

My Journey

By Stephen Caudana

Stephen Caudana is currently serving as Convener of a diverse, vibrant community of men in Southern California.

How and when were you introduced to male spirituality?

I had a “beginner’s mind” experience. I met a man, walking with his grandson in the backcountry of Sequoia National Park, twenty years ago. He had an inner radiance and authority. He shared with me about the Men’s Rites of Passage, and God was in that invitation.

At that moment, his words landed on rocky ground. But eventually, the soil of my life softened. A couple of years later, the loss of my father and some family conflict led me to the limits of my problem-solving ability. I needed to draw upon a deeper well of strength and love.

I took a chance and did the MROP. The experience was so unexpected and powerful. It changed me forever, because I had a real encounter with the Beloved and knew I was a Son of God.

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

It’s opened up a path to a more authentic life. In the past, I doubted my skills as a leader or healer. But participation is a willingness to say Yes, and trust in God. So, for me, that opens up a freedom—a freedom to be and do what I can and let the outcome rest with God.

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

An Illuman SoCal retreat—Sex, Love, and Intimacy, in Julian, California—about the mysterious gift of our sexuality as mirror and metaphor of the divine embrace. It humbled me and made me want to better integrate this part of my life, as a lover, husband, and father.

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

Don’t be afraid. Don’t be afraid to look into the Shadow: the dark part of yourself, the part that all of us push out of view; your sin, your pain. There’ll be resistance, but that’s the entry point for your journey and healing.

What's the best thing about doing this work?

Being in the flow of a divine life and energy, as part of a community of Brothers who are on the spiritual journey and committed to changing themselves and the world.

Concluding thoughts?

Everything is an invitation to love. What comes to you, comes to you, and you can use it for healing and greater peace. Then hand that peace and freedom on to others. God is great!