



## ASHES TO ASHES

~ Kahlil Gibran

By Brother Thomas Faulkenbury



*“You should know the secret of death. But how shall you find it unless you seek it in the heart of life? The owl whose night-bound eyes are blind unto the day cannot unveil the mystery of light. If you would indeed behold the spirit of death, open your heart wide unto the body of life. For life and death are one, even as the river and sea are one.”*

*“For what is it to die but to stand naked in the wind and to melt into the sun? And what is it to cease breathing, but to free the breath from its restless tides, that it may rise and expand and seek God unencumbered?”*

*“Only when you drink from the river of silence shall you indeed sing. And when you have reached the mountaintop, then you shall begin to climb. And when the earth shall claim your limbs, then you shall truly dance.”*

It’s difficult to imagine how many people have lived and died on planet earth since the dawn of creation. Scientists estimate that for every person alive today thirty have died in the past.

As of May 2009 the world’s living population was estimated at 6.8 billion. That means the world’s deceased population is over 204 billion whose mortal remains have been claimed by the earth and whose breath has expanded and risen to seek God.

Death envelops us in life. Yet in the midst of all is life, singing, dancing, and trembling in joy before the king. It is an awesome and wondrous thought.

We walk on the dust and ashes of forgotten billions who have gone before us. Yet we walk with remembrance of those who loved, nurtured, and taught us.

*“Life is often heavy only because we attempt to carry it. But, we can find strength in the ashes.”*

*“Each of us is alone. Each of us is in the great darkness of our ignorance. And, each of us is on a journey. In the process of our journey, we must bend to build a fire for light, and warmth, and food.”*

*“But when our fingers tear at the ground, hoping to find the coals of another’s fire, what we often find are the*

*ashes. And, in these ashes, which will not give us light or warmth, there may be sadness, but there is also testimony.*

*Because these ashes tell us that somebody else has been in the night, somebody else has bent to build a fire, and somebody else has carried on.*

*"And that can be enough, sometimes."  
~ Noah benShea*



## RECOMMENDED READINGS

Universalism and Spirituality, Williams, Patricia A. (Editor), 2007, Quaker Universalist Fellowship, Columbia, MD, ISBN 978-1-878906-82-3

Chi: Discovering Your Life Energy, Liao, Waysun, 2009, Shambala Publications, Boston MA, ISBN 978-1-59030-695-6



"Do you believe in life after death?" the boss asked one of his employees. "Yes, Sir." the new recruit replied.

"Oh, well that's okay then!" said the boss. "Because after you left early yesterday to go to your grandmother's funeral, she stopped in to see you!"

## 👍EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Wednesdays, 7:00-8:00 p.m., Zazen/  
Centering Prayer, **White River Dharma Center**, 250 Lilly, Batesville, Arkansas

Sundays closest to the full moon, 6:30 pm-12:20 am, Sacred Fire Ceremony and potluck dinner, **Sacred Fire Community of Eureka Springs**, Arkansas, contact Melissa Clare at (479) 253-8252 or [eshearthfire@gmail.com](mailto:eshearthfire@gmail.com)

**Sitting Zen, Maria Kannon Zen Center**, 6532 Hunnicut Road, Dallas TX 75227

Mondays & Wednesdays: 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm

Fridays: 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Saturdays & Sundays: 8:30 am to 10:00 am; 10:30 am to 12 noon

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[tfaulkenbury@earthlink.net](mailto:tfaulkenbury@earthlink.net)

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