

## **The Labyrinth – A Bit of History**

The Labyrinth is one of the oldest known contemplative practices. Its origins can be traced back to an ancient Greek myth. The maze of the labyrinth was created for King Minos as an enclosure like prison for the monstrous half-man, half-bull called the Minotaur. Theseus, the prince of Athens, killed the monster and was guided out of the labyrinth by holding on to a thread given to him by the king's daughter.

Christians, in the Middle Ages adapted this symbolic maze-like path as a means of reflection on the suffering and death of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the same vein as the Stations of the Cross. This spiritual walk serves as a means of reflection as how in life we journey with the "thread" of faith and are led to discover God's Kingdom. At that time pilgrimages to the Holy Land were encouraged yet not possible for everyone. So, the faithful adopted this form of spiritual journey using the path of the labyrinth. Most famous perhaps is the Labyrinth at the Cathedral in Chartres, France.

## **The Labyrinth Today**

The labyrinth is a path of prayer that helps us to seek the Divine regardless of the tradition in which we stand. The winding path leading to the center serves a mirror to reflect the movement of the Spirit in our lives, as well as a means of reflection on the passion, death and resurrection of Christ.

Walking the labyrinth invites us to linger and experience gratitude for life. It helps us meet our longing for a change of heart. It challenges us to refine the way we live together. It can also slow us down to be mindful of God's loving presence in our lives.

The labyrinth is only one path. It differs from a maze in that it has no tricks or follies. It helps us to waste time with God in prayer. It fosters a sense of surrendering to journey into one's own heart.

## **The Resurrection Labyrinth**

Labyrinths throughout the ages have varied in their configurations and dimensions. Their purpose is the same, to foster a sacred place for reflective prayer. The Resurrection Labyrinth is oval or womb shaped. This is symbolic of us experiencing new birth through our meditation on the promise of new life Christ has won for us by his cross and resurrection

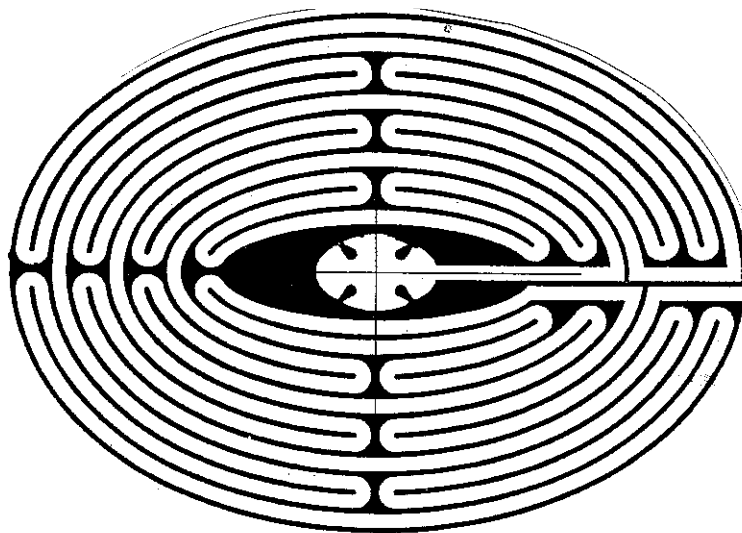
## The Three Aspects of the Labyrinth

- *Purgation – Entering*  
Entering the Labyrinth is an act of letting go, striving to release the details and burdens of one's life. Walking quietly, slowly, deliberately quiets and empties the mind.
- *Illumination – Center*  
Having arrived at the center we can allow ourselves to receive guidance. This is a place to be still, a place of prayer and meditation. You may stand or sit in the center as long as you like.
- *Union – Begins*  
Follow the path out. Each time you walk the Labyrinth you can become healed and strengthened for your calling in our community and work in the world.

## Suggestions for Walking the Labyrinth

1. Clear your mind. Be aware of your breathing
2. Allow yourself to find a pace your body and spirit want you to go. Your pace may change or vary.
3. The labyrinth's path has two ways. Those entering may meet those coming out.

We welcome the wheelchair bound to use the labyrinth. There is access to the Labyrinth Patio by means of the wheelchair lift. Please contact the parish office during weekday business hours or a parish acolyte after weekend liturgies.



### Resources:

Veriditas, The Labyrinth Project, Grace Cathedral, San Francisco  
Weber Center, Adrian Dominican Sisters Campus, Adrian, MI  
West, M. *Exploring the Labyrinth*, Broadway Books, NY, 2000.