



Walking God's Paths



SOME BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR INTERFAITH DIALOGUE

1. Enter into dialogue so that *you* can learn and grow, not to change the other.
2. Everyone must be honest and sincere, even if that means revealing discomforts with your own tradition or that of the other. Everyone must assume that everyone else is being equally honest and sincere.
3. Everyone must be permitted to define their own religious experience and identity, and others must respect this.
4. Don't feel that you are the spokesperson for your entire faith tradition or that you ought somehow to know everything there is to know about it. Admit any confusion or uncertainty you might have if a puzzling question arises.
5. Don't assume in advance where points of agreement or disagreement will exist.
6. Everyone should be willing to be self-critical.
7. All should strive to experience the other's faith "from within" and be prepared to view themselves differently as a result of an "outside" perspective.
8. Trust is a must. Confidences must be kept within the group. Everyone should feel "safe " to express their ideas and feelings without fear.

[Adapted from Leonard Swidler, "The Dialogue Decalogue," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 20/1:1-4.]