

# **Crossin's Ten Points on Ecumenism and InterReligious Relations Today<sup>1</sup>**

**John W. Crossin, OSFS**

1. **Conversion**—The importance of a change of heart to ecumenism cannot be overestimated. Ecumenism must go from an intellectual understanding to a commitment of the heart.
  
2. A **Communion of Communions**—The goal is to bring all together with the distinctiveness of the varied traditions. It is not to obliterate those distinctions but to find the common core around which we can unite. There will be diversity in unity and unity in diversity
  
3. **Structures**—
  - a. World Council of Churches
  - b. National Council of Churches
  - c. Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity
  - d. The 'Big Tent'—Christian Churches Together
  
4. **InterFaith Dialogue**—This is important but is not the same as Ecumenism. The goal of ecumenism is visible church unity while the goal of InterFaith dialogue is mutual understanding. The two efforts are complementary in that they both require mutual respect, attentive listening and clear explanation.

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<sup>1</sup> My original 10 points were drawn from an article by Michael Kinnamon in *Ecumenical Trends* in May, 2001.

5. **The Both/And**--The necessary relationship of doctrine and life, Scripture and Tradition, etc. For Christian unity things go together.
  
6. **Cultural differences** do make a difference
  - a. With the Orthodox—who never experienced either the Enlightenment or the Reformation.
  - b. In Africa and Asia—the struggle to enculturate.
  
7. Diversity in Unity is especially challenging in the **moral arena**
  - a. Divisive moral issues such as Homosexuality---Ecumenism often moves from the less difficult to the more difficult.
  - b. Can we agree to disagree on some things?
  
8. Differences in the **Understanding of the Church**
  - a. Have some reforming movements run their course?
  - b. Local or international
  - c. Hierarchical/Participative
  
9. **Local Reception**—agreements at the top must be received locally
  - a. Interchurch Families
  - b. What are the practices that form us ecumenically?
  
10. God's ways are mysterious. God seems to work slowly. Yet there has been abundant change in the last few years. The key foundation is prayer [See *Ut Unum Sint*, Pauline Books and Media, 1995.] **Christian Unity is a gift of God.**

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