Guide for Those Considering conversion

The following are offered as guidelines by the author based on his counselling experience. They are designed to ensure that individuals find long-term contentment and stability.

1. Explore your existing religious tradition thoroughly before deciding to abandon it. You may be surprised at how little you know it and how rich it actually is.

2. Investigate several different faiths to find out which has the values and lifestyle that appeals most to you. Be aware also of the different denominations within each of them.

3. Do not just read about a faith, but experience both its public worship and domestic ceremonies. Make sure you feel at home with both the practice and the theory of it.

4. Do not make your decision in a hurry. Give yourself time to feel comfortable at leaving your previous tradition and to feel at home in the new one.

5. Be fully aware of the demands your new faith will make on you, both in order to convert and what is expected after conversion. This applies particularly to changes in lifestyle and to any demands that will affect your relationship with your family.

6. Keep your family fully informed throughout the process of searching and converting, so that they do not feel alienated and so that you can benefit from any advice they may give.

7. Check whether your conversion will be recognised by all within the faith or be limited to certain denominations.

8. Be highly cautious when teachers tell you that they alone have access to the truth. Be wary of those who insist that joining their faith must involve surrendering control of your financial affairs.

9. Remember that the best teachers are those who encourage you to study the tradition for yourself and establish your own relationship with God rather than simply imbibe what others tell you about God.

10. Ensure that you are converting because you want to convert and not out of pressure or simply to please others. There has to be something in it for you. Nor should conversion be an attempt to escape aspects of your character or your past with which you have not yet properly come to terms. Conversion should (be) a positive step, looking brightly to the future and bringing a sense of fulfilment.