

**INTERRELIGIOUS BEATITUDES:
RAIMUNDO PANIKKAR**

(cited, <http://www.hinduismtoday.com/archives/1995/2/1995-2-06.shtml>)

(Note: Panikkar uses the term “*INTR*religious,” because he wants to emphasize that it is something that takes place inside us, as well as with someone else).

When you enter into an intrareligious dialogue, do not think beforehand what you have to believe.

When you witness to your faith, do not defend yourself or your vested interests, sacred as they may appear to you. Do like the birds in the sky: they sing and fly and do not defend their music or their beauty.

When you dialogue with somebody, look at your partner as a revelatory experience as you would-and should-look at the lilies in the fields.

When you engage in intrareligious dialogue, try first to remove the beam in your own eye before removing the speck in the eye of your neighbor.

Blessed are you when you do not feel self-sufficient while being in dialogue.

Blessed are you when you trust the other because you trust in Me.

Blessed are you when you face misunderstandings from your own community or others for the sake of your fidelity to Truth.

Blessed are you when you do not give up your convictions, and yet you do not set them up as absolute norms.

Woe unto you, you theologians and academicians, when you dismiss what others say because you find it embarrassing or not sufficiently learned.

Woe unto you, you practitioners of religions, when you do not listen to the cries of the little ones.

Woe unto you, you religious authorities, because you prevent change and (re)conversion.

Woe unto you, religious people, because you monopolize religion and stifle the Spirit which blows where and how she wills.

“THE RULES OF THE GAME IN THE RELIGIOUS ENCOUNTER”

Taken and adapted from *The Intra Religious Dialogue*, by Raimundo Panikkar

(Explanatory notes by Edward L. Shirley, SFO; Chair, Ecumenical/Interfaith Committee,
National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order)

1. It must be free from particular apologetics.

[Explanation: you must not go in determined to “prove” your religion is superior.]

2. It must be free from general apologetics.

[Explanation: The goal is not to look “out there,” to see the problem in “other religions,” or the political system, or modern science, or even encroaching secularism. It is fine to look at issues facing the world, and to share approaches and insights, but it is not fine to erect a “common barricade” from behind which we face the problems of irreligion.]

3. One must face the challenge of conversion.

[Explanation: if one is truly open to learning from people of other Traditions, one must be willing to see where one’s own practice and understanding might grow. There are always deeper levels of experience: God is Infinite.]

4. It is not enough to talk history, philosophy or theology.

[Explanation: it is important to understand the history of development in one’s own Tradition, as well as in others, to understand philosophical and theological concepts, but this is more than an academic exercise.]

6. It is not merely an ecclesiastical endeavor.

[Explanation: while there are different “levels” of dialogue—institution-to-institution, theologian-to-theologian, dialogue is interpersonal: THIS PARTICULAR CATHOLIC with THIS PARTICULAR BAPTIST, or THIS PARTICULAR CHRISTIAN with THIS PARTICULAR BUDDHIST. This means everyone can do it on some level.]

7. It is a religious encounter in Faith, Hope and Love.

[Explanation: Both Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI have said that Christian ecumenism and interreligious dialogue are essential component the Christian mission. This is not a head exercise: it is truly an encounter with the Living God.]