

**Ms. Linda Doherty**

## **Religious Perspectives - Wicca**

### **What are some misunderstood or controversial practices within your religion?**

“One of the things you, one of the words people hear and get really, really offended by or extremely scared of is witchcraft. You will hear probably at some point that Wiccans consider themselves as witches. When we talk about witchcraft we talk about doing magical work. And in doing magical work we use the energies of the universe and we talk about these energies in a way that help us to work on ourselves.

In other words we don't do, if somebody is Wiccan they do not practice what is called black magic. They don't hurt anyone. Somebody who practices black magic or whatever is out there, is not Wiccan. When we talk about doing magical work, magical spells, we make take elements that are inherent here on our universe and within our own bodies. Water is our blood, earth is our flesh and bones. We wear a pentacle ring which offends, or a pentacle in some fashion - a five-pointed star, which sometimes offends people and makes them kind of wary of us. But it only represents the five elements and those are air, fire, water, earth, and the element of spirit.

And we use these elements for healings. We use the energies of the universe, whether we're doing personal healings on ourselves or somebody else or for the common good of the world. When we had the big oil spill I was asked to put together a ritual down on the beach to push that oil away from our shores. And it was very difficult for us to be down there with all these people around and they are wondering what we're doing all in a circle and chanting. And asking Yemaja, which is an Yoruban goddess to, and she's a goddess of the sea, to push the oil away from our shores so that our fish can live, so that our marshes could survive.

These are the things we do in our practice of the craft. A lot of times you hear it called the craft. That's basically the craft. But it is very misunderstood when you hear the word witchcraft or the word witch.”

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