

Walking in Sacred Space



The Labyrinth as a Sacred Path

“Sacred space is, by definition, the place where two worlds flow into each other, the visible with the invisible.

The finite world touches the infinite.

In sacred space we can let down our guard and remember who we are... When psyche and soul are reunited, so too are the imagination and the logical mind.

Walking the labyrinth is a body prayer...

Discover your own rhythm ... Honoring your body's tempo helps open your intuitive channels.”

~ Excerpted from Walking a Sacred Path
By Rev Dr. Lauren Artres

Guidance for Walking the Labyrinth

The Labyrinth is offered as a spiritual tool and a worshipful experience. While there is no "right way" to walk the path, you might find these guidelines helpful:

The experience of walking the labyrinth is best done in silence. Allow about one minute to pass between you and the person in front of you before entering the labyrinth. Quiet your mind, become aware of your breathing, and enter with an open heart. You may want to offer a prayer, ask for spiritual guidance or use some other ritual as you enter this sacred space.

Follow the pace that feels right and natural for you. If your pace is more rapid than the person's in front of you, feel free to gently pass around that person. It is important to respect the prayerful, meditative state of others. As you meet others along the path, please step aside or avert your eyes to provide each of you with the space you both need while walking. This can be an intensely personal and inward time for some people, so please avoid intruding upon others.

Suggestions...

You may want to focus on a question you've been asking yourself. Turn it over in your mind and look at it from all angles. Your question may not have a yes or no answer, but you may want to take time to pay attention to a specific issue in your life.

Select a word or a phrase to repeat over and over as you walk, as a way of centering yourself. This approach distracts the restless mind by keeping it busy.

Select a psalm, scripture passage, poem, or other sacred texts and read them as you walk, or stop at intervals to read them. You can also sit in the center and read or reflect on what you have read.

You may want to simply pray throughout your walk. If something is weighing heavily on your mind and heart, the labyrinth can offer tremendous support. This is a space in which you can pour out your heart, express your anger, experience joy, express gratitude, and above all, ask for what you need.

Moving Through the Labyrinth

Letting Go...

As you walk towards the center, you have the opportunity to let go of the things that interfere with your ability to connect with the Divine. As you notice thoughts entering your mind, simply let them go and allow them to evaporate. You may feel sadness, peace, or just a sense of quiet. Honor your feelings by being present in the moment and attentive to how you feel.

Moving Through Sacred Space...

As you walk, let go and trust the path to guide you to the center. How do you feel as you walk the path? What can you leave behind as you walk the labyrinth? You may want to take a small object with you into the labyrinth and leave it in the center as you leave, as your symbolic act of letting go.

Awakening...

You may be surprised to find you have suddenly arrived in the center! You are invited to remain there for as long as you need. It is a time for silent meditation, reflection, focus or prayer.

Rebirth...

When you are ready to leave the center, retrace your steps through the same path you entered. This is an important reminder that one does not remain in the center, but returns to live one's life in the everyday world. Think about any insights you have gained during your experience. How can you integrate these insights into your daily life? After you leave the labyrinth, you may want to take some time for personal reflection, journaling, artistic expression, or discussion with friends as a way to integrate your expressions into your life.

Remember...

Though the labyrinth always remains the same, your experience each time you walk may be different. You are invited to come and walk the sacred path again and again.