

## Christian Faith and Witchcraft in Romania

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In most societies there is a conflict between belief in the Christian God and adherence to pagan traditions such as witchcraft. Although most of Romania is modern, there are still areas in which people have faith in witches rather than in God.

There is a story about two Romanian women who went to a witch to have their fortunes told. However, one of them, Angela, had no faith in the powers of the witch and ridiculed her the entire time as they traveled to the witch's home. The witch somehow knew about her behavior so she refused to tell the skeptical woman anything about her future.



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Yet, the journey had been long so Angela implored the witch to tell her something of her future. She finally agreed to tell her and insisted that she would have a grim life. The witch told her she would get married two times and that her first husband would be a violent, abusive man and that she would have to divorce him. Her second marriage would be to a general and she would spend her life with him.

The witch said that Angela's life would be filled with trials and tribulations but if she could overcome some health problems, she could live to be 92 years old.

The witch also revealed that she would never have a child because of an abortion to which she agreed when she was young. Angela was born in a poor family with lots of children. The difficulties of her life motivated her to work hard for a better living. She lived a Christian life and eventually enjoyed great success.

Later, Angela desperately wanted a child and spent lots of money trying to find the appropriate medical treatment. Unfortunately the treatments did not work so she remained childless.

While dreaming Angela had visions that proved to be true and one of them was of her own death. The witch's prediction of living until the age of 92 was not fulfilled and Angela died at the age of 86 as predicted in her visions.

Even though the witch stated some things that were proven to be true, Angela rejected pagan beliefs and never lost her faith in God.

In Romania, when someone dies, a candle is lit for the soul as it begins to wander all alone around the physical world. When a candle has been lit for that person's soul, the flame will fade three times in a row. The thin line between the worlds of the living and the dead ones is mostly empowered by signals and symbols rather than the use of words.

The tradition is to cook and give away food but also to prepare a memorial feast for the deceased, inviting all of those who knew the person. Each time a memorial feast was arranged for Angela, a white dove would appear and show no fear of the gathering.

Our Christian faith teaches us that only trust in God can help us. It shows us that only God will make us stronger, giving us peace when we need it the most. Even when our world is filled with people who have sold themselves to the devil, it is Christian faith that will truly save us.