

My Journey

By Michael Dunne

Michael Dunne is the Northeast Convener and a member of the Illuman Board of Directors.

How and when were you introduced to male spirituality?

I have often been asked how I was introduced to male spirituality. Frankly, I never thought of spirituality as being gender-specific. What I did know was that the spirituality I was exposed to didn't speak to *my* spirit or needs. About 25 years ago, during a time of personal struggle and searching, I came across the book *The Quest for the Male Soul* by Martin Pable, OFM Cap. In his book he references Richard Rohr's book *From Wild Man to Wise Man*. I picked up a copy of this book and from the first chapter I was hooked. Richard's straightforward style spoke directly to how I was feeling and what I was experiencing. A few years later, I attended a Man Matters retreat on True Self/False Self, which led to the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius and the MROP in 2005. From that point on, I immersed myself in what is commonly referred to as male spirituality.

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

As the Northeast started preparing for their first MROP in 2006, I volunteered to work in the background, getting some of the materials and supplies ready for the MROP. Not long after that, I assumed the role of Convener for the Northeast and have been actively "working" in male spirituality locally, regionally, and nationally since that time. My gift of organization and attention to detail is what I offer. If you were to ask someone that knows me well, when it comes to organization, they would agree that I keep the edges hot!

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

I would have to say that the Conference/Soularize event that was held in November of 2014 had a significant impact on me. Previously I had only been briefly exposed to the Way of Council; however, this event breathed life into the power of Council and the extensive possibilities for its use as a vehicle of inner discovery and transformation.

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

The one piece of advice I'd pass along to a man starting on the spiritual journey is to find likeminded men that can walk with you. Having a "soul brother" with whom to share your experiences and insights is invaluable on the spiritual journey.

What's the best thing about doing this work?

The best thing about doing the "work" is the exposure to other men that are sojourning. I am a firm believer that every man, regardless of where they are on their journey, has a gift to give me, as I have for them. When I am attentive to this reality and cooperate with God's grace, I am enriched, as are they.

Concluding thoughts?

I have found that we each connect with God in a way that only makes sense to us. When I remain true to who I am and to where God is calling me, amazing things can happen. When I am attentive to this movement, interior freedom follows. It is in that tender place that God is revealed and I am blessed.