

## GUIDELINES FOR WALKING

### THE LABYRINTH

- \* Remove your shoes; wear socks (indoor labyrinth).
- \* Clear your mind and become aware of your breathing.
- \* When you are ready, begin to walk the path. Set your own pace.
- \* There is only one path to the center and the same path returns outward.
- \* You may pass people on the way or allow others to step around you at the turns.
- \* You may meet people coming in the opposite direction. Do whatever feels natural as you cross paths.

#### Note

Please do not bring food or beverages into the area of the labyrinth.

The indoor labyrinth is available by reservation only. Individuals are welcome to the outdoor labyrinth at any time, but please schedule group events. Contact: Labyrinth Committee at 713-440-3713.

## MOVING INWARD - PURGATION

On entering the path, we surrender our daily concerns; we relinquish things we attempt to control. This act of shedding thoughts and emotions quiets and empties the mind. As feet and breathing find a rhythm of working together, mind and body submit to the way. Peace descends, the heart opens, and the winding passage deepens as an inner journey begins to unfold.

## CENTERING - ILLUMINATION

To move into the center is to enter a sanctuary - a place of prayer and meditation. Being in the center invites a sense of reflection and peace, which in turn awakens feelings of renewal, unity and wholeness. We may come to clarity, insight and self-knowledge in the center. We are receptive to personal healing and transformation. It is a source of affirmation. We will be able to receive what is there for us.

## MOVING OUTWARD - UNION

When it is time to move out from the center, the sojourner re-traces the entire path in the opposite direction. We return in union with the Divine to extend mercy and healing to others. During the walk outward, we integrate the insights gained and become grounded and empowered. We become more confident to take risks as we offer our gifts in the world. We are granted the power to act in a loving and compassionate way.

## WALKING INTENTIONS

- Use the labyrinth time to pray for events or situations, a particular person or people, or for the planet itself.
- Use the walk to reflect on past events or walk into your dreams and goals for the future.
- Walk with a particular emotion, bringing it into sacred space for healing, asking for guidance in understanding it better. Surrender it to God as you walk.
- Walk with a prayer for healing and reconciliation in a particular relationship.
- Walk for understanding or healing a spiritual issue.
- Walk in supplication for the physical recovery and restoration of personal health or well-being of a friend.
- Walk for guidance on how a creative project should unfold.
- Walk using a mantra, such as the rosary or Jesus Prayer, to guide your intentions to know the direction of God's will in your life.
- Walk in graceful freedom uniting your energy to those who have been transformed unto timeless being. Ask for their guidance.
- Walk in praise and thanksgiving to God, the Ultimate Mystery, for . . .

## HISTORY OF THE LABYRINTH

The labyrinth is a powerful, complex design which has been found to exist in civilizations as far back as 5000 years. Most scholars think that ancient peoples used the labyrinth to celebrate their relationship to life, nature, and the world. Various forms of this sacred circle can be found in all religious traditions throughout the world.

The ancient wisdom of the labyrinth becomes a spiritual tool for those on the journey today. It can assist us to connect with our Spirit. It is a symbol of unity and wholeness; the winding path that takes us into the center and out again becomes a metaphor for our own spiritual journey.

The labyrinth is a profound spiritual symbol that transcends all creeds and beliefs.

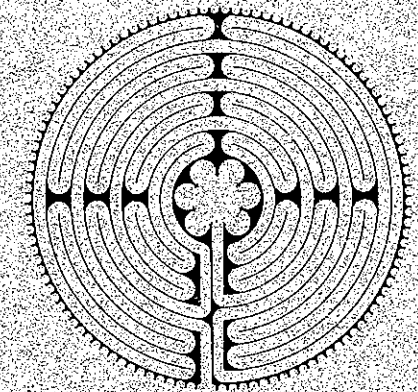
The medieval Chartres labyrinth has been re-introduced to us since December of 1991 by the Rev. Lauren Artress of Grace Cathedral in San Francisco.

## THE LABYRINTH AT DOMINICAN SISTERS OF HOUSTON

Our labyrinth is based on the 11 circuit design in the floor of Chartres Cathedral in France. The indoor labyrinth was blessed and dedicated on September 29, 2001, Founders' Day of the Houston Dominicans (1882). The outdoor labyrinth installation was done by Marty Kermeen and Robert Ferre in the fall of 2002. We hope this labyrinth ministry will provide a sanctuary, an oasis of calm and peace. The labyrinth offers an opportunity for sisters and for people in the wider community to have a sacred experience of prayerful walking as a creative tool for healing and spiritual enlightenment.

The sacred circle of the labyrinth can symbolize our Dominican spirituality, which transforms prayer and contemplation into action. The path inward is time for contemplation; in the center we gain insight and self-knowledge; the same path leads outward into the world for compassionate action in the service of others.

## THE LABYRINTH A SACRED CIRCLE



*"The labyrinth is an archetype of wholeness, a sacred place, that helps us rediscover the depths of our souls...It is a walking meditation, a path of prayer..."*

*-The Rev. Dr. Lauren Artress, Creator of the Labyrinth Project at Grace Cathedral in San Francisco.*

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