designed publication.

As readers take up the Dupuis volume, they must steel themselves for a very rigorous and penetrating investigation into the complex questions surrounding religious pluralism. Yet, it is a labor that will bear abundant and lasting fruit. Here one meets a master; here one encounters depth, precision, and insight; here one holds a volume that is destined to become a recognized milestone for its contribution to investigating the questions facing Christian theology in the contemporary world of religious diversity. Although not common in book reviews, a concluding expression of gratitude and compliment to Jacques Dupuis is truly appropriate.

Reviewed by James H. Kroeger, M.M.


The literature on interreligious dialogue emerging in the post-Vatican II era is extensive — even voluminous. Thus, a prospective reader of another “dialogue” book instinctively asks: Is there anything new and creative to be found here?

By design this is a practical handbook; it is authored by Cardinal Francis Arinze, President (since 1984) of the Vatican’s Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue. It is a pastoral compendium for engagement in interfaith dialogue. In this reflective book the author invitingly shares his wide experiences and convictions.

Arinze is not primarily concerned with the theology of dia-
logue; he focuses on dialogue-in-practice. The author's magnanimity and interreligious sensitivity emerge as he writes. Here is the *novum* of the book: a personal and concrete *vademecum* for practitioners of dialogue.

Consisting of nine chapters with a brief introduction and conclusion, the book situates or contextualizes its discussion within the reality of world-wide religious pluralism. Chapter One focuses on the essence of dialogue as "a meeting of people of differing religions, in an atmosphere of freedom and openness, in order to listen to the other, to try to understand that person's religion, and hopefully to seek possibilities of collaboration." (10)

Interreligious Dialogue is NOT an optional commitment; this is the theme of Chapter Two. A sincere believer, "remaining firmly rooted in his or her religion," (15) can grow spiritually and come closer to God through such interreligious encounters. As Pope John Paul II noted in Assisi in 1986: "Either we learn to walk together in peace and harmony, or we drift apart and ruin ourselves and others." (18)

Chapter Three recognizes that there are risks involved in dialogue: "danger of losing one's faith, relativism, syncretism and religious indifferentism." (22) However, the response "is not to renounce the whole exercise but to ride or drive carefully." (26)

Dialogue partners are open and sincere in their religious convictions (Chapter Four): "We do not promote dialogue authentically by suppressing our religious identity" (28). Dialogue about doctrinal matters (Chapter Five) is a possibility, but it is "psychologically unwise" (36) to begin here. Chapter Six discusses how dialogue and the propagation of one's own religion are to be understood.

Chapter Seven explores the theological reasons for the
Church's commitment to dialogue. The requirements for fruitful dialogue are explored in Chapter Eight. Dialogue demands spirituality and holiness (Chapter Nine). Does interreligious dialogue have a future? Arinze concludes that "the balance is in favour of interreligious dialogue. Let it go on." (72)

This practical handbook deserves wide dissemination and translation. It probably communicates the Church's vision and practice of dialogue better than most academic treatments. Arinze's popular, narrative style, mixed with quotes, personal experiences, faith insights, and common wisdom, effectively communicates and convinces. Meeting Other Believers could well bear the subtitle: "A Primer on Interreligious Dialogue."

Reviewed by James H. Kroeger, M.M.


Thomas Thangaraj is Associate Professor of World Christianity at the Candler School of Theology in Atlanta, Georgia. In a warm and engaging manner, he presents to Christians the motives, paths, and basic confidence about relating to people of other faiths. His approach is autobiographical, anecdotal, biblical, and practical; the result is an easily read book that communicates effectively.

Because of his lengthy personal involvement in interfaith