

ERESA MEARS | tmears@herald.com | 305-376-3674 or 954-764-7026 ext. 3674 | THE HERALD



WORK BY TITIAN: *Noli me tangere*, showing Mary of Magdala meeting the risen Christ, hangs in the National Gallery in London.

# LURE OF THE

BY ELIZABETH HANLY  
Special to The Herald

Hundreds of years before Christianity or even Judaism took root in the Middle East, the region was awash in sacred stories. One of the most enduring tells of a goddess ever searching for her god. He is lost, he is broken, even dead. She is tireless, fearless in her grief and finally instrumental in his resurrection.

Sound vaguely familiar?

The Roman Catholic Church long taught that a certain woman, a sinner with lovely hair, was present at the crucifixion. Later, when those men close to Christ had

Branded for centuries as a harlot, yet revered as the first to see the risen Christ, the enigmatic **Mary of Magdala** has a curious hold on popular culture

scattered, it was this same woman — one described as “fearless in her grief” — who went to his tomb, becoming the first disciple to recognize the risen Lord.

There isn’t a lot of information on her in the Christian gospels. Still, everybody agrees it was this woman, the Magdalene, who was the sole witness to the single most important event in Christianity. More legends have grown up around Mary Magdalene than any other figure in Christian history, with the exception of Jesus himself. One might well ask why.

• TURN TO MAGDALENE, 4E

# MAGDALENE

all  
day  
I like  
mer for