

## 31. August 2019 „Answering Questions - Part 2“

Today we are continuing to answer questions.

### *How to fight witchcraft?*

Let us limit the answer to the so-called black magic, but I would like to say explicitly that the so-called white magic is also evil.

This question is certainly particularly in the context of Latin American experience, but it certainly also applies to Africa. Even in Europe, and probably also in North America, this problem is likely to become increasingly important. So how to protect yourself against magical practices or try to weaken them?

We know that the missionaries were very aware of this problem, because many natural peoples were often superstition, and the shamans (magicians) had a great influence on the populations. But when the missionaries came, the influence of the magicians faded, and the people who turned to the Lord and accepted the faith, received the protection of God. The shamans could not do anything to the missionaries at the level of sorcery.

We must be aware that the practiced magic is a connection with the fallen angels, i.e. with the demons. They are called directly or indirectly in order to harm other people or to assert the interests of those calling them. This opens a door for the demons. This can be seen as a perversion of the invocation of the angels who like to rush to the aid of the faithful when they are asked.

The efforts of the demons will fail because of the true faith of Christians, for they call to their Lord, who has come to destroy the works of the devil (compare *1 Jn 3:8*). As the gospel teaches us, the powers of darkness are already defeated, and the invocation of the name of Jesus realizes this victory.

Thus it is also clear how the protection against witchcraft looks like.

Faithful people are seeking the protection of Jesus and call his name against the forces of evil. It is important that we know about the destructive activities of demons, but that we are not afraid of them. Demons like to scare people

to be able to influence them more easily. We must face them in the awareness of the victory of Christ.

If stronger manifestations of evil spirits appear, then it is advisable to call a priest to help and ask him to perform an exorcism. One can also ask an experienced spiritual person, who does not have to be a priest, to pray in a special way. Sometimes there are people who have a special charisma for this type of prayer, but one should be careful not to approach these people too recklessly, especially if they are not clear Catholics.

In defending against the forces of evil, we are called not only to remain in defense, but also to attack them - if possible. The daily prayer for St. Archangel Michael is such a weapon, as it is the Rosary, the Word of God, and the Holy Mass. The fasting, which is unfortunately forgotten today, is also a weapon.

In general, the best protection and struggle against all forms of magic is the deepening of faith, so that the Lord may take more and more form in us. Although the devil does not rest and tries to gain influence again and again, the stronger the presence of the Lord in our lives, the easier it becomes to escape the attacks of the devil and to weaken him in the Lord by the appropriate means! One should be careful not to overestimate the presence of the devil in our lives and thus get into a negative fascination, but also not ignorantly relativize the influence of demons or even deny them as personal fallen angels.

*How do Catholics know they have the right Bible?*

For the Catholics there is not only the Holy Scripture the source as it is with Protestants, but also the holy tradition and the magisteria. Relying on the magisterias of the Church, we know that the right tradition of the scriptures is given to the faithful and not passages have been removed from it. This applies to both the Old and New Testaments.

*How to start reading the Bible?*

There are various instructions on how to read the Bible. Unfortunately, however, we have to issue a warning here. There are quite a few theological confusions and modern interpretations of the Bible. They are often more likely to destroy the faith and joy of the Word of God than to awaken it.

I would recommend starting with the New Testament and then gradually integrating the books of the Old Testament, to read the Bible more often in a praying attitude but also once in a while such as the Acts of the Apostles.

One can ask the Holy Spirit to guide us in reading the Bible. This does not conflict with to ask an experienced person for advice.

One should get used to the reading the scriptures daily. The soul will then become more and more hungry for the word of God. The daily readings of the Church were also rich, perhaps provided with an interpretation.

*How can one reach spiritual maturity?*

Spiritual maturity is the fruit of a consistent spiritual life, paying attention to and following the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Then love grows in us and also the experience with God. When the gifts of the Holy Spirit are developing in us and becoming more and more effective, then our more affective life changes into a spiritual life, i.e. led by the Spirit of the Lord. This requires an inner transformation.

As in natural life, there is steady growth here and you normally cannot skip a stage of this maturation process.

To explain it in more detail, it would now be necessary to speak about the spiritual path, which would, however, go beyond the scope of the questioning.

From tomorrow, we will resume the usual interpretations.