**Keys for questions of the text  « Religious Diversity in the U.S.” extracted from (Datesman, Crandall & N. Kearny. 2005. American Ways: An Introduction to American Culture. ( pp. 57-59)**

**According to your reading of the text, do and discuss the following:**

1. What is the main reason behind religious diversity?
2. Find in the text supporting ideas to develop the main topic idea expressed in the text “The belief that the individual, not the organized church, should be the center of religious life has encouraged a tolerance and acceptance of all faiths. This climate of religious freedom has, of course, strengthened the development of cultural pluralism in the United States.”
3. What does the following expressions mean?
4. Expressive individualism
5. Privatizing of organized religion
6. Identify the trends that create a spiritual kaleidoscope in the U.S.
7. Today, there are many new religious organizational structures. According to the text, identify the main basis underlying those organizational structures.
8. Try to express your understanding to American young people identifying themselves as being spiritual, rather than religious.

**“The care of every man’s soul belongs to himself” Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826)**

**Keys to the questions**

1. The belief on the individual in general and that the individual rather than the church should be the center of religious life is the main reason behind religious diversity in the U.S.
2. Today, we can identify various aspects of religious diversity in the U.S. First, the huge number of religious groups that are estimated to over 140 groups with more than 5000 members, and to around 2.000 distinct groups according to other estimates. In addition, the different religious trends that can be identified in present day America such as the switch from a Protestant-Catholic-Jewish nation into multiple religious nation, the spread of religious “expressive individualism” and the “privatizing of organized religion”, the large number of religious organizational structures, and finally the widespread of the belief in spirituality rather than belonging to a given religion.
3. Religious expressive individualism mean switching among the faiths of a given religion, such as the switch from one Protestant denomination to another, or from one faith to another. Privatizing organized religion, on the other hand, means choosing among the beliefs in in order to create a personal religious identity.
4. The trends that are creating spiritual kaleidoscope are the following: The switch from a Protestant-Catholic-Jewish nation into multiple religious nation, the spread of religious “expressive individualism” and the “privatizing of organized religion”, the large number of religious organizational structures, and finally the widespread of the belief in spirituality rather than belonging to a given religion.
5. The bases underlying the religious organizational structures in the U.S. are ethnicity, volunteering and charity, and party affiliation.
6. Many young Americans today identify themselves as spiritual rather than religious. Those people believe that what comes from the inner self is always the purest and reflects the bright side of individuals. For them religious restrictions and obligations hinder individuals from expressing and improving themselves and may result in stimulating their bad side. Generally, it is not a matter of faith but rather a matter of individual liberty of improvement of doing things that come from the deep of onself.