

SOME HISTORY

Labyrinths in varying styles have been found in many cultures, on most continents, and date back as far as 4,000 BC. Today, our society runs in circles from too much uncertainty, stress, dis-ease, or financial, cultural and family pressures. These days, many folks all over the world are walking in circles to seek answers to Life's questions, to solve a problem to seek the Divine and/or deepen their own spiritual path or spiritual knowing. The circles they walk are called labyrinths, whether it be a classic 5-7 circuit or the lovely 11 circuit Chartres (Medieval) pattern or the modified 7 circuit medieval pattern offered in this courtyard. Based on sacred geometry that offers a balanced and serene environment for the soul, the Chartres labyrinth was installed in c.1201, before the walls of the great Cathedral were completed. Labyrinths in the Middle Ages were walked as a pilgrimage or the celebratory ending of a pilgrimage journey, described in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*.

Labyrinths were rare in Western culture until early in the 1990s when The Rev. Dr. Lauren Artress introduced the Chartres labyrinth in Grace Cathedral in San Francisco as a spiritual tool for healing and wholeness of mind, body, and spirit. Since that time, labyrinths have been popping up all over the world in churches, parks, hospitals, prisons, universities, and public buildings.

For more information, please see:

Walking a Sacred Path: Rediscovering the Labyrinth as a Sacred Tool by The Rev. Dr. Lauren Artress, Riverhead Books, 1995. "Rediscovering the Labyrinth" a 30-minute documentary video by The Rev. Dr. Lauren Artress at Grace Cathedral:
www.gracecathedral.org/labyrinth/
See also: www.veriditas.com,
www.labyrinthenterprises.com and
www.thelabyrinthcompany.com.

www.saintjudes.org

WELCOME TO ST. JUDE'S LABYRINTH



OPEN 24 HOURS EACH DAY
A GIFT TO THE COMMUNITY FROM
ST JUDE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
20920 McClellan Road, Cupertino CA
95014

www.saintjudes.org



APPROACHES TO THE LABYRINTH

There are many ways to approach and walk a labyrinth. First, there is no right or wrong way. Second, a labyrinth is not a maze. There is only one way in and one way out. By simply putting one foot in front of the other, the path will lead you. You might pause at the entrance, take a few deep breaths, and focus on an idea, a question, or use a mantra to quiet the “busy mind.” This could be a word or phrase, such as: Be still... Love... Peace...

Tradition recommends three optional stages of the walk. On the way in. . . .

Purgation (Releasing) ~ A releasing, a letting go of the details of your life. This is the act of shedding thoughts and distractions. A time to open the heart and quiet the mind.

Illumination (Receiving) ~ When you reach the center, stay there as long as you like. It is a place of meditation and prayer: Receive what is there for you to receive.

Union (Returning) ~ As you leave, following the same path out of the center as you came in, you enter the third stage, which is joining the Divine, God, your Higher Power, or the healing forces at work in the world. Each time you walk the labyrinth you become more empowered to find and do the work you feel your soul reaching for.

Guidelines for the walk: Quiet your mind and become aware of your breath. Allow yourself to find the

pace your body wants to go. The path is two ways. Those going in will meet those coming out. You may “pass” people or let others step around you. If your pace is faster or slower than others, you can pause at a turn or you might take a turn a bit shorter. Do what feels natural. After your walk, it may be helpful to write or draw something about your experience. You might want to talk with a labyrinth facilitator or friend.

May you be blessed from your experience with our labyrinth. Please come again and invite others.