

“A Small Glimpse of Heaven”: Dano Jukanovich’s reflections on a Boston-area Gender Equity & Reconciliation International Retreat

I felt loved. When a woman I barely knew wiped tears from my eyes and said, “I see you,” I felt loved.

I’m not sure how I got from here to there over three days through the Gender Equity and Reconciliation International retreat in Boston this Fall, but somehow I did.

I walked into a room with 21 people, most of whom I had never met, a large number of whom were women, and I was invited to participate in the human growth process.

Clearly God wanted me to be there. I had just come off a weekend with a small group of friends where we spent time in guided reflection about what it meant to be made in the Image of God. It was the first time I had in any serious way contemplated God as represented both in the masculine and feminine, and I was hungry to learn more.



At the GERI retreat, I struggled with the intense level of vulnerability in the midst of people I barely knew. I found myself defensive about whatever culpability I might have in the Gender-inequity so prevalent in our world. But I committed to share and engage as authentically as I felt able to do.

I talked about growing up 40+ years ago in a home where mom and dad played relatively traditional roles. In spite of going on to be an Army Ranger, I was the kid who didn’t lean as much toward hunting and working on cars as my brother did. I played the piano and helped my mom bake cookies and clean the house. That was fine, but not necessarily highly praised. I shared with a smaller group about my relationship with my mom and dad, friendships and romance in high school and college, married life and being the father of a son and two daughters and the consequent considerations of being a man made in the image of God.

I also listened a lot. I listened to the other men in a group of only men. We heard and held each other’s stories and each other’s hands. I listened to the women as they shared with the full group of men and women. It was heart-breaking to listen and contemplate the ways we had debased the image of God in each other.

This was all facilitated by a thoughtful, wise and experienced group of GERI



