



## 30. August 2019 “Relationship of a Catholic to the New Age“

From the circle of those who hear the meditations, questions keep coming up on various topics. If these questions are of general interest, then I have scheduled the last two days of the month to answer them. Today this is a question which is quite comprehensive and which I am only able to answer incompletely in this context.

The question is: What should be the relationship of a Catholic to the New Age?

First, a brief summary of the different spiritual currents that converge in New Age:

Traditions that converge in The New Age include: the occult practices of ancient Egypt, the Kabbalah, the gnosticism of the first centuries of Christianity, Sufism, druid knowledge, Celtic Christianity, medieval Alchemy, Renaissance hermetism, Zen Buddhism and Yoga. It is a syncretism of esoteric and secular elements. It is a modern revival of pagan religions with a mixture of influences of both far Eastern religions, as well as modern psychology, philosophy, science and the cultural-critical movement of the 50s and 60s.

All these spiritual currents are inherent in the fact that they are alien to the Christian faith or hostile to it. It must therefore be made clear that they are not simply neutral like philosophical considerations that can be discussed. It is, more or less intense a manifestation of a "other spirit" that does not lead to the redeeming act of Christ, but leads away from him. This is especially true if, in addition to reading esoteric literature, one participates in any practices or in so-called holistic therapies. There is a wide range of approaches to holistic therapies, some of which are influenced by ancient cultic, religious or esoteric traditions, others by the psychological theories developed in Esalen in the years 1960-70. So we have to prove which methods of healing are neutral and which are connecting us with the spirit of New Age.

From the point of view of the spirit of discernment, it should be noted that we, as Catholics, should not practice exercises, nor music, nor questionable healing methods from the spectrum of the New Age.

Of course there are differences how strong the influence might be. But all in all we should avoid to come into a closer contact with New Age.

On the one hand we open our souls to another spirit that would on a long perspective distance us from the Lord and alienate us from the Christian faith. In addition, we send false signals to people seeking for God, as if New Age were compatible with the Catholic faith.

It is something else that the Lord can also accompany the religious search of men through the turmoil of the New Age. Perhaps for those people who do not know a living faith, the encounter with the New Age is like a first entry into the space of religion. If we know such people, it is important to pray for them and try to lead them on the right path. But one has to reckon with resistance, because if someone has become more deeply involved in the New Age, then it may be that he feels superior to the Catholic faith. He thinks he has entered a larger and wider spiritual space than the Christian way and does not realize that he is deceiving himself. Such people want to harmonize everything, including the different religions. The question of the truth is no longer asked! On the other hand they will say that everyone has his own truth.

If one applies the spirit of discernment, it becomes difficult to understand how contents of the New Age are even brought in by Catholics or even offered in Christian institutions. It is even more surprising when Zen and Yoga are practiced in monasteries.

The background is probably that there is a lack of knowledge of true Christian spirituality, a lack of knowledge of one's own contemplative tradition, there is the desacralization of ecclesial life and especially of the liturgy. In addition, there is an incomplete to erroneous view of how to deal with other religions and spiritual systems.

There exists a strange optimism on this theme, and it is often lost that a dialogue with other religions should lead them to recognize the only redeemer Jesus Christ. So a foreign spirit, which weakens the Catholic faith from within is on work. This spirit must be rejected either to us personally or to the Church!