD; for the godly man
ceaseth;*

*for the faithful fail from among the
children of men.*

*They speak vanity every one with his
neighbour:*

*with flattering lips and with a double
heart do they speak.*

*The LORD shall cut off all flattering
lips,*

*and the tongue that speaketh proud
things:*

*Who have said, With our tongue will
we prevail;*

*our lips are our own: who is lord over
us?*

*For the oppression of the poor, for the
sighing of the needy,
now will I arise, saith the LORD;
I will set him in safety from him that
puffeth at him.*

*The words of the LORD are pure
words:
as silver tried in a furnace of earth,
purified seven times.*

*Thou shalt keep them, O LORD,
thou shalt preserve them from this
generation for ever.*

*The wicked walk on every side,
when the vilest men are exalted.”*

Set the bucket to one side, and

proceed to dress the handle of the broom with the uncrossing oil. Stand the broom in the bucket, allowing the bristles to absorb the liquid. Leave it to sit overnight. In the morning remove the broom and pour the liquid on your front doorstep. Tie the ribbon around the handle in a criss-cross pattern, from top to bottom. Once the bristles are dry, the broom is ready for use.

To use this broom, simply sweep the house (or any other building with a negative atmosphere) from the back door through to the front door. The broom will pick up any negative or harmful vibration, energies or entities and whisk them out of the house. You

may wish to repeat the psalm given above as you sweep, to give your actions added potency.

SAINT MARTHA SPIRITUAL BATH

A spiritual bath designed to draw on the power of St Martha for any work you wish to perform with her assistance. You will need:

- 1 Bunch of tarragon
- 1 Cup of strong black coffee
- 1 Glass of coffee liquor

- 1 Pan of water
- 1 Small handful of brown sugar
- 1 Teaspoon of treacle
- 3 Cinnamon sticks
- A few drops of St. Martha Oil

Boil the tarragon and cinnamon sticks in the water, and bring to a boil. Simmer for 20 minutes, strain the mix and then add to a bath of water. Directly to this bath add all the other ingredients. Stir the water until the treacle has dissolved. Sit in the bath of water, and using your hands, scoop the

water over your head nine times.

MOJO BAG FOR KEEPING A LOVER FAITHFUL

Use this mojo to stop your lover from straying. You will need:

- Personal effects from your lover – such as a lock of the persons hair, fingernail clippings, etc.
- Teaspoon cumin
- Teaspoon coriander

- A few pinches of magnolia flower petals
- A small peiece of paper and a pen
- A few pinches of calamus
- A few pinches of tobacco
- A red flannel
- A needle and thread
- Rose cologne

On the piece of paper write the name of your lover, and directly over the top of this write your own name. Place this in the centre of the flannel along with any personal effects belonging to your

lover. Sprinkle with the calamus and tobacco – whilst you are doing this say Psalm 114:

*“When Israel went out of Egypt,
the house of Jacob from a people of
strange language;*

*Judah was his sanctuary, and Israel his
dominion.*

*The sea saw it, and fled: Jordan was
driven back.*

*The mountains skipped like rams,
and the little hills like lambs.*

*What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou
fleddest?*

*thou Jordan, that thou wast driven
back?*

Ye mountains, that ye skipped like

*rams;
and ye little hills, like lambs?
Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of
the Lord,
at the presence of the God of Jacob;
Which turned the rock into a standing
water,
the flint into a fountain of waters.”*

Mix together the cumin, coriander
and magnolia, and sprinkle them
around the name paper in a ring. Over
this say Psalm 82:

*“God standeth in the congregation of
the mighty;
he judgeth among the gods.
How long will ye judge unjustly,*

and accept the persons of the wicked?

Selah.

Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy.

Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked.

They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course.

I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High.

But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.

Arise, O God, judge the earth: for thou shalt inherit all nations.”

Fold the flannel in half, and, using

the needle and thread, stitch around the edges, creating a packet containing all the ingredients. Place this under the mattress of the bed you both sleep in, and once a week dab the mojo with a little rose cologne.

ST MARTHA'S DAILY BREAD

Inspired by the story of Martha serving Christ in her home, here is a simple recipe for bread which can be used in offerings to the saints on their shrines, or shared amongst your family and friends. It's an excellent stand-by should you receive unexpected visitors.

- 250g plain flour (plus extra for dusting)
- 250g wholemeal flour
- 1 tablespoon bicarbonate of soda
- 1 teaspoon fine sea salt
- 400ml buttermilk
- 1 tablespoon molasses

Combine all ingredients in a bowl until they form a dough. Tip the dough onto a floured surface and work into a rough ball. Using a sharp knife, score a cross into the top of the loaf – whilst saying the Lord's Prayer.

*“Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come,
Your will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we also have forgive those who
trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
Amen.”*

Place on a baking tray in an oven that has been pre-heated to a medium-high temperature (around 200 degrees centigrade) and bake for roughly 45 minutes.

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