

My Journey

By William Lee Bedell

William Lee Bedell is Convener for the Texas Chapter of Illuman; he also serves on the Texas board of directors (Men As Sons, Inc., dba Soul Pathways) and facilitates the Houston monthly meetings.

How and when were you introduced to male spirituality?

I was introduced to male spirituality when I met Ernie Fitzpatrick in October of 1991 as I joined Liberty Revival Church. Ernie was instrumental in discovering and introducing Richard Rohr to our congregation via books, videos, and eventually Richard's first visit in 2006. By this time, I had already read several of Richard's books and participated in many Wednesday night "Rohr Video" experiences/dialogues in our congregation. What I was not aware of was that I would encounter Jesse Aranda at a table with literature regarding the first Men's Rite of Passage happening in Texas in March of 2007; I was fortunate to attend this experience and I am still unpacking and feeding upon it to this day.

How has your participation in Illuman/M.A.L.Es fostered the use and development of your gifts?

As I continue in the Journey of Illumination, I am increasingly aware of my need for real, vulnerable, and ongoing experiences with other men as we help each other embrace God, others, and the mystery of this life. This type of intimate participation with other men in Illuman/M.A.L.Es is helping me use, develop, and discover gifts that I did not even realize I have.

Describe a recent Illuman/M.A.L.Es event you attended. What was the impact on you?

Attending Soularize 2014 was a tremendous experience for me in a variety of ways. One main impact for me was the introductions, experiences, and continued applications of the Way of Council that I encountered in our small groups. There are other rich memories that include group meditation times with the glorious view, meeting men from around the world, and seeing further evidence of the healthy organizational structure of the Illuman board of directors. I left Soularize with a growing heart of gratitude.

What's one thing you'd recommend to a man starting on the spiritual journey?

The main thing I would recommend to a man "starting on the spiritual journey" is to realize that he's already begun the *journey*. Simply learn to

receive love and take one step at a time—or, stop stepping and simply have a seat.

What's the best thing about doing this work?

One of the best things about “doing” this work has been for me to receive the love and acceptance of the Spirit through the many genuine relationships with other men as we walk together.

Concluding thoughts?

In conclusion, I'm reminded that it's *not* all about me! I'm honored and grateful to be living, moving, and having my being as the result of those that have gone before me. I'm challenged to continue to lean into the wind of mystery and love while serving other men, their families, and communities.