

Profile: Joe Hebert, Illuman Treasurer

My involvement with men's work began with a retreat with Fr. Richard Rohr at Ghost Ranch in 1990 and I mark that as the start of a strong and continuing spiritual journey. The first few gatherings with Fr. Richard and then M.A.L.Es brought me to an understanding that my ego was out of control and that I had no true relationship with God. Until that time my life decisions were based on money, prestige in the community and what I thought other people expected of me. Through the retreats and gatherings I came to an acceptance of God as a loving and forgiving God and an understanding that all of the things I had been "beating myself up over" were experienced by almost every man with whom I have shared over the years.

As I continue the journey (hoping that it does not end until my eyes close for the last time) I am nourished by encounters with other men on their own journeys. My spirit is fed at each gathering and I noticed at Soularize 2013 a most positive spirit of anticipation and joy as each man came up to the registration desk. That feeds me and tells me that I am doing the right thing with the right people. Each of the brothers I encounter through my involvement joins me in my spiritual work. This community is one where I feel affirmed and have an opportunity to affirm other men who are on a spiritual path.

My life today is not the same as it was 23 years ago and it has most definitely changed for the better. Now I see God in all things and all people...still struggle with the lifelong problems of judging people and frequently forgetting to realize that God is with me at ALL times....the good and the bad. My friends and my family can tell you that I am not the same person as I was before the journey started.

Exercising my ministry I am open to all who are seeking to deepen their journey. Through mentoring, one-on-one conversations and through my participation in our local men's group, I try to be of value to each person I encounter. It is my strong belief that our work continues through real relationships that are personal and not through advertisements or cajoling anyone to do something I have done. I strive to be a servant to others in my involvements and do not seek out leadership position. My ego has deflated and more and more I take to heart what Fr. Richard says ..."Everything Belongs".

This is a community of men that I am proud to be associated with and who feed my spirit each time I gather with them...be it on an international scale, a national scale or in local groups. I cant' imagine returning to my life as it was – I am a better man for being part of this community.