



The Thin Line on All Hallow's Eve - An Interfaith Dialogue

November 3rd, 2008

Its October 31st, 2008, as I write this, and I am in Chicago where I spent the day as a guest speaker at the Human Empowerment Conference. It has been a sweet and significant day and I am compelled to share it with you!

This is a Hindu event, and I was asked here to participate in the "American Dharma Congress," a presentation designed to help Hindus explore the possibility that other faith traditions might be "allies in cause." I spoke, this afternoon, on the topic of "Paganism in America."

Did I mention how interesting it is that I am here on Halloween? This holiday, whose roots are deeply embedded in the rich soil of the Pagan culture, is a holy-day that invites us to offer gratitude for the gifts of our ancestors, to explore the value of death as a normal and healthy aspect of life, and to understand the importance of endings...and beginnings.

Voices, speaking from five different perspectives, were heard; Romani (Gypsy), Mohawk (Native American), Pagan, Feminist-Yogini, and Hindu.

We spoke about our related wounds, about marginalization and persecution. We spoke about our respective ways of connecting with the Divine in both its masculine and its feminine forms. We spoke about Mother Earth, ecology and sustainable living. We spoke about mysticism, science, and history. We listened and we learned - together.

On this day of endings and beginnings, we asked each other "what has died in order that we can be together in this way, and what will be born from our collaborative sharing?" We were reminded of all that we have to be grateful for in this very moment, which is not the moment of death, nor the moment of birth, but the present "now" that resides between them.

As is always the case for me, when I am blessed to be part of interfaith dialogue, I found myself brought to tears many times throughout the day. It is amazing to delve deeper into the recognition of our similarities. The common ground we discover reassures me that, at some time in our very distant past, we emerged from the same Divine Source - and no matter what path we follow to reconnect with that Source, we are destined to find each other as travel companions along the way!

So, at this very special moment in time, I offer thanks to the ancestors who have given their lives that we might follow our respective paths freely and openly. I am deeply grateful for the doorway that is opening between people of various traditions as a result of our heart-based recognition of each other, and I look forward, with great anticipation, to a future where labels such as Hindu and Pagan are

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replaced by such references as friend, companion and soul-kin.

On this very special Halloween, I wish you endings and beginnings that awaken you to your true and divine nature – and a few pieces of your favorite candy to sweeten the journey!

Blessed be,

Ahriana Platten