

What is a Prayer Labyrinth?

The labyrinth is becoming a popular tool to help people connect with God. These can be found around the world in churches, schools, prisons, hospitals, etc. One of the earliest known church labyrinths was formed in the floor of Chartres Cathedral in France in the 13th century. The four arms of the cross can be seen coming from the centre.

In the Middle Ages, walking a labyrinth was a substitute for going on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Very few people could make the long journey there so walking a labyrinth became a devotional activity.

The labyrinth looks like a maze. However, it is impossible to get lost in a labyrinth. The labyrinth is a symbol of life. Everyone is on a journey, a journey which has potential to draw a person closer to God and closer to others. But the journey is unknown - where will the path lead? No-one can foresee the twists and turns of the future but the path leads to the centre, the centre being where God is, the one in control of the universe and everything in it.

A Prayer of St Paul

*"I pray that ...
Christ may dwell in your hearts
through faith.
And I pray that you,
being rooted and established in love,
may have power ... to grasp
how wide and long and high and deep
is the love of Christ,
and to know this love that surpasses
knowledge"
(Ephesians 3:16-19)*

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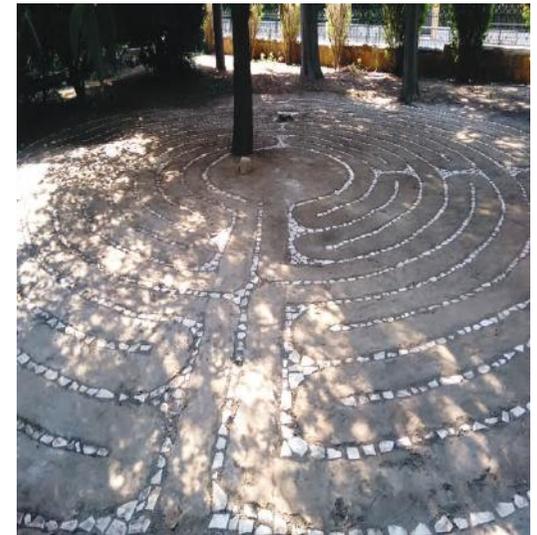
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Prayer Labyrinth

A journey to the centre

St Paul's Anglican Cathedral Nicosia



What is it?

And how do I use it?

Ways to walk the labyrinth (or walk your own way)

A Personal Prayer

You may have a personal concern that you feel you need to think and may be pray about - a family or work issue, a relationship, a decision you need to make, etc. Or may be your mind is just racing and just needs time to get still and just 'be'.

Go to the entrance of the labyrinth and start slowly walking the path.

You may wish to ask God to help you listen for an answer to a question you may have.

When you reach the centre you may wish to stand or sit a while, thinking or praying. When you feel it is time to leave, walk slowly along the path to the exit, thinking and may be praying more about the issue.



You could choose to recite a prayer, a verse from Scripture, or something else as you slowly move to the centre. What comes to your heart and mind? Sit in the centre for a while. As you walk out, is there anything you can be grateful for?

A Prayer for Reconciliation

You may wish to identify a situation that needs reconciliation - personal, family, community, national or international. Then start slowly walking the labyrinth, asking God to guide your thoughts.

Walking into the centre, think about the first step to reconciliation - taking responsibility for our actions. We face choices about how we will act now and in the future. Secondly, as you walk, think about the things that need to be confessed and those issues which need to be walked away from in order for behavior to change and relationships to be restored.

At the centre of the labyrinth consider what and who needs to be forgiven. Pray for a spirit of forgiveness to be seen in the situation.

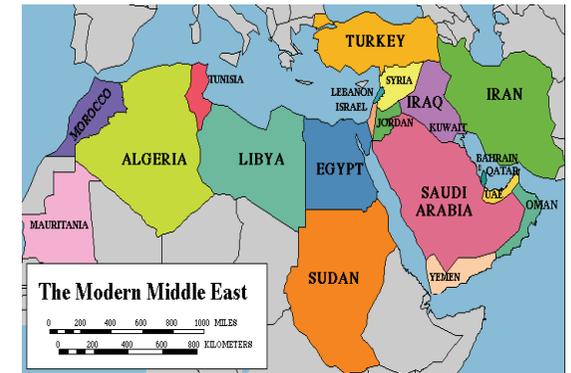
Walking out of the labyrinth think about how amends can be made for the wrong that has been done in the situation you are thinking about. Reconciliation is about restoring relationships between offenders and those who have been harmed. Consider how peace and trust can once again be built into the situation you have been thinking about. You may want to ask God what he might wish you to do to bring about reconciliation.

As you leave, think of carrying God's love and grace with you into the situation.

A Prayer for the Province

The labyrinth is made up of four quarters, each as a reminder of the Dioceses in the Anglican Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East - Cyprus and the Gulf, Jerusalem, Iran and Egypt.

As you walk the labyrinth you may wish to think about, and pray for, the countries, the citizens, the governments, the conflicts, and the joys, in this area.



You may wish to consider yourself walking in the steps of St Paul who travelled through this part of the world. What words of his from the Bible come to your mind as you walk?

Stop in the centre and listen to what God may bring to your mind. Respond to that.

As you walk back out you may like to repeat the following words from Paul's letter "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:9).