

WALKING THE LABYRINTH

QUICK START GUIDE

Please take off your shoes and walk in your socks. If you are not wearing socks, then make use of the disposable shoe covers provided.

Be as silent as possible in respect to others also walking the labyrinth.

It is permissible to pass other people on the labyrinth. If someone is coming up behind you on the labyrinth, simply step to the side and allow him/her to pass you.

Children enjoy the labyrinth. Parents, please supervise young children, so all may enjoy the meditative aspects of the walk.

MORE INFORMATION

What is a labyrinth?

The labyrinth is an aid to prayer. It is not a maze. There are no tricks to it and no dead ends. It has a single circuitous path that winds its way into the center. The person walking it uses the same path to return from the center; and the entrance then becomes the exit. The path is in full view, which allows a person to be quiet and focus internally. Because there is no reason to be concerned with getting "lost" the heart and soul can engage the labyrinth in a more intuitive manner to find communication with God in new, deeper, and more meaningful ways. Each pilgrim follows the same clear, winding path that leads to a center and then back out again. The private and inner journey can lead the pilgrim to an encounter with God that possibly includes healing, transformation, renewal, and peace.

How may one use the labyrinth?

Generally there are three stages to the walk: releasing on the way in, receiving in the center, and returning when you follow the return path back out of the labyrinth. Symbolically, and sometimes actually, you are taking back out into the world that which you have received.

While there is a specific path to follow, the spiritual journey one takes on the labyrinth is very private and personal, different for each individual. What follows are some suggested steps for making the most of your experience:

Prepare for the Walk: This can be as simple as pausing in silence, visualization, or reading scripture to ponder as you walk. Some people find a specific phrase or Bible verse to use as prayer as they walk. A related breath prayer is repeating a short phrase, such as "Come, Holy Spirit," as you walk. Others find walking the circumference of the labyrinth before entering to be an important part of the experience.

The Invocation: Pray before entering the labyrinth to share with God your serious intentions for this time together. Pray for the presence of the Holy Spirit to be with you as you walk.

Entering: Remember as you walk in, this is a time of shedding or letting go. You may want to repeat a verse or phrase or sing a hymn silently to yourself. You may just want to clear your mind and walk. You can think of things you need to let go of and visualize those things falling by the wayside as you walk to the center.

Reaching the Center: This step is often for receiving that which you will take with you. The center is a perfect place to pray and/or meditate. Feel free to sit and read, journal or pray. Remain in the center until you feel ready to leave.

Walking Out: This is a time for joining with God. You may imagine taking a gift with you to be given to the world. You may want to choose another breath prayer to say over and over on the journey out, such as "Lord, make me a servant."

Thanksgiving: As you reach the end of the labyrinth, say a prayer of thanksgiving for this time with God.

Reflection: After walking the labyrinth, you may wish to process the experience by journaling or drawing. Some people keep a journal reflecting each walk they take. You may simply want to sit in silence to think about your walk.