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Fundamental Principles

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Fundamental Principles

of a Theology of Religious Pluralism

for an Alliance of Civilizations and Religions

and the Common Good of Humanity and of Life on the Planet

The only real absolute is the universal salvific will of God.

Religious pluralism is not only factual but is a matter of principle.

The current context or paradigm of reflection for theology is the pluralist paradigm.

It is necessary to recognize the mutual complementarity of religious traditions in which a reciprocal enrichment results from the dynamic interaction between two religious traditions.

The eschatological fullness of the Reign of God is the final common accomplishment of all religions. This step in the theology of religious pluralism is inseparable from an authentic interreligious dialogue.

Because God goes out to meet all people and in multiple ways (*See Heb. 1, 1-2*), all religions are valid. We can be sure that all authentic prayer is the result of the Spirit who is mysteriously present to every human being.

Religions are also human and cultural works.

In the pluralist model, the relationship of dialogue maintains the polarity between the two fundamental categories of thought that are oneself and the other, refusing to make one's own criterion the same as that of the other and that of the other to be the contrary of one's own.

The exchange of interreligious dialogue should take place in a setting of equality between believers of different religious traditions.

In light of the large questions in our world such as that of the common good of humanity and of the planet, interreligious dialogue places the believers of different religious traditions before an alternative: Are we to be solitary or in solidarity in our commitments? In the last analysis, the irruption of dialogue into the interreligious domain transforms the believer from being a partisan of God having a doctrine and observing a religious practice into a partner with other believers in the search for the Absolute and for an encounter with the world. The common good of humanity and of the planet then becomes the affair of everyone, not in solitude but in solidarity.

All these characteristics of interreligious dialogue take us back to the pluralist paradigm where the style of behavior is the Golden Rule (*See Matt. 7,12; Luke 6,31*), whether it is with regard to behavior toward our brothers and sisters in humanity or, *mutatis mutandi*, of behavior toward the planet.

No country, religion or civilization today escapes the double phenomenon of mondialization-globalization. In this inevitable and irreversible phenomenon, risks will be avoided and the opportunities seized upon to the extent that everyone makes an effort to respect human dignity, in themselves as also in others, through the promotion of the common good and respect for the universal destiny of goods, through the practice of the principle of subsidiarity and participation of all in the common good, as well as by promotion of solidarity, which cannot exist without attention to the weakest.

For Africa in general, and for Senegal in particular, the theology of religious pluralism required for an alliance of civilizations and religions for the common good of humanity and of the planet, should also be an African theology, that is to say, a theology that is aware of the issues affecting Africa.

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