



Men as Learners and Elders (Ireland)

{M.A.L.E.s (Ireland)}

Background

The battle of the spiritual man is always with himself. Today we are seeing the sad results of society's failure to prepare men for this battle. They face life unprepared for the trials of life. The effects are all around us: legitimated and even glorified violence, compulsive addiction, breakdown of foundational relationships, projection of shame and blame, a common inability to believe in themselves, others and life in general and the worrying rise in male suicides. They find the question of what it means to be a man perplexing.

Fr. Richard Rohr OFM, the internationally renowned lecturer, author and Franciscan priest, has been exploring issues of male spirituality since 1987. He says that

"None of our current social or church issues is going to change until the ordinary male matures spiritually. It seems clear that it is time for the ordinary men to trust their own inner authority and to train their possible outer authority as elders (wise men) of the next generation".

He maintains that men long for the support and nurture of other men to help on their journey towards masculinity, maturity, and a deeper experience of the divine, a journey into the true self. The initiation rites (rites of passage) and vision quests of many cultures in the past were considered essential preparation for the spiritual journey into the true self. It helped men to reassess what it means to be a man, and to become leaders in the broader culture. It also helped them to confront suffering, loss, and death in order that they can live with genuine wisdom and vision. And most importantly, it re-birthed them into a new consciousness of themselves, of their giftedness to others and of their responsibilities to family and community.

Establishment of M.A.L.Es

Fr Richard established Rites of Passage programs in New Mexico to help guide men through a formal initiation process that they may have missed during their critical developmental period as young men. These proved so successful that an organisation called "Men as Learners and Elders" (M.A.L.Es) was established in 2002 to carry out the vision of creating a school for male spiritual development by expanding the scope of Men's Rites of Passage programs throughout the world. The programs include the best from mainline traditions, from contemporary psychology, anthropology, and theology.

The aims of M.A.L.Es are

- To help awaken men to their own masculinity, their deep spirituality, and their potential for leadership.
- To form an extended network of initiated men and leaders who have an ecumenical vision of Gospel based male initiation.
- To call on initiated men to serve as Elders (wisdom figures) in providing leadership and guidance in the spiritual development for other men of future generations.
- To support initiatives that seek to explore specific issues of male spiritual development.
- To provide other men's groups who want to follow this program with teachings, books, videos and training.

Contact: M.A.L.Es (Ireland) – Events, 69 Barton Road Extension, Dublin 14
Phone: 086- 8435191
Email: malesireland@hotmail.com

Establishment of M.A.L.Es (Ireland)

A number of Irish men participated in this program over the past few years. Their experience was so transformative, that they agreed that an organisation must be established here in Ireland to give Irish men access to this program.

M.A.L.Es (Ireland) was established in January 2004 in Marley Community Centre, Church of the Divine Word, off the Grange Road, Dublin 14.

They adopted the same aims as the parent group above. They intend fulfilling these aims by;

- Running a men's development group on the last Saturday of each month in Marley which will follow the teachings of Fr. Richard where all men are welcomed.
- Providing a spiritual resource for other men's groups'
- Running conferences and seminars on men's development issues
- Running Men's Rites of Passage programs in Ireland
- Forging links with men's movements throughout the country.
- Encouraging other similar men's groups to be formed throughout the country
- Being the representative of M.A.L.Es here in Ireland.
- Making use of the media to spread the message.

For further information on M.A.L.Es (Ireland) Please contact:

Address : M.A.L.Es (Ireland)
4 Ballinteer Court, Dublin 16

Phone : Mon – Fri 10.00am to 5.00 pm, 087–2958066, 087–2614248
Email: malesireland@hotmail.com

For information about events, bookings etc, please contact

Address : M.A.L.Es (Ireland) -Events
69 Barton Road Extension, Dublin 14

Phone : Mon – Fri 10.00am to 5.00 pm, 086- 8435191
Email: malesireland@hotmail.com

Meeting Place : Last Saturday of every month from 10.30 am to 1.00 pm
Marley Community Centre
Church of the Divine Word, Marley
Off Grange Road
Dublin 14,

Note, turn into the Marley estate is almost opposite the main entrance to Marley Park

All men are welcome



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VISION STATEMENT

***We proclaim the spirituality of men through
experiential journeying into the True Self
and to creating a tradition for future generations.***

MISSION we commit to:

- *Creating an association which will act as a centre for men's development and to encourage and support the networking of men's spirituality groups.*
- *Directing men in lifelong spirituality*
- *Training men to be mentors*
- *Maintaining on-going relationships with participants*
- *Providing men with transitional and developmental programmes*

PHILOSOPHY we believe:

- *In a universal message that transcends the boundaries of race, nation, culture, gender, economics/class, politics, sexual orientation and religious differences.*
- *Every man is precious and beloved by God.*
- *Men are ready for serious spiritual journeys.*
- *Our message is grounded in the Christian mystery of dying and rising, while integrating the symbols and rituals from other religions and cultures, paying particular attention to our own Celtic traditions.*
- *Men must seek to improve their spirituality by attending to and feeding their masculine souls.*
- *Men must have the affirmation and guidance of wise mentors.*
- *Men have a need and responsibility to mentor future generations.*
- *Men must seek honest mutuality in their relationships with women.*
- *Men must recognize and critique their own power in relationships.*
- *There is a need for collaborating with like-minded groups*