

Several excerpts from Fr. Carlos Martin's The Exorcist Files regarding yoga are below:

Is the Practice of Yoga Consistent with the Christian Faith?

"Her case illustrates that sometimes, you don't even realize you have opened a door until something terrible has slipped in. As we leave this case, I want to say a word about yoga. I am a priest, sharing my experiences. I know that many people do yoga apart from having any religious intention. And, I don't want to leave listeners with the impression that if they did yoga 10 years ago, that they are now oppressed. The point of my sharing this case is simply to say, that it is my belief as a Catholic priest born out by my experience as an exorcist that to do yoga is to roll the dice. And friend, take it from me, you don't want to gamble when it comes to demons."

People often forget that our adversary plays the long game. He's patient. In fact, he has all the time in the world, until he doesn't. The devil is also crafty. Just because he gains the rights to someone doesn't mean that he acts on them immediately. He may choose to hold on to those rights ever so carefully watching and waiting, biding for the perfect move. And when he does strike, he does so at the time of his choosing at a time that is optimal for him. (Intro by Fr. Carlos Martin).

The question before us now is, "Can the physical practice of yoga be separated from the theological and philosophical foundations behind it." In other words, "Can a Christian simply engage in the poses of yoga without subscribing or even being aware of its spiritual underpinnings." As an exorcist, my answer is a resounding, "No." The postures within yoga are by their very nature religious acts. One can practice yoga with the purest intentions, seeking nothing other than its physical benefits. But by its definition, yoga's postures possess a spiritual purpose. To engage in them is to open a door into the spiritual realm and you cannot control what type of spiritual racoon might decide to walk through that door. (Fr. Carlos Martins).

...Yoga emerged as an exercise centric practice during British colonial rule. Various popularizers of yoga spirituality such as swame, vive, kanunda and parva hundsya yoganunda capitalized on western curiosity of eastern spirituality and exploding enthusiasm for physical fitness like the YMCA.

Historically yoga is far more about spirituality than about stretching.

20:18 I wanted to take a minute and focus on the health data on yoga. Just to be fair we need to acknowledge that a lot of people practice yoga for the health benefits and are not actively seeking a new religion. And there are some health benefits to be sure. Articles... While yoga can have health benefits, so do almost all forms of exercise. With yoga, the evidence though often is not as water tight as it seems at first glance...

While the Catholic Church has not yet put out a definitive teaching on the practice of yoga, if you do an internet search on the terms Catholic and yoga, you will see a great many pages saying that there is nothing morally wrong with the practice of yoga. To be fair, many will say that it should not be used as a form of worship or as a way to enhance one's worship but if done

for the purpose of exercise and improving one's physical health, doing yoga is fine because there is nothing inherently evil in its physical movements. However, what these articles fail to investigate is whether there is something spiritually wrong with yoga. The poses, postures and movements in yoga are by their very nature, religious actions that are designed to connect you with what yoga practitioners call the universal self or the universal consciousness. The very word yoga comes from Sanscrit and it means to yoke. That should give one pause. Just what is the yoga practitioner yoking himself to? The spirit that animates each of the poses, that's what. A close examination of each of yoga's poses will reveal that they are anything but spiritually neutral.

Alexander Frank is a former yoga practitioner who converted to the Catholic faith in 2019 from Kashmiri Shivaism, a sophisticated form of yoga, and yoga's modern manifestations. Interestingly he has some pretty blistering comments on the nuts and bolts of some of the most common yoga poses. The warrior pose is a three part pose that invokes the god theobadra. Theobadra was made by the god Shiva in order to murder Shiva's father-in-law. The three part poses imitate the sequence of the murder. Sean Sherman, the founder of Rasa yoga informs us that the goddess pose invokes the dark goddess kali, known for making clothes out of the body parts of slain enemies. In addition, one of yoga's quintessential positions is the lotus pose. In an article about it, Nora Isaacs, a well known practitioner of yoga and a writer for the online yoga journal, yogajournal.com stated, "Lotus hold the alluring potential to awaken the dormant energy known as kundalini at the base of the spine and move the energy up the chakra system. This dormant energy called kundalini is a serpent that Hindu's and Yogi's believe lives at the base of the spine. The practice a yoga is meant to awaken the kundalini and send it up the base of the spine in order to take possession of ones real self and yoke that self to the universal consciousness." Bhakti, a yoga guru and the founder of Bhakti Yoga one of the most popular forms of yoga said the Lotus posture awakens the kundalini, the effect is that with kundalini active, you can essentially become whatever you want. You could become Jesus Christ or Buddha, he asserts. And to be sure millions of people are practicing yoga and I am going to guess 99% of them are probably not walking around demonized because of it. However, the poses and gestures in yoga have a spiritual foundation. The upshot is that, even if one engages in yoga merely as a form of physical activity that does not disassociate it from its spirituality. Since yoga was created to yoke oneself to spirit, that yoke is not broken simply because you don't want it to be there. According to Father, yoga is incompatible with Christianity. And to practice it is to open and door and you never know what may be on the other side of that door. No matter who you are or how strong your faith is, or even how irreligious you are, practicing yoga a rolling of the dice. A spiritual roulette which everyone needs to know, before deciding to play.