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Updates

Dear Men,

October 1, 2009

Fall is upon us and the football season has officially begun! As an ex-football player, the fall weather always reminds me of the crisp cold days playing on the gridiron in high school and college. At our recent Into the Wild outdoor retreat for men, I had a chance to play some pick-up football with some of the men on the weekend. It was a great experience as you will read below!

On Thursday September 10th, The King's Men (TKM) traveled to French Creek State Park in Elverson, PA to host what is quickly becoming our flagship program for men. The rugged terrain and facilities at French Creek were once again the setting and destination point for 70 men who were desirous of discovering and experiencing their Catholic faith in a masculine modality. You might recall that TKM took over 100 men "into the wild" the beginning of June. Like the last time, we had many men travel from as far as California to experience this powerful weekend. Although our numbers were less, we were able to develop an exceptional program for men that in my opinion rivaled the one we hosted in June and in some respects surpassed the achievements of our first effort.

I'd like to share with you some of the highlights from the weekend:

- 70 men passionately and devoutly prayed the rosary at sunrise each day.
- A strong leader team who were completely at the service of the men on the weekend.
- Our executive chef John McGann prepared amazing meals for the men on the weekend. Have you ever gone camping and ate swordfish? Enough said!
- The rain didn't stop the men from smiling and forming a true band of brothers.
- We had a priest attend the weekend for his own masculine development. This was a terrific witness to the men.
- The men built an outdoor chapel that was in a word—awesome!
- The Training Under Torchlight activity enabled the men to experience much healing and offered them much hope in their masculine journeys.
- The cook-off activity was something that we tried for the first time and it was a home run. Here's the menu for the men: pheasant, duck, rabbit, buffalo, chicken, and venison—Wow, a carnivore's delight for sure!

Damian Wargo and I are planning tentatively to offer men three "Into the Wild" retreats in 2010. God willing we will be able to offer some satellite locations such as Pittsburgh, California or Milwaukee. Stay tuned to our website for future details on these plans.

Although our "Into the Wild" program took up much of our time and energy during the month of September, TKM continued to be busy speaking to men about authentic masculinity at various locations and events in PA. On Friday 9/4 to Saturday 9/5, TKM was privileged to participate for the 4th year at the Courage Sports Camp in Allentown, PA. This year I was blessed to coach 40 men from all over the country in the sports of football, softball, basketball and volleyball. On Saturday 9/19, I was invited to speak to 75 men at the Guardian of the Redeemer men's breakfast in Wilkes-Barre, PA. On 9/27 I was invited to address for a second time a group of protestant brothers on how we as men are called to engage the culture of death. Finally, TKM hosted a day of prayer and fasting for the 40 Days for Life campaign in Warminster on 9/29.

Mark J. Houck